

RESEARCH REPORT

INTEGRATION OF POPULATION AND GENDER CONCERNS INTO THE NATIONAL AND SECTORAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES: CURRENT STATUS AND CONSTRAINTS¹

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ACRONYMS

<i>BBS</i>	– <i>Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics</i>
<i>CBO</i>	– <i>Community Based Organization</i>
<i>CBR</i>	– <i>Crude Birth Rate</i>
<i>CDR</i>	– <i>Crude Death Rate</i>
<i>CPR</i>	– <i>Contraceptive Prevalence Rate</i>
<i>CEDAW</i>	– <i>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</i>
<i>DGHS</i>	– <i>Directorate General of Health Service</i>
<i>DSHE</i>	– <i>Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education</i>
<i>GES</i>	– <i>Gender Equity Strategy</i>
<i>GoB</i>	– <i>Government of Bangladesh</i>
<i>HNPSP</i>	– <i>Health, Nutrition & Population Sector Programme</i>
<i>HPSP</i>	– <i>Health & Population Sector Programme</i>
<i>HYV</i>	– <i>High Yielding Variety</i>
<i>ICT</i>	– <i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
<i>IMR</i>	– <i>Infant Mortality Rate</i>
<i>IMED</i>	– <i>Implementation, Monitoring &, Evaluation Division</i>
<i>ICPD</i>	– <i>International Conference on Population and Development</i>
<i>MDGs</i>	– <i>Millennium Development Goals</i>
<i>MoHFW</i>	– <i>Ministry of Health and Family Welfare</i>
<i>MoWCA</i>	– <i>Ministry of Women and Children Affairs</i>
<i>MoSC</i>	– <i>Ministry of Science and ICT</i>
<i>MMR</i>	– <i>Maternal Mortality Ratio/Rate</i>
<i>NGO</i>	– <i>Non-Government Organization</i>
<i>NRR</i>	– <i>Net Reproduction Rate</i>
<i>NPWA</i>	– <i>National Policy for Women’s Advancement</i>
<i>NAP</i>	– <i>National Action Plan</i>
<i>NPC</i>	– <i>National Population Council</i>
<i>NIPORT</i>	– <i>National Institute of Population Research and Training</i>
<i>PFA</i>	– <i>Platform for Action</i>
<i>PRSP</i>	– <i>Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</i>
<i>TFR</i>	– <i>Total Fertility Rate</i>
<i>UNFPA</i>	– <i>United Nations Population Fund</i>
<i>UN</i>	– <i>United Nations</i>
<i>WID</i>	– <i>Women in Development</i>
<i>WDIEC</i>	– <i>Women Development Implementation and Evaluation Committee</i>

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

1.1 Introduction

The integration of population and development has been widely recognised as an effective strategy in development and population planning (UNESCAP, 1988). As UNFPA (2003) emphasised, the population dynamics, structure, reproductive health, empowerment of women, gender equality and equity are fundamental in reducing poverty and achieving economic development in a society. It is believed that the persistent and widespread poverty and serious social and gender inequities have significant influence on, and are influenced by, the demographic parameters such as population growth, structure, and distribution. Hence, the measures directed towards influencing the demographic indicators and the population dynamics represent often the key actions in development planning process. Similarly, the empowerment of women and improvement in their status are considered important for achieving the sustainable developments in a society. The sustainable and the effective developments including the economic development in a society are indeed achieved when the interests and needs of all groups in a society are taken into consideration and the potentials of all groups are released.

Realising the importance of population in development planning, Bangladesh has been paying largely an exclusive attention to it since independence. The gender equality via the improvement in the conditions of women who have been falling behind the men also has been able to attract attention of the planners and policy-makers in recent years. The efforts of the government to integrate the concerns relating to population and gender into the country's mainstream development process/planning at national and sectoral levels have gained additional momentum, however, following CEDAW, ICPD, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Declaration, which repeatedly emphasised the importance of population and gender and the linkages between them as crucial to achieving sustainable developments in a society. Bangladesh is a signatory to all these agreements/conventions, thus; expressed its willingness and commitments to implement them.

1.2 Objectives

In the above background, the present study aims to examine the current status and the extent of integration of population and gender concerns into the country's development policies, plans, processes and the strategies. In this study, the "Integration" is understood as "bringing together of the specialised and differential units or activities into a single or more coordinated whole set of activities and implies, thus, the interactive linkages between specialised activities." Hence, integrated programmes/policies can be an organisational, management, and operational effort to link specific activities, with a view to developing interaction

among those activities” (ESCAP 1980). The main focus of the study is to review how much the country's development policies/plans/strategies have dealt with various population and gender concerns in the country with latter referring to the concerns for women only who are facing a highly unequal situation vis-à-vis the country's men. The study also make an endeavour to identify the major problems and constraints restricting the process of effective integrating of these concerns and, also tries to identify the necessary corrective measures to overcome such constraints.

Structure of the Study

The study is organised as follows: Chapter-1 introduces the research issues and the methodology of the study; Chapter 2 outlines briefly the interrelationship among population, gender and development; Chapter 3 presents a review of the policy documents both national and sectoral with regard to integration of population and gender concerns into them; Chapter 4 presents the views of the policy-makers, planners, field managers and different stakeholders for this, Chapter 5 highlights the gaps, barriers and constraints facing the integration of these concerns; Chapter 6 presents the summary findings and suggestions/recommendations while Chapter 7 concludes the study.

1.3 Methodology

For realising the objectives, the study has depended upon both primary and secondary information; in understanding the current status of integration of population and gender concerns at the policy/programme and strategy level, the national and sectoral policies/plans/strategies are reviewed. For understanding the actual integration of these concerns into the sectoral activities, the field level situation in implementing these concerns under the integrated sectoral programme/projects, and to comprehending the ground realities including the barriers and constraints that persists and identify the possible corrective measures for streamline the process of integration at sectoral level, the primary information was relied upon. Such primary information was collected from the policy-makers, planners, local level government officials responsible for implementing the sectoral activities/programmes/projects, and different stakeholders of development activities such as lawyer, journalist, women activist, civil society members, NGO members, local elite, local elected representatives, etc. both at the centre and at the local level. Such information was also collected through personal interviews as well as through consultative workshops. A unique part of primary information for this study has been the feedback received from the policy-makers, planners, programme personnel, professional bodies/groups, NGO representatives, legal experts, women's groups/activists, civil society members, etc. on the draft report of the study prepared using both secondary and primary information. These feedbacks were then incorporated in the final version of the report.

The field level information for the study was collected from two district headquarters, namely, Sylhet and Cox's Bazaar. The choice of them was guided by the fact that they have revealed the lowest performance with regard to the gender

equality and population parameters like birth rate, infant and child mortality rate, etc., and have been drawing thus the special attention from both the government and the donor community (UNFPA 2006, MoWCA 2006).

1.4 Status of Population and Women

Population

Bangladesh, achieving independence in 1971, is now the Asia's fifth and the world's eighth most populous country. It is currently the homes about 164 million population (UN Population Division 2009), implying a population density of nearly 1150 per square kilometer, which is one of the highest in the world (NIPORT/Mitra & Associates/Macro International 2009). According to available statistics, the country's population grew at a rate of around 3 percent per years during the 1970s and 1980s. But due to following strong population control measures this high population growth rate started to decline since the 1980s reaching a natural population growth rate of 1.45 percent in 2008 (BBS 2009). During this period, fertility has also declined substantially with TFR (Total Fertility Rate) falling from over 7 children to less than 3 children in 2007 (NIPORT/Macro International/Mitra Associates 2009). Despite all these successes, the fact remains that the country is yet to achieve the replacement level fertility (NRR=1) for which the target date was shifted several times with latest date being fixed at 2015 (the target year to reach NRR=1).

The time trend of the country's population size reveals that country's population during the first half of the twentieth century (1901-51) increased by 45 per cent only; in the second half (1951-2001) it grew rapidly tripling the size (NIPORT/Mitra & Associates/Macro International, 2005) and according to the latest population census of 2001, the country's population size was 130 million in 2001 (BBS 2003). of total population, 39 per cent is aged under 15 years, 54.7 per cent is aged between 15 and 59 years and 6.2 per cent is aged 60 years or more (BBS 2003). This young age structure constitutes a built-in "population momentum" which will continue to generate population increase well into the future and this process will continue even after the attainment of replacement level fertility for the 'echo effect' of high fertility experienced by the population in the past. If the population momentum and the period of population stabilisation get delayed than the time stipulated, the population increasing process will then get lengthened and the ultimate size of population will also get bigger (NIPORT/Macro International/Mitra Associates, 2005).

According to Bangladesh Population Policy, the country's population size should stabilise at 210 million by 2060 if the replacement level fertility could be reached by 2010 (which is not the case anymore and the revised target year is set at 2015 (MoHFW, 2004)). According to World Bank (1995) forecasts, Bangladesh may reach a final stationery population of 263 million by the mid-22nd century (2150), suggesting the country would face a prospect of continued population growth for many decades to come.

Realizing the gravity of population problem and its threat to the country's development, Bangladesh Planning Commission back in 1976 warned that "no civilized measures would be too drastic to keep the country's population size on the smaller side of 150 million for sheer ecological viability" (GOB, Planning Commission, 1973). This only serves as an indicator that if the country cannot handle properly its population growth, this will have serious implications for socio-economic development. The country has already crossed or at the verge of crossing 150 million size (according to BBS); hence, the country's population problems may get more complex in future particularly in the given socio-economic and cultural settings characterised by high level of poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, and persistent high level of discrimination and inequality between genders disfavours women.

Women

In Bangladesh, 49 percent of the total population is women. Across classes, the situation of women is relatively dire one; their status is the direct result of the patriarchal values embedded in the socio-cultural pattern of the country which demand a systematic subordination of women to the men, and which frequently forces social and economic dependence of them on the men and raises occasions for them for all kinds of deprivation/exploitations by restricting their access to almost all benefits and opportunities, both at home and in the society. Their adverse predisposition is reflected in their poor economic role, low literacy level, poor nutritional status, and high rate of morbidity, mortality, and also in high fertility of them; the women almost always have fewer opportunities when it comes to access to health, education, income, decision-making power and legal rights (Khan Salma et al. 2004).

The rural Bangladeshi women are regarded as the poorest of the poor because they are economically poor, socially prejudiced by customs and beliefs and traditionally secluded in purdah due to patriarchal dominance of the society. The traditional attitudes and gender-stereotyped roles often prevent the rural society to recognise equal rights for women; women are subjected to inequalities not only in the family, but also in the community and workplace. Discrimination against girls starts, indeed, at birth and continues throughout their lifecycle.

Over the past two decades, much has been achieved to reduce the impediments to women's development "fertility has drastically declined by over half, girls' primary and secondary school attendance rate exceeds that of the boys, the mortality gap has reduced, and large numbers of girls/women are now earning members of the family. Yet there are long ways to go by the women in order to achieve equality with the men (The World Bank 2008).

1.5 Limitations of the Study

The study first envisaged collection of sector-specific detailed primary information about integration of population and gender concerns into the sectoral policies, programmes and/or activities through face to face interviews with the

policy-makers and planners of different sector ministries including those at the Planning Commission using pre-designed questionnaire. This endeavour failed as most of the policy-makers could not allocate time for such interview. The second attempt to collect these information from them through sending the questionnaire is also too failed, as many of them did not return the filled-in questionnaire after repeated requests and those who returned also failed to respond to many of the questions included in the questionnaire. In order to collect necessary information from them, finally the consultative workshops are organised but this attempt too has not been much successful as in the number of cases, subordinate/junior official attended the workshop on behalf of the target officials who often were less aware of the sectoral policies, programmes or activities. As a result, the sectoral information obtained through this process remained limited in content restricting the desired understanding.

Again, due to political situation, the local level primary data collection effort through consultative workshop also faced problems (local level data collection was done in the last quarter of the Caretaker Government). Due to official preoccupation, the local level officials could not give time for holding the district level workshops several times. Finally, when they could give it, the duration was curtailed to half viz., instead of one day the workshop is squeezed to half a day which limited the desired discussion.

CHAPTER 2

THE INTER-RELATIONSHIP AMONG POPULATION, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT: A REFLECTION

The familiar argument that the population and gender have impacts on socio-economic development and vice-versa can be better approached and understood through a framework which underscores the interrelationship between them and the development both as cause and consequences.

2.1 Relationship between Population and Development

Conceptually, population, in terms of quality and quantity, and development, in terms of resource potentials and choices, are interrelated and interdependent (MoHFW 1999). The interrelationship between population and development, though complex, is understood mostly by the concept that “development is a continuous process with an aim to improving the well-being of the people.” The concept of development thus presupposes that while a healthy, well-nourished, well-educated and skilled labour force is the best foundation for sustainable development, the development efforts of a nation need to increase people’s development choices with regard to quality of life, education, health, environment, etc. in order to enable them to render further contribution to development. Hence, in the design and pursuit of development policies and programmes, the population perspectives deserve to be treated as an integral part (MoHFW 1999).

As regards the relationship between population and development, there are debates and conflicting observations and arguments; to many, population growth is either the primary cause of poverty or a major obstacle to its elimination and to others the population growth contributes to the progress (Coale and Hoover 1958; Jones and Selvaratnam 1972, Kuznets 1966, Hagen 1958, Rodgers 1985). Yet the general agreement has been that the size and composition of a population can exert powerful influence on a country’s development, as population, poverty, patterns of production and consumption, education, economic status and the empowerment of women are all interconnected. In economic-demographic research, nothing indeed contradicts the proposition that in low-income countries with considerable backlogs in human development, living standard and infrastructure, a population growth rate exceeding two percent per year acts as a structural barrier inhibiting achievement of wide range of development objectives (World Bank 1994s) as the rapid growth of population in these countries requires a lot more resources to manage and cater to the needs of rapidly growing population and to ensure their well-being and economic security.

Long-term demographic and economic data indicate that high fertility levels raise the absolute levels of poverty in a country by slowing economic growth, reducing the rate of poverty reduction and skewing the distribution of consumption against the

poor. Economic insecurity and poverty, in turn, encourage people to have large families to create fallback space in adverse situations, which adversely affects the whole range of other demographic and social parameters (Rafel M. Salas 1981). In most developing countries, one can observe a parallel between demographic characteristics such as high overall population growth, high fertility, high infant mortality and high population density on the one hand, and the severe poverty among a large section of the population on the other. The often observed tendency, therefore, has been to infer that population and poverty are inextricably linked and each is a determinant and consequence of the other or that population growth is, by and large, responsible for the increasing poverty in many of these countries (UNESCAP 1988). It is also argued that the high fertility rate causing high population growth creates in most developing countries an imbalance between population growth and the pace of development which then translates itself into disequilibrium between supply of and demand for services such as education, health, employment, food, etc. and leads to reduction in savings and investment, a prerequisite for achieving socio-economic development (Ashford 1995). On the contrary, there is increasing evidence suggesting that a decline in fertility and population growth contributes to a country's development, which in turn lowers the tempo of fertility and population growth, rendering positive effect on the country's development process (Eastwood and Lipton 2001).

The population policy of a country requires to be conceived therefore in terms of the country's social and economic milieu and not in isolation and the country's socio-economic planning process should take adequate recognition of the population dynamics. Such integration is widely recognised as an effective strategy both for development planning and population planning (UNFPA 2003, UNESCAP 1980, UNESCAP 1988). The sectoral development planning needs to take population and its characteristics into account in order to decide the sectoral targets and strategies to achieve them. Similarly, population characteristics like population growth, age-sex composition and other demographic processes like fertility, mortality, migration, etc. having profound effect on sectoral planning need to have a definite space in the activities of each of the sectors.

2.2 Relationship between Gender and Development

Primarily as a result of the awareness created during the UN Decade for Women, the women's contribution to development started receiving wide recognition. ICPD emphasised the crucial links between women's advancement and the overall progress of society and reaffirmed that the societal issues need to be addressed from a gender perspective to ensure sustainable development of a society.

In most developing countries, women are less valued, they lack domestic and social status, and consequently remain subject to malnutrition, illiteracy, ill-health, unemployment, and remained deprived of human rights although equal political, economic, social and cultural rights for them can help unleash the productivity of women and empowerment, earned through these factors, can serve as an engine for

development. For example, eliminating child marriage, enabling adolescent girls to delay pregnancy, ending discrimination against pregnant girls, providing support to young mothers, etc. can help ensure that girls complete their education. Educated mother can improve the prospects for the whole family and help break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. Empowering women through education also can have great impact on socio-demographic factors like fertility, child survival, population growth, building on human capital, etc. all of which render significant impacts on the overall welfare of the society, including poverty reduction.

Also, investment in women's economic rights ensures equal opportunities for employment and wages, access to credit and agricultural resources; inheritance and property rights directly helps increase the productivity and well-being of the society and the family. Women's participation in the labour market in poorer countries has the greatest potential to promote pro-poor growth; their control over the household resources leads to higher investment in children's health, nutrition and education, which helps break the poverty cycle through creating human resources and empowering the next generation socially and economically (International Poverty Centre 2008). It is sometimes argued that investments in women's and girls' education and on their health can yield some of the highest returns of all development investments, including reduced rates of maternal mortality, better educated and healthier children and increased household income (www.usaid.gov/development/economic/gender/cfm). On the other hand, improvement of women's status through employment outside traditional sectors is considered important for bringing a decline in fertility; thus, more of the women work outside their homes are more likely to control fertility as they find employment outside home and childbearing not compatible roles.

In short, the improved status of women not only helps women's own well being, but also contributes directly to the country's development via improvements in socio-demographic and economic factors, which in turn, enable women to participate more in the social, economic and public life, and consolidate further their status both at home and in the society (Mcnamara 1977). While through conscious and proactive education and employment policies, it is possible to bring significant changes in the lives of women and people, this can render also significant influences on demographic and gender variables, leading to profound changes in women's lives, demographic characteristics and the socio-economic development of a country. For a balanced and speedy development, a country's development process, therefore, needs to take account of the women, who comprise of half of the total population.

2.3 Population, Gender and Development Interactions

As discussed above, population and gender variables can greatly influence the socio-economic development of a society. As the available evidence suggests, the demographic processes (such as fertility, mortality and migration) and the gender issues (such a gender discrimination, lack of women's access to basic services, women's low status in society, etc.) can affect both population and gender outcomes

such as population size, age-sex structure, spatial distribution of population, gender equality, women’s empowerment, women’s status, etc. All these demographic and gender outcomes are able, in turn, to affect greatly the development process of a country, including health, education, food availability, housing, savings/investment, human resource utilisation (labour), utilisation of land, capital, technology, public expenditure and other issues that shape the development outcome of a society, namely the income distribution, employment, educational status, health/nutritional status, better quality of life, etc. All of them again affect the population processes like fertility, mortality and migration and gender variables like gender discrimination, lack of women’s access to services, women’s low status etc. in the society. Hence, population, gender and development variables are intricately related among themselves and this relationship takes place in a circular fashion, acting both as the process and outcome variables. These interactions can be appreciated better through an integrated framework underscoring the relationship among population, gender and development in terms of both processes and outcomes. A macro framework for this relationship is given in Figure 1, but a specific one specifying the demographic, gender and development process and while outcome variables is given in Figure 2.

Figure 1: Population, Gender and Development Framework: A Macro Perspective

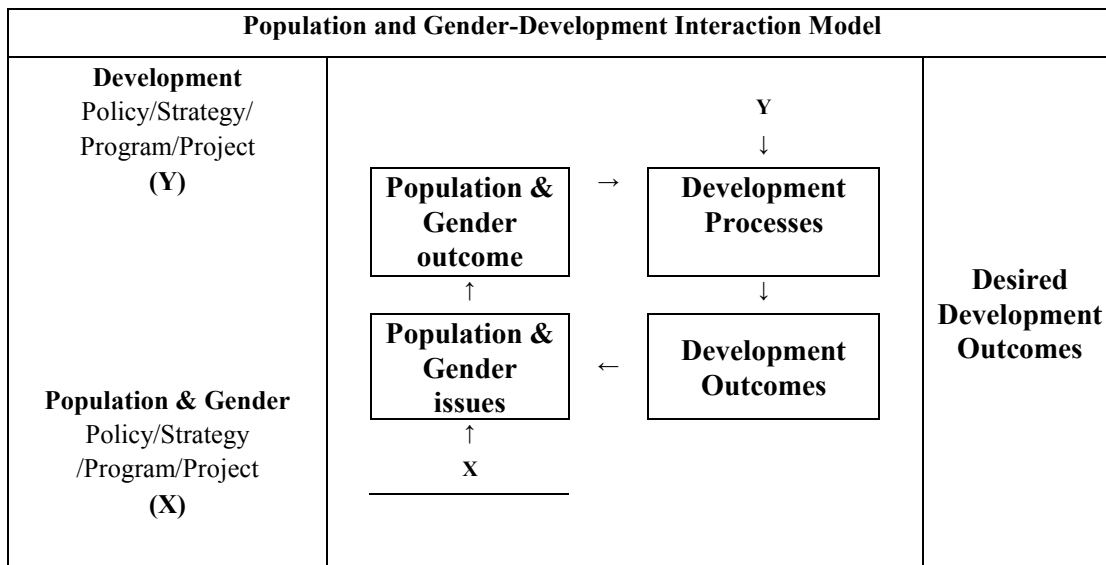
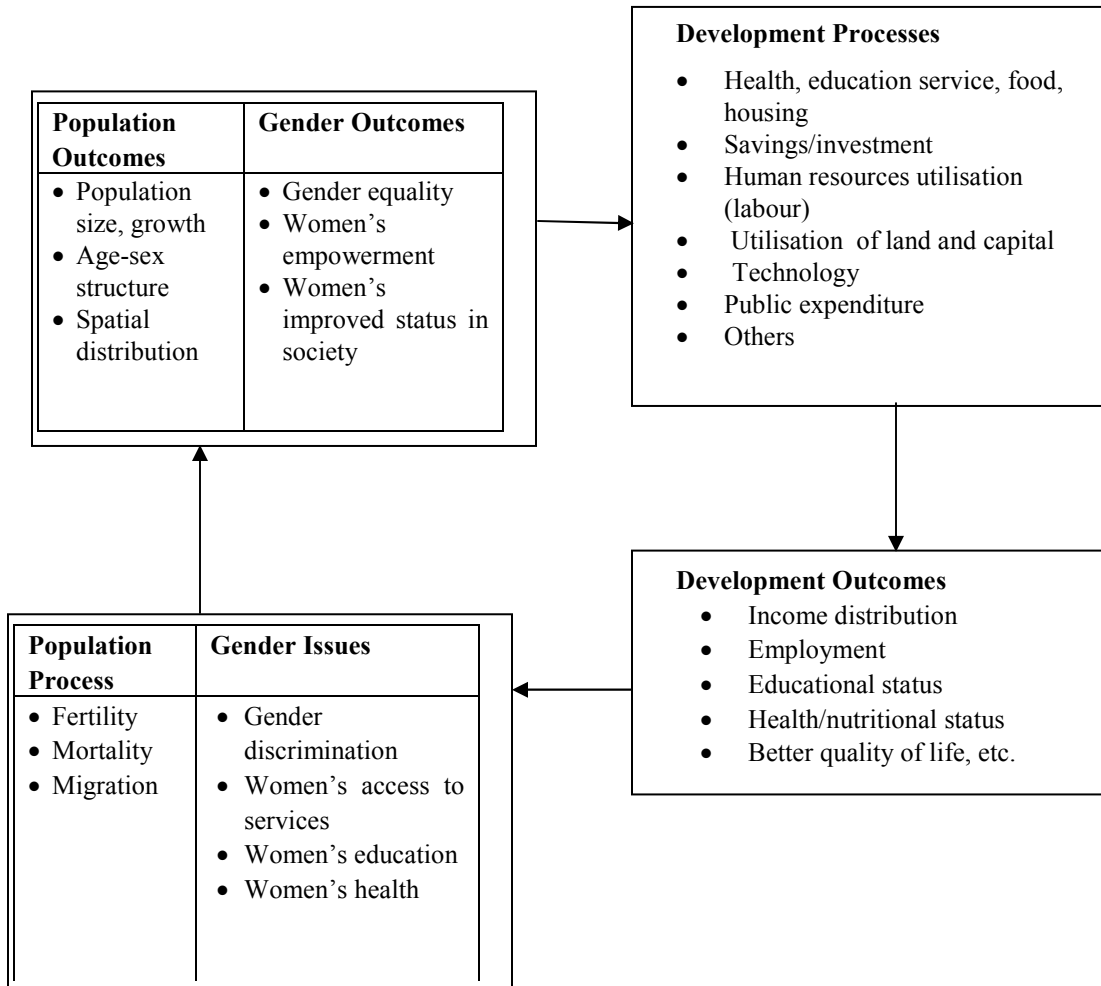


Figure 2: Population, Gender and Development Relationship: A Specific Perspective



CHAPTER 3

INTEGRATION OF POPULATION AND GENDER CONCERNS INTO THE NATIONAL AND SECTORAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES: A REVIEW OF THE POLICY DOCUMENTS AND SECTORAL ACTIVITIES

The Government of Bangladesh has duly recognised the importance of gender equality and of keeping a balance between population size, growth and development to ensure the sustainable development in the country. As noted above, Bangladesh has been emphasising a balance between population and development variables since independence while the gender equality in terms of promoting the women's cause, has been drawing attention for the last two decades or so. The Constitution of Bangladesh upholds the necessity of equal opportunities between men and women and sanctions positive measures for the country's disadvantaged groups, particularly the women.

An attempt is made in this chapter to identify the nature and extent of integration of the population and women concerns that have gone into the country's national and sectoral policies, plans and strategies. For this purpose, we have reviewed, on the one hand, the national policy documents of Bangladesh such as "Population Policy," and "National Policy for Women's Advancement (NPWA)," known as the "foundation documents" respectively for population and gender policy guidance, Five-Year Plans and recent Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS), and on the other, the policies and strategies of few major sector ministries. In this chapter we have also reviewed the activities of few ministries with regard to the nature of their integration of population and gender concerns into the sectoral activities. The sector ministries covered for this purpose are: health, education, employment, agriculture, food, housing, rural development, home, industries, information, social welfare, law and justice, local government division, and youth development.

3.1 Review of Policy Documents

3.1.1 Foundation Documents:

"National Policy for Women's Advancement" (NPWA)

The "National Policy for Women's Advancement" which was prepared in the background of overall framework of CEDAW, was adopted by the Government in 1997. The primary concern of NPWA is the protection of women's human rights, ensuring them an access to politics, administration and socio-economic activities, education and skill training, reflection of positive image of women in the media, reducing the burden of poverty on them, elimination of trafficking and violence against women, and rehabilitation of women during natural calamities, etc. The NPWA also emphasises women's rights to access the physical and mental health care of the highest quality, reduction of mortality for both mother and children,

women's reproductive health rights of all kinds including acceptance of family planning methods, reduction in maternal mortality, and prevention of all hazardous/killer diseases including RTI, STDs and AIDS.

The main focus of the document is on removing the gender disparities at all levels and creating better opportunities for women to ensure equal participation of them in both private and public spheres of life. Given this wide coverage touching all aspects of women's life, this document is considered a gender-related "foundation policy" document which is followed by other sector ministries while addressing and incorporating gender concerns into their respective sectoral policies, strategies and programmes. The goals set in this document for the advancement of women are (MoWCA 1998):

- To establish equality between men and women at all levels of national life;
- To ensure women's security in all spheres of state, society and family;
- To ensure empowerment of women in the fields of politics, administration, and the economy;
- To establish women's human rights and implement CEDAW;
- To develop women as educated and efficient human resources;
- To eliminate existing discrimination against men and women;
- To acknowledge women's contribution in social and economic spheres;
- To eradicate all forms of oppression on women and girls;
- To eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls;
- To establish equality between men and women in administration, politics, education, culture, sports and all other economic activities;
- To take adequate measures to ensure women's health and nutrition;
- To ensure priority of women in the arrangement of housing and providing suitable shelter for women;
- To take measures for rehabilitating women affected by natural calamities and armed conflict;
- To meet the needs of women, especially in difficult circumstances;
- To ensure security for widows, divorced, unmarried and childless women;
- To reflect gender perspective in the mass media by projecting a positive image of women;
- To provide support services in the advancement of women;
- To free women from the curse of poverty;
- To acknowledge women's contribution in social and economic spheres.

In 1998, the Government also approved the *National Action Plan (NAP)* for the advancement of women. This was formulated in the light of *Beijing Platform for Action (PFA)* and the *National Policy for the Advancement of Women (NPWA)*. The

NAP is the translation of policy statements made in the NPWA into a concrete programme package and project components, which are to be implemented within a time frame in order to achieve reduction in gender disparities disfavoured women in a time-bound manner. The NAP emphasises the strategy of mainstreaming women's concerns in all government plans and programmes as adopted by different sector ministries and autonomous agencies. It also emphasises the incorporation of other gender-related activities such as gender disaggregated information and resource allocation for gender responsive programmes for achieving the gender parity in terms of key social and economic indicators. Recognising women's contribution in all spheres and gender discrimination against women in terms of programmes, resources, and facilities, NAP sets the following goals (Bhuiyan, no date):

1. To make women's development an integral part of the national development programme;
2. To establish women as equal partners in development with equal roles in policy and decision making in the family, community, and the nation at large;
3. To remove legal, economic and political or cultural barriers that prevent the exercise of women's equal rights by undertaking policy reforms, and strong affirmative actions; and
4. To raise/create public awareness about women's differential needs, interests, and priorities and to increase commitment to bringing about improvements in women's position and condition.

However, based on Beijing PFA's, the NAP identified 12 critical areas of concerns. These areas are identified on the basis of goals set in the NPWA and these are: (i) women and poverty, (ii) education and training of women, (iii) women and health, (iv) violence against women, (v) women and armed conflict, (vi) women and the economy, (vii) women in power and decision-making, (viii) institutional mechanism for the advancement of women, (ix) human rights of women, (x) women and the media, (xi) women and the environment, and (xii) girl children. For each of these areas, the strategic objectives are formulated and various actions are outlined.

Based on 12 critical areas of concerns, 15 ministries/divisions are identified on a priority basis for implementing NAP recommendations. These 15 line ministries are partners in implementing NAP. The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) is the nodal ministry for coordinating NAP implementation by different sector ministries.

Population Policy

The country's first population policy was formulated in 1976 (GoB 1976) when the rate of population growth was around 3 per cent and the TFR was more than seven children per woman. Given the demographic reality, the 1976 Policy outline for population incorporated the population and family planning programme as an integral component of overall national development and social reformation programmes in order to ensure improved living standards for the people (MoHFW

2004). This phase with a focus on population particularly on population control, continued until 1997 (Rob 2003) and in 1998, the Government launched the Health and Population Sector Programme (HPSP) with an emphasis on sector wide approach. In this new programme, the population issues including population control failed to draw central attention and became a component only. Under this new programme approach the population control underwent few basic changes which also believed to have some negative effects on the country's population and population control efforts.

The latest population policy was formulated by the Government in 2004, and major objectives of the policy document have been to reduce TFR and attain replacement level fertility (NRR=1) by the year 2010 (this target date has been shifted to 2015 by HNPSPP) so that the population stabilisation for the country is reached by around 2060. Other objectives are to improve maternal and child health including reproductive health of women and improve the living standards of the people through a desirable balance between population and development in the context of MDGs and PRS. The objectives of the population policy also include elimination of gender disparities in education, employment, health and nutrition, ensuring women's empowerment, supporting measures to regulate and reduce rural to urban migration and bringing coordination among different sector ministries to integrate population into development activities.

The specific policy objectives of the 2004 Population Policy are as follows (MoHFW 2004):

- Reduce TFR and increase the use of family planning methods among eligible couples through raising awareness;
- Attain NRR=1 by 2010 so as to stabilise the population of the country by around 2060;
- Ensure adequate availability and access to reproductive health services, especially family planning services to all, including information, counseling and services for adolescents;
- Improve maternal health with emphasis on reduction of maternal mortality;
- Reduce RTIs/STIs and prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS;
- Reduce infant and under-five mortality;
- Reduce maternal and child malnutrition;
- Promote and actively support programmes for elimination of gender disparity in education, health and nutrition;
- Ensure early childhood development (ECD) programmes;
- Ensure and support gender equity and empowerment of women;
- Develop human resource capacity including improved data collection, research and dissemination;

- Actively support measures to regulate and reduce rural to urban migration;
- Support measures for environmental sustainability, with emphasis on access to safe drinking water;
- Support poverty alleviation strategies and create a conducive environment for improved quality of life;
- Ensure coordination among relevant ministries for strengthening population and development linkages and making their respective mandates and implementation strategies more population focused.

3.1.2 National Development Plans and Strategies

Population

The Government of Bangladesh declared population control and family planning activities as a national priority in 1973. The First Five-Year Plan (1973-78) emphasised the necessity of immediate adoption of drastic steps to slow down the population growth. The serious concern of the government to control fertility and arrest population growth was revealed in a statement of the Plan Document that “no civilized measures would be too drastic to keep population size of the country on a smaller side of 150 million for sheer ecological viability of the nation.” In 1976, the government approved a National Population Policy Guideline involving different ministries and NGOs. It contained few non-family planning measures as well, such as; (i) tax benefits to the unmarried and to the families with fewer children; (ii) preferential treatment in allotment of housing and giving medical benefits to individuals with fewer children; (iii) credit and economic benefits to the mother’s clubs, women’s cooperatives and other organised groups; (iv) liberalisation of laws relating to abortion, etc. From 1976, the family planning turned increasingly MCH-based, multi-sectoral and community-based integrated programmes and the central purpose of all these has been to ensure the achievement of demographic goal of $NRR=1$ by the year 1990. The National Population Council (NPC), headed by the Head of the Government was established for the first time in 1975 (Mabud and Akhter 2000).

The country’s Second Five-Year Plan (1980-85) aimed at initiating steps to integrate sectoral policies and programmes with the national demographic goals. During this plan period, the Population Planning Wing of the Planning Commission undertook a project on integrating population with development activities wherein some studies were undertaken on the subject and training was provided to the government officials to create awareness about population issues. This Plan (1980–85) emphasised undertaking more dynamic and diversified programmes for the population and demonstrated a multi-sectoral model involving women’s participation in the health, education and employment.

The Third Five Year Plan (1985-90) continued to provide feedback on the policy needs regarding integration of population into the development process and efforts continued to further identify the nature and extent of population and development integration through the establishment of Population and Development Evaluation Unit (PDEU). The activities on the Population and Development interrelationship could not be sustained, however, during the plan period due to lack of technical assistance and skilled and professional human resources.

The objectives of the Fourth Five Year Plan (1990-95) had been to progressively incorporate appropriate population variables into the sectoral policies and plans, particularly in education, including medical education, rural development, social welfare, women's affairs, labour welfare and agriculture. However, as the incorporation of population variables into the projects of different ministries has been found not fruitful and effective, the Fourth Five-Year Plan intensified further the multi-sectoral programme approach to incorporate them and undertook inter-sectoral population projects through identification of potential roles of different ministries/divisions in family planning (Fourth Five Year Plan 1990-95, Planning Commission P-XV11). The inter-sectoral approach subsequently could not be implemented due to lack of foreign assistance and initiatives of different ministries.

The Fifth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) had a programme on population and development linkages for reduction of population growth through women's participation in development activities, wider opportunities of employment for youth, and promotion of female education and vocational training. This programme was not new however, but further strengthening and continuation of the earlier multi-sectoral population activities under the Bangladesh Rural Development Board (BRDB) and Social Welfare Directorate and Women's Affairs Department. During this plan period, a sector wide programme known as HPSP (Health and Population Sector Programme) was launched (in July 1998), under which the reproductive health programmes enjoyed the maximum focus with population taking the back seat.

The first Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper of the country, popularly known as the First PRSP (2004-07), which replaced the earlier five years plans, dealt mainly with health, reproductive health and gender in the health sector. The document did not envisage anything on population. As a result, the demographic factors like population size, growth, birth rate, death rate, population momentum, family planning, etc. could not occupy much space in the document; except in the policy matrix in the appendix, the document did not envisage and emphasise appropriately the sectoral thrust of reducing fertility and mortality. The document mentioned nothing about the population and development interactions, nor did it highlight the population momentum, the country's current population challenges and their possible implications on development. The reproductive health and gender issues are, however, highlighted significantly in the document (GED 2004).

With regard to population, the Second PRS (2008-11) made a significant departure by discussing the implications of population growth in a great detail and

the document revised both short and long-term demographic goals. For example, the target of achieving two-children families or $NRR=1$ (i.e. TFR 2.1) was shifted to 2015 from 2010 and similar shift of target date was done for achieving the desired level of contraceptive prevalence rate. Thus, a link between achieving health-related MDGs like IMR, MMR and under-five mortality and the fertility is established. The document, however, did not emphasise the population and development interactions.

Women

The approach of the *First Five-Year Plan* (1973-78) towards women was welfare-oriented with a focus on rehabilitating war-affected women and children. Their productive role was not emphasised that much. The Two-Year Plan (1978-80) was characterised by a move from welfare to development-oriented efforts.

The major objective of the *Second Five-Year Plan* (1980-85) relating to women was to create an atmosphere to facilitate women's participation in development activities through expansion of opportunities for training, skill development, credit and entrepreneurship development.

The *Third Five Year Plan* (1985-90) built upon the previous plan activities but aimed at achieving overall integration of women into the development process and outlined specific objectives to reduce imbalances in the development between men and women. The Plan made more elaborate programmes on women's development and for women's participation in the mainstream socio-economic activities. In the Third Five Year Plan, a rural-oriented health service delivery for women was proposed in which maternal and child health care, family planning, nutrition, immunisation services, family health education and environmental sanitation were the major components. In the Plan documents the government also proposed to take steps to accelerate and expand the educational facilities for women. For employment, the objective was to achieve the equal opportunity for women workers and integrate them with the labour force (Planning Commission, GoB 1985).

The *Fourth Five-Year Plan* (1990-95) placed women within the macro framework with multi-sectoral thrust focusing on gender dimensions of poverty and mentioned gender mainstreaming as a strategic objective to reduce gender disparities. The different ministries also incorporated women's concerns and emphasised women's issues in the sectoral plan. The Fourth Five Year Plan emphasised the development of poor and disadvantaged women; it gave special attention to the increase of income generation activities for women, their need to access institutional credit for economic activities and building up organisations for them to participate in the bottom-up planning (Planning Commission, GoB 1991). It was not possible, however, to achieve any tangible progress in these regards during the Plan period due to lack of comprehensive integration of women's concerns into development planning and also due to inadequate coordination and monitoring of integration of these issues under different sector ministries (Planning Commission, GoB 1998).

As a follow-up to the Fourth Five-Year Plan, the *Fifth Five-Year Plan* (1997-2002) in its macro chapter endorsed mainstreaming as a strategy for women's development. The Plan recognised the role of all sectors in mainstreaming women's development and emphasised the policy and advocacy role of MoWCA. It also emphasised promotion and protection of women's human rights through implementation of CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women). The macro and micro chapters on women's development of the Plan stressed the importance of implementing the National Policy on Women and NAP for achieving women's advancement (Planning Commission, GoB 1998).

The following are the broad objectives of women's development, as mentioned in the Micro Chapter on women's development of the Fifth Five-Year-Plan:

- (i) Undertake necessary steps to implement CEDAW;
- (ii) Promote all sorts of rights for women—human, socio-economic, legal and political;
- (iii) Reduce the increasing burden of poverty on women;
- (iv) Increase women's participation/representation in every stage of development;
- (v) Promote capacity development;
- (vi) Strengthen institutional development to increase women's development accountability;
- (vii) Change negative cultural values against women;
- (viii) Eliminate violence against women and girl children.

The strategic concerns envisaged in the Fifth Five Year Plan include poverty reduction, public expenditure, public employment, education, health, legal protection, security, institutional and infrastructural capacity building, support services for women's employment, research development and gender segregated database. No clear mechanism was laid down, however, to achieve those goals, nor were there any set targets and funding for implementing these concerns into the reality. The chapter on poverty reduction had identified poor and disadvantaged women and female headed households as one of the focus groups in the objectives but no specific targets or strategies were set to target these women for poverty reduction. Insufficient coverage was given to the problems of urban poor, particularly urban poor women, who like their rural counterparts are susceptible to marital instability, physical violence, natural calamities, and environmental hazards.

The *first PRS* in its relevant chapters envisaged elimination of gender disparity through adoption of multi-sectoral approach and addressed women's advancement and their rights within the sectoral context. The document sought to address a considerable number of gender-related concerns in different sections such as crop, agriculture, rural non-farm activities, infrastructure, energy, ICT, education, health,

environment, etc. (for details see Annexure 1) but only some of these sectors/sub-sectors could mainstream the women's concerns effectively and there are a range of key commitments which are yet to be realised. For example, women's participation in the labour market is still low, maternal health remains a key concern, malnutrition affects many women and women and girls are still at risk of serious violence (World Bank 2008).

The Second PRS followed the same approach for gender mainstreaming; the different sectoral thrust on gender issues was reflected in the text as well as in the policy matrix of the document (GED 2008).

3.1.3 Sectoral Policies

The *National Health Policy* as adopted by the Ministry of Health in 2004 envisaged creation of awareness among people about health, particularly through the media so that every citizen of the country irrespective of caste, creed, religion, income, gender, age and geographical location, can avail health, nutrition and reproductive health services as a constitutional right of them. The health policy clearly mentioned various health related objectives including reproductive health and gender issues. But with regard to population issues, the policy document only mentions that the country will achieve NRR=1 by the year 2005 although by then it became clear that such a target is unachievable.

The health policy although envisaged arranging the supply of birth control methods through integration, expansion and strengthening of the family planning activities within the sector, eventually this did not prove much successful; at grass-roots level, service delivery for both health and family planning was hampered. The Health Policy did not touch upon issues of integration of population, reproductive health and gender with other development sectors of the economy and had not properly defined the responsibility of other sectors for health, reproductive health and gender dimensions of health.

The MoHFW has developed a *Gender Equity Strategy (GES) in 2001* to provide overall strategic direction to the gender mainstreaming in HNPS (Health, Nutrition, Population Sector Programme). All agencies under the MoHFW are obliged to comply with this Strategy; it became mandatory for its 38 Line Directorates to design their respective annual Operation Plans (OP) in line with it for ensuring gender balance in all areas and in all respects (e.g. services, training, and employment). There were endeavours to ensure gender balance with respect to admission, provision for services, training and employment, although there is still a long way to go to achieve the objectives fully.

The Education Policy adopted by the Ministry of Education in 2000 aims to eliminate gender biases from education irrespective of race, caste and creed. The policy states that the women are a part of the deprived segment of the population and envisages to making the women free from domestic discrimination, repression and social superstition. The Policy also envisaged that given the women's contribution

during the country's Liberation War (1971), they deserve to be given a fair share in political and social rights for making them self-reliant. The Policy gave emphasis on devising a suitable policy package for women's overall development, including education and major strategies for this include creation of a special fund for female students, provision of non-formal education for them, higher professional and technical education for them, provision for transport and scholarship facilities for girl students at the secondary level, etc.

Although the country's overall policy for education is gender sensitive, the curricula of primary and secondary education are not so fully; reproductive health and reproductive rights issues of women are not adequately focused in the school curricula. This is indeed a general picture with all education curricula in the country. *The National Plan of Action II of 2003-15* (Fourth Draft) has mentioned very little about the reproductive health, although its activities like separate toilet facilities for girls at school is a reproductive health issue. This *Action Plan* has integrated gender inequality and reduction of disparity in education management by 2015 in line with the *Dakar Framework for Action (DFA)* for ensuring the access/enrollment and retention of girls in the school, emphasised improvement in "law and order" situation for giving a sense of security to the parents/guardians who send their girls to the school and to female teachers who serve in the schools away from home.

The *National Plan of Action II* mentioned nothing directly on population, although it is argued that the education, influencing marriage, fertility, mortality and population growth, takes sufficient care of population issues indirectly (DSHE).

A new education policy was adopted by the Government in 2010. The fundamental aim of the policy has been to create opportunities and ensure rights of education for all in the country. It also aims to offer technology based modern education to all so that the people can develop themselves as skilled manpower through which they can contribute in building a prosperous Bangladesh. Its major goal is to create a discrimination free society for all across religion, sex, race, caste, etc. and remove sex variation in opportunities for education. It has put special emphasis on quality of education and ensuring education opportunity for children of disadvantaged sections. The policy has duly recognised the fact that half of the country's population is women and they are backward in education and emphasised education as a means to uplift their condition. It has duly also emphasised the productive role of women and the need for their effective contribution to the society for achieving desired development goals.

The strategizing that have been outlined in the policy to encourage women's education in the country are: special allocation in the budget for women's education, adopt measures to reduce girls' drop out from the school; arrange part time, vocational and non-formal education and technical education for them; increase facilities to encourage them for institutional education, and include positive image of girls/women and the issue of equal rights of women with men in the curricula of primary education so that the social attitude towards women get changed. It also suggested inclusion of life story of more women in the secondary school curricula and proposed to introduce gender studies and reproductive health

subject in the last two year of the secondary education. Also, the education policy emphasised equal freedom for both boys and girls in choosing subject, placed importance on professional and technical education of women, emphasises the need for special stipend and education loan for poor girls for higher education, inclusion of the women in policy formulation activities at different levels of education, and emphasizes strict implementation of rules and regulations to prevent sexual harassment of girls at the educational institutions.

The Bangladesh Labour Act of 2006 includes provisions of prohibiting child labour defined by setting a cut-off age at 14 years. This is a big jump relating to population concerns; the prohibition of child employment and employment of adolescents in certain work creates a new era in population aspects. With regard to child labour, the Bangladesh Labour Act, however, has some inconsistencies. Article 34 of the Labour Law 2006 prohibits employment of the children and juveniles in any type of work if the person is not certified to be capable enough to work by a registered doctor. A sub-article 34(3) allows juvenile employment as interns. At the same time, Article 44 disdaining all previous articles from 34 to 43 allows employment of children up to age 12 years in such works which does not hamper mental and physical growth of them. The Labour Act has nothing specific on population indicators such as fertility, child mortality, etc.

As envisaged in the Labour Act, in the case of wages or fixing a minimum wage rate, ‘the principle of equal wage for male and female shall be followed’ and no discrimination should be made in this regard on the ground of sex. Also, employment of women workers is prohibited during the eight weeks immediately following the day of delivery. If a woman dies at the time of her delivery or during 8 weeks after delivery, the employer shall have to pay the amount of maternity benefits due to her, to the concerned legal representative as determined by the law. The Bangladesh Labour Law of 2006 ensured therefore the maternity benefits to the women and established reproductive health rights of women. Employment of women during certain period is also prohibited; as envisaged in the Act, “no employer shall employ a women knowingly during eight weeks immediately after the child delivery.”

The National Agriculture Policy of 1999 consists of three policies, namely (1) National Agricultural Policy (NAP), (2) National Seed Policy, and (3) National Integrated Pest Management Policy (NIPMP). The agricultural policy maintained that in the socio-economic context of Bangladesh women’s involvement in agriculture is very important; it would be easier to control ‘rural to urban’ migration through this. However, the measures suggested in the policy documents to enhance women’s role in the agricultural activities are as follows:

- Agriculture related activities like post-harvest operations, seed preservation, nursery business, jute stripping, vegetable cultivation, homestead gardening, floriculture, production of horticulture seeds, establishment and management of cottage industries based on locally produced agricultural commodities, etc. are suitable for women. For women, extensive training programmes in these areas and resource support for them are proposed in the policy document to

encourage women's interest and improve their skills in such activities. Separate extension programmes are proposed to organise women in the light of *New Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP)*; it proposes to undertake appropriate research studies to identify constraints for participation in agricultural activities by the women and devise measures to remove these constraints.

Although little is said directly in this policy on gender and reproductive health, the main points of the policy relate very much to gender, health and nutrition. For example, increases in production and supplies of more and nutritious food crops are able to take care of the food security and nutritional status of the population and women. Also, this policy through the promotion of community based activities and formation of farmer groups has taken of the economic empowerment of women.

The *draft National Agricultural Policy of 2007* has given proper emphasis on women's involvement in agriculture and the reduction of rural to urban migration. As envisaged in the policy, control of rural to urban migration would be easier if more people can be engaged in agricultural activities. This policy is concerned with the economic well-being of rural women and their access to micro-credit, support for small-scale agro processing, storage and preservation to ensure gender equality. The policy further envisaged elimination of wage discrimination between males and females, an exclusive block allocation for undertaking women related activities/programmes and to provide them necessary support for capacity building in promoting household food and nutrition security. The fund is also conceived to provide adequate support to women for participation in agricultural production and in the agricultural business activities.

This policy does not directly incorporate any aspects of the reproductive health, although an issue like nutrition addressed by it is a part of reproductive health.

The National Food Policy 2006; the corporate plan of the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management of 2005-09 developed a *Food Policy* in the light of Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and in the context of broader definition of food. The National Food Policy aims to ensure adequate and stable supply of safe and nutritious food, enhance purchasing power of the people for increased accessibility to food and ensure adequate nutrition for all (especially women and children). The policy strategically depends on agricultural extension services, inputs, credit, production of non-cereal crops, non-crop agriculture etc. for efficient and sustainable increase in food production. It also emphasised collaboration among key government agencies, NGOs, UN agencies and programmes, civil society and private businesses on food security, food supply, food distribution and on food accessibility issues. The food policy, therefore, aims at improving the nutrition status of women and children and takes care of food insecurity through its concern for basic food production, increase of population and decrease of cultivable land.

The National Industrial Policy (NIP) of 2005 includes in it the aspects of reproductive health such as maternity benefits for women workers. The Policy also

took care to control environmental hazards as a dangerous element to health. At the same time, declaration of pharmaceuticals and herbal medicine as thrust sectors is likely to partially cover the reproductive health issues.

However, this policy has little mention about the population variables, even though it is gender-focused; it gave special emphasis to identify women entrepreneurs who are capable of running independent and self-sufficient industries and businesses so that they can be given technical, financial and training assistance to establish SMEs. Also, as envisaged in the Policy, women entrepreneurs are to be given encouragement on a greater scale in setting up and running agro-based industries and establishing cottage industries of decorative items.

The participation of women entrepreneurs in policy-making in the field of industrial development is also emphasised in the policy. It envisaged establishment of a separate bank under public or private initiative to allow women easy access to industrial credit, equity capital or working capital. Also, as envisaged in the Policy, deserving women entrepreneurs shall be considered for collateral free loan from this bank. The *Industrial Policy* did not pay any consideration to growth of the city and growth of the urban population, particularly the slum population that industrialisation may cause and which may have numerous negative impacts on the population and gender well being.

The *National Housing Policy of 1993* has given emphasis on the housing needs of women in difficult circumstances and has given priority to the specific needs of women in difficult circumstances. It envisaged joint or exclusive title to land and houses for women, women's access to credit, home-based employment, maternal and child welfare, hostels for working women, provision for shelter and services, access to education and income-generating opportunities, etc. The Policy also gave priority to the housing needs of the older people and access to shelter by shelter less, inadequately-housed and disadvantaged groups such as widows, single women, women-headed households living in poverty and the handicapped. Moreover, Policy considered massive rural to urban migration and the consequent growth of slums and squatters in the urban areas; keeping this in view, the Policy has taken provisions for the planned growth of urbanisation.

The *National Youth Policy of 2001* includes provisions for education, training and health services for both female and male youths and emphasises creation of an environment that makes them free from HIV/AIDS. The Policy has integrated family planning activities, and decision-making rights of women regarding reproductive health and creation of an environment to make them free from HIV/AIDS. The policy discourages urban migration from rural areas, but does not include the projection of youth population (15-30) by age and sex, which is necessary for formulation of future plan to transform youth force into dynamic and sustainable human resources.

The *National Rural Development Policy (NRDP) 2000* has integrated women's empowerment, women's rights relating to dowry, marriage and divorce, inheritance,

women's entrepreneurship development, violence against women, etc. The NRDP has only discussed reproductive rights, but made little mention about reproductive health issues such as fertility control, maternal and child health, prevention of unwanted pregnancies, adolescent health, etc. NRDP, however, has included the population control, birth registration and rural migration, although it failed to incorporate any provisions for reduction of infant and child mortality, maternal mortality, etc. The NRDP is, therefore, more a gender-responsive document than a reproductive health/population responsive one.

Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in 2005 has developed the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) after extensive consultations with the communities, professional groups, and members of the civil society. Since then, they have taken this process forward through the adoption of the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP), which serves as the main basis of efforts to combat climate change over the next ten years. This document is prepared also after extensive consultations with all important sections of citizens, including disadvantaged groups, such as those identified in Agenda 21.

The BCCSAP is designed as a "living document." Therefore, anticipates periodical revision, as required. Responsibility for implementing various components of it lies with line ministries and agencies which will work in partnership with each other and with civil society and the business community. The Ministry of Environment and Forest will be responsible for coordinating activities under the Action Plan and intends to establish a Climate Change Secretariat to facilitate this work. The ministry will report to the Steering Committee on Climate Change (chaired by the Minister of Environment and Forests) and to the National Environment Committee (chaired by the Honourable Chief Adviser or Prime Minister).

In understanding the impacts of climate change, the Government focused mainly on food security, infrastructure, population and gender. Changes in the climate are likely to affect seriously the agriculture (crops, livestock and fisheries) and this sector while accounts for only 20 per cent of the GDP, over 60 per cent of the people depend on it for livelihood directly or indirectly. The higher temperatures and changing rainfall patterns, coupled with increased flooding, rising salinity in the coastal belt and droughts, are likely to reduce crop yields and crop production. IPCC estimates that, by 2050, rice production in Bangladesh could decline by 8 per cent and wheat by 32 per cent (against a base year of 1990). Shortage of safe drinking water is likely to become more pronounced, especially in the coastal belt and in drought-prone areas in the north-west of the country. This will impose hardship on women and children, who are responsible for collecting the drinking water for families. Increasingly, the saline drinking water may also result in health hazards, especially for pregnant women. Climate change is likely to affect adversely women more than the men. Increased river bank erosion and saline water intrusion in coastal areas are likely to displace hundreds of thousands of people who will be forced to

migrate, often to slums in Dhaka and other big cities. If sea level rise is higher than currently expected and coastal polders are not strengthened and/or new ones built, six to eight million people could be displaced by 2050 and would have to be resettled.

The *Climate Change Action Plan* is a 10-year programme (2009-2018) to build the capacity and resilience of the country to meet challenges of climate change. The needs of the poor and vulnerable, including women and children, will be mainstreamed in all activities under the *Action Plan*. Population, migration, resettlement of women and children are concerns in climate change action plan. In the *Action Plan* the government gives emphasis on implementing surveillance systems for existing and new disease risks and encourages the health systems to gear up to meet the future demands. But it says little or nothing about the reproductive health.

3.2 Sectoral Activities

Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)

With regard to population issues, the MoA introduces population education in all its training institutes/programmes and undertook programmes to motivate the farm population about small family norm through extension workers (Fifth Five Years Plan 1997-2002, page-481.) During the Second Five Year Plan (1980-85) the MoM implemented projects assisted by the World Bank and UNFPA to integrate population contents with the curriculum of Agricultural Education and in Agriculture Extension Training Institutes in order to raise awareness among trainees.

With regard to the gender, the ministry holds the responsibility to facilitate mainstreaming of women in agricultural activities through creation of sustainable and comprehensive intuitions and programmes addressing their needs and interests. The ministry is also supposed to provide training to the officials and staffs of the directorates and institutes on gender issues and undertake advocacy programme to sensitize people for improving women's role and participation in agriculture. The Ministry undertakes appropriate research/studies to identify the constraints for participation of women in agricultural activities and devise measures to remove the constraints if any is found. Recently the ministry has increased studies and researches to develop appropriate technology to improve agriculture productivity of women in agriculture.

Ministry of Primary and Mass Education

The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) introduces population education in the formal curriculum of class four and five and update the curricula time to time. The policy makers and planners of MoPME use school population projections by age, gender (man and women) and rural and urban residence for recruitment of new teacher and creation of new facilities for male and female student's population.

MoPME incorporates gender equality measures in Education Policy for developing programmes that are comprehensive, need based and instrumental to address the female students need in primary school. The ministry works to increase the enrollment of girl and reduce their dropout rate in the primary level. For this reason the ministry undertook compulsory primary education, food for education, stipend programme, social mobilisation programme to encourage guardians to send their girl child to the school. To encourage more women to join primary school as teacher the ministry has taken steps to establish women's hostel at the primary training institutes.

Ministry of Education (MoE)

MoE introduces population education in the curriculum of eleven and twelve grades and updates the same time to time. It supports the universities to introduce population/demographic training for relevant persons who work on population. It also undertook projects to promote population as well as female education in the country. It is now implementing a project called "Life Skill Based Reproductive Health Education for In-school Youths and Adolescents" through peer approach to provide sexual and reproductive health (ASRH) information and services to them and to protect them especially against consequences of early marriage and pregnancy, STI and HIV/AIDS.

The MoE incorporates the gender equality measures in Education Policy to develop programmes that are comprehensive, need based and instrumental to address the female students' need. The ministry has taken steps to provide stipend to and exempt tuition fees for the girls in rural areas for reducing gender gap in secondary school enrollment. It has taken a strategy to appoint more female teacher in the high schools with a view to facilitate girls' participation in the secondary education and is taking care of girls' problem in the school more carefully. The ministry provides residential accommodation for female secondary school teachers to enable them to work in a congenial atmosphere without worrying about dislocation. It also provides hostel facilities to girls in the secondary school to enable girls who live in far off places from the school to pursue education at secondary level. The MoF and NCTB include gender issues in the school curricula so that boys and girls become aware of sharing the responsibilities in the household and other arena. Similarly the ministry organises training programmes for teachers with a gender-specific focus.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)

MoHFW is the lead agency responsible for implementing health care programme including reproductive health, family planning and maternal and child health care programme through its existing service outlets. It is also responsible for policy formulation and coordination of the population activities undertaken by different sector ministries. It has established the "National Population Council" to monitor the progress of implementation of the policy decisions adopted by the ministry and act as a guardian to all population related coordination committees from national to grass root level. It also arranges training for all functionaries involved in population

activities. The ministry is implementing, through NIPORT, a project entitled “Support for Policy Planning, Program Implementation and Research for Population and Development” to improve the understanding of planners about demographic trends, including the determinants of fertility and to link between reproductive health and poverty through the analysis and utilisation of data disaggregated by age, sex, economic status and locations.

MoHFW ensures women’s accessibility to health care throughout their lifecycle and provides self regulating mechanism to safeguard human rights especially of women rights in the area of health and family planning services. The ministry recognises the importance of enhancing the women’s access to quality health care and improved health for women and recognises the need to involve men in promoting the reproductive health of women. It has introduced a strategic framework for male involvement in the reproductive health and emphasised the need for addressing the feminisation of the HIV epidemic; it tries to ensure that HIV-infected women receive proper assistance and treatment and tries to prevent the mother-to-child transmission. It also conducts awareness raising campaigns, especially among sex workers and drug addicts, with regard to HIV/AIDS infections. The ministry attempts to make health services more women friendly and make doctors more sensitive and responsive toward female patients in the absence of female doctors, and to ensure women’s security and confidentiality along with safe and effective service delivery. The ministry provides healthcare services to ageing women and women and girls with disabilities.

Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA)

MoHA undertakes programme to provide motivational services relating to maternal and child health and family planning services to the Police and Ansars. The ministry at present, is implementing a project “the Capacity Development of Law Enforcing Agencies” in order to impart them knowledge on reproductive health, reproductive right and gender issues. It is also developing a comprehensive framework in creating awareness about reproductive health services among members of the law enforcing agencies and provide them an access to the reproductive rights for reducing gender inequality, preventing HIV/AIDS, etc. Through another project the MoHA is providing these services to the members of law enforcing agencies through its health care facilities.

MoHA is structurally capable of addressing most of the Beijing PFA strategies and undertake the actions relating to human rights with special reference to violence against women. So the basic responsibility of this ministry is to provide a framework for legislation and action to combat all forms of violation against women. The ministry creates awareness among its personnel about the ministry’s responsibility in furthering the advancement of women. Recently the ministry has taken steps to increase appointment of women in decision making and management level and has set up women investigation cell in police stations which receive complaints from the women, carry out investigations for them and file charges. Bangladesh Police has

established a Victims Support Centre at Tejgaon Police Station where the women police officers in partnership with NGOs provide round the clock support service to women victims and develop thereby commitments among police to uphold and promote gender equality as human rights. The ministry has taken steps to introduce gender sensitive community policing to sensitise the community leaders to act as pressure group and be vigilant about the law and order situation regarding violation of women and children's rights.

Ministry of Industries (MoI)

MoI encourages private sector to invest in production of FP/MCH commodities and equipment. The Board of Investment (BoI) and the MoHFW are to explore the prospect of foreign investment for establishment of condom, pill and IUD manufacturing plants in Bangladesh (according to the Fifth Five Year Plan 1997-2002, p.480). Industrial development planners recognise that industrialisation involves urbanisation i.e. increase in the urban population density, creation of urban slums, and increase in the necessity of clinic based reproductive health, FP and MCH services in urban area. The planning for industrialisation, thus, requires concomitant planning for urban population and urban way of life.

MoI has incorporated women's needs, concerns and priorities in the Industrial Policy. MoI is providing training on "Business Management and Entrepreneurship" to the rural potential women entrepreneurs for mainstreaming women in the industrial sector. BSCIC's project "Women Entrepreneurship Development (WEDP)" is providing training on entrepreneurship development for self-employment of potential women. The Project "Self-Employment of Rural Destitute Women through Cottage Industries" (SERWTIC) is successful in promoting women entrepreneurship. The ministry has established an institution called "Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Foundation" to address SME problems. A special section has been created under this Foundation to address women's issues and develop necessary policy guidelines for improving efficiency of the women in entrepreneurial role.

MoI reserved 10 per cent credit facilities for women entrepreneurs to encourage them for business and 10 per cent industrial plots are being reserved for women entrepreneurs in various industrial parks to ensure more participation of them. Representatives of women entrepreneurs associations are sent abroad to participate in training, seminars and workshops in order to enhance their capabilities.

Ministry of Information (MoI)

MoI informs the people through different media such as television, radio and print media on population, family planning, maternal and child health by using appropriate themes and messages and enhance people's motivation in favour of the small family size. It also telecasts/broadcasts other reproductive health related messages such as on STD, HIV/AIDS, etc. The MoI is implementing a project called "Advocacy on Reproductive Health and Gender Issues" through the Department of

Mass Communication to create an environment for promoting reproductive health and health rights and to improve sexual and reproductive health information and services for protecting the youth and adolescents especially against STI and HIV/AIDS. Finally, through appropriate programmes in different media, the ministry tries to enhance the women's empowerment so that they can take decision about their reproductive health and rights.

The ministry, however, has no holistic broadcasting and communication policies with regard to women and men's differential access to and participation in the media. The ministry, however, has recognised the importance of media, including radio, television and newspapers, in promoting women's interests and gender equality and discouraging the practices that discriminate against women, and thus, harmful to them. The ministry undertakes the advocacy and awareness raising activities through the media to change the attitudes and behaviours of all segments of population and create an environment to advance in all areas of lives by the women. It has taken steps to uphold the positive image of women in print and electronic media and has sensitised the media to project the image of women in terms of empowerment and to avoid stereotyping role of women. The ministry ensures women's participation in media to bring changes in the preparation of messages about gender equality and women's human right issues in every sphere of life. It also incorporates gender sensitive training curricula in the training programmes of PiB and NimCO. The print media often publicise PFA, CEDAW and CRC to increase the public awareness.

Ministry of Labour and Manpower (MoLM)

MoLM introduces the reproductive health care at labour welfare centers, tea garden clinics, and other service outlets and the population of industrial areas is the special target group for such services. The ministry was supposed to develop a surveillance system of returnee migrants to detect HIV/AIDS incidence. It is implementing a project called "Promotion of Reproductive Health, Reproductive Rights, Gender Equality and Prevention of HIV/AIDS in the Tea Estate Communities" in order to facilitate a behaviour change in the community through creating a gender friendly environment. MoLM also implements another project "Promotion of Reproductive Health, Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the Garment Sector" to strengthen the 'workers' welfare cell' of the BGMEA and to provide workers the reproductive health services and create awareness among them about reproductive health, reproductive rights and use of contraceptive devices to prevent STD/AIDS.

The Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) of the ministry provides skill training to rural poor women of eight upazilas of four regions. The ministry under its Department of Labour has established five Women Technical Training Centre (TTC) at the divisional head quarters of Rajshahi, Khulna, Chittagong, Sylhet and Barisal to provide vocational and skill development training to women.

The ministry has made a provision to increase maternity benefits to 4 months from 3 months, with full pay for women workers both at public and private levels. It is the ministry's responsibility to ensure enforcement of equal pay for women worker for equal work, ensure inflation adjusted wage, safe and secure working environment for women and establish more childcare facilities, separate toilet, better transport, and accommodation for the working women/mother. The ministry takes initiatives for women to have access to and to enter into the overseas employment and the provide livelihood counseling, reemployment assistance and to raise awareness of garment workers to reduce unemployment risks on any retrenchment condition. It provides skill development training and orientation on foreign language to make female garment workers capable of working in foreign job market.

Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJPA)

MoLJPA has recognised the need for legal empowerment of women, which is a prerequisite to achieve women's advancement and gender equality. It has enacted a good number of laws to ensure gender equality in both public and private life. The ministry provides legal aid assistance to women and families that are victim of violence and gender discrimination. Besides, the ministry appoints women to the lower court, to the high court, in the police department and has set up mechanisms to sensitise the judiciary about the state's obligations to gender equality and women's rights. There is an amendment of the Bangladesh Citizenship Act of 1951, and the Bangladesh Citizenship (Temporary Provisions) Order, 1972 to allow women the right to transmit their citizenship to their children. The ministry has taken initiatives to introduce and enforce eve-teasing and sexual harassment laws or codes of conduct and implement the existing laws to punish criminals in the case of violence against women.

Local Government Division (LGD)

LGD introduced population education in the curricula of local government institutes. It develops programmes involving Union Parishads and local elites to orient them in population and development related activities. Reproductive health and rights, FP and MCH are made important element of the functional literacy and adult education at local training programme. The women working for the maintenance of rural roads under the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) are motivated to accept family planning for birth prevention. The Union Parishads are given the responsibility for supervising the family planning and health workers. LGD has been implementing the "Urban Primary Health Care Programme -II" to improve the health status of the urban population, especially the poor, through improved access to primary health care, reproductive health, and family planning and MCH services.

LGD assures that Local Government Act integrates/incorporates women's needs and priorities at all levels of local bodies. All city corporations have kept one third seats of the Commissioners for directly electing the women commissioners in reserved seats. The Upazila Parishad too has a provision for a woman vice-chairman

to be elected directly from women. Similarly, there is a provision for the direct election in one-third reserved seats for women in Union Parishad. This created political awareness and consciousness among women at local level.

The LGD has taken steps to include women members in different standing committees, project implementation committees, thana development coordination committees, and social welfare committees. At ward level committees, the female ward member from that ward is assign the chairmanship to create an enabling environment so that the woman member can play a proactive role in decision-making process. LGD undertakes training on gender sensitisation of the male colleagues of the women members as well as the government officials and undertakes awareness raising prorammes for the local elite to ensure support for women member in their regular activities of local bodies. Gender training has become an integral part of the regular training programme of NiLG and other relevant training institutes.

Rural Development and Cooperative Division (RDCD)

RDCD has included population control, birth registration and rural migration in its National Rural Development Policy, 2000. It has implemented women cooperative project through which women were organised for skill development training, were given micro credit to them, and were educated about FP/MCH and reproductive health. It introduced population education in the curricula of all training institutes like BRDB, BARD and RDA.

RDCD integrates/incorporates women's needs and priorities in the National Rural Development Policy. It included adequate representation of women in decision making bodies of BRDB, BARD and RDA. BARD undertakes a good number of rural poor programmes in which majority beneficiaries are women and provides them micro credit to empower them and improve their socio-economic conditions. BARD, RDA and other training institutes under RDCD introduce gender sensitive training in regular training curricula of management and professional staff. They organise management and leadership programme to develop and strengthen the leadership capacity of women leader at all levels. They also create awareness among the beneficiaries on human rights, dowry, violence against women, trafficking, etc. in weekly village meetings at grassroot organisations.

Ministry of Social Welfare (MoSW)

MoSW implements Rural Mothers Club and gives specific focus to provide skill development training, micro-credit, FP/MCH and reproductive health education to the members of the club. The ministry strengthens the Club by enlisting more and more members from the village communities and enables them to avail these service/facilities.

MoSW has country wide institution and porgrammes that are sustainable and integrated especially the women and girl's needs and interest. The ministry runs the Mother Club under the umbrella of Rural Social Service Programme and provides women micro-credit and skill development training. The ministry through of

Department of Social Services is taking care of gender balance while rehabilitating the orphans, destitute children, children with disabilities in the orphanages. It has established six “Shanti Nibash,” i.e. free shelter home, one in each of the six divisional headquarters for providing lifelong health care services, food and shelter to the aged and distressed men and women. Besides, the ministry is distributing widow allowances among the widowed, deserted and destitute women and providing old age allowances among poor men and women in equal numbers.

Ministry of Planning and Planning Commission

The Ministry of planning is responsible for population policy planning, integration of population variables with the relevant sectoral policies and planning strategies and programme and coordinating the resource allocation to various projects and programme of different sector ministries. It is also responsible for assessing the programme impacts through evaluative studies. BBS under the ministry undertakes decennial population census and demographic studies. The Commission is now implementing a project for integrating population and gender concerns into the national and sectoral planning. BBS is also implementing a project on strengthening capacity of BBS in data collection and analysis using GIS maps to improve census coverage and enhance the utility of census data in planning and maintaining a database of geographic boundaries in digitised form.

The Ministry of Planning has established a WID Focal point in GeD of the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission has also established WID Focal Mechanism in the Sector divisions as well to integrate the gender issues into the sectoral plans and projects. The fourth and fifth five year plans have included a chapter on “Women Development” and sectoral chapter included a statement on women’s issues. Similarly, the First and Second PRS were structured in this way. The Planning Commission has revised DPP and TPP and made provisions to include women concerns so that they are benefited from the project. BBS collects gender disaggregated data to allow policy makers and planners to assess the women’s situation in a particular sector and adopts the gender sensitive policies accordingly.

CHAPTER 4

INTEGRATION OF POPULATION AND WOMEN CONCERNS INTO THE SECTORAL POLICIES/ PROGRAMMES/ACTIVITIES: VIEWS OF THE POLICY-MAKERS ... DEFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS

In this chapter we have documented the major activities of the ... sector ministries for advertise the and presented the views of the Policy-makers, Planners, Field Managers and different Stakeholders the actual integration of population and women concerns into the sectoral programmes/projects/activities. As noted before, views of above mentioned different stakeholders of the sectoral policies/programmes/activities are gathered through personal interviews and consultative workshops conducted at two district headquarters i.e. in Cox's Bazar and Sylhet.

4.1 Views of the Policy-makers and Planners

The representatives from the Population Planning Wing of the Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning, mentioned that the major objectives of the country's latest population policy of 2004 are: to reduce population growth from 1.8 to 1.2 percent and TFR from 2.7 to 2.2 by 2015. The population policy also aims a reduction in MMR from 3.2 to 2.7, IMR from 52 to 37, the under-5 death rate from 65 to 52 and increases the CPR from 58 per cent to 72 per cent by 2011. However, different population issues covered so far by different sector ministries/directorates include population size, population age-sex composition, infant and child health/mortality, fertility, adolescent fertility, age at marriage, rural-urban migration, maternal and neonatal health services, and ageing and elderly population. With regard to gender, the issues covered by them are: gender equality and equity; women empowerment, and violence and discrimination against women. As they reported however, the gender and reproductive health issues are integrated/mainstreamed better in the projects/programmes of different sector ministries while population concerns received insufficient attention.

The representatives from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare noted that the Ministry has Population, Policy, Health Policy, Gender Equity Strategy and the Sector-wide Programmes such as HNPS (2003-11) to ensure better health for the entire population irrespective of sex. In the area of population, the objectives of the Ministry have been to reduce TFR, IMR, and MMR, increase CPR and improve health of the urban and rural population. The representatives from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) however, mentioned that the policy measures taken to address the country's population concerns and gender goals are not enough. They further admitted that they are not fully aware of all the programmes/projects

that the Ministry and the Health Directorate might have undertaken to directly deal with population and gender issues.

The representative from the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) noted that the ministry has a policy document for the development of women called the “National Women Development Policy.” The latest one is formulated in 2008 (another one is formulated in 2011 which is yet to be approved and put in practice). The representatives from MoWCA mentioned that the present policy document is not sufficient to ensure full integration of women’s concerns into the sectoral policies and programmes. At present, the ministry has about 20 programmes/projects to address women’s concerns and of them 10 are major in nature. The women’s issues that the ministry is currently addressing through different projects/programmes are: violence against women, inequality between men and women, trafficking of women, poverty and unemployment among women, shelter for shelter less women and food insecurity of them. Of these issues, as they mentioned, the Ministry/Directorate could address better the issue of women’s poverty, they find very difficult to address the issues of ‘violence against women’ and “trafficking of them.”

With regard to gender discrimination disfavours women, the representative from the Directorate of Women Affairs mentioned that the country’s women are discriminated against for property right, right to divorce, citizenship right, etc. In order to reduce such discriminations, MoWCA has undertaken various activities/programmes/projects to create awareness among people including women, to provide them legal support in case of necessity, to promote skill development for economic activities and entrepreneurship development, to empower them economically through micro-credit, allowances, etc. The ministry also tries to address persistent discrimination against women in the formulation of different policies and programmes in the ministry. The ministry also maintains elaborate institutional mechanisms down to local level, to implement various women related projects/programmes and takes help of two sister organizations namely, the National Women’s Organization (Jatiyo Mohila Shangstha) and the National Children’s Academy, in formulation and implementation of policies relating to women and children. In the ministry, there is a Monitoring Cell to monitor the activities of the ministry. The representatives expressed satisfaction about the activities of the Ministry and Directorate in addressing women’s issues but mentioned that to achieve better integration of women’s concerns it is important that the education, equity and human rights of women are emphasised and established, awareness is built in this regard in the society and adequate resources are made available to address women concerns.

The ministry, however, addresses little the population concerns of the country directly; its policies too are not population focused.

According to representative of the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, this ministry in its policies and programmes focuses neither the population

nor the gender. As claimed, addressing population and gender concerns does not fall under the ministry's purview. Yet, the ministry is very much concerned about the persistent 'discrimination against women' in the country and tries to address it through various legal measures. Indeed, the ministry has enacted a good number of laws to ensure gender equality both in private and public life.

The policy-makers from the Education Sector (Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE)) claimed that the country's Education Policy is very much responsive to the gender; it directly contributes to MDG Goal 2 and 3 which indicate respectively achieving universal primary education and elimination of the gender disparity in primary and secondary education. Also, as claimed, policies of this sector are very much sensitive to CEDAW, ICPD and Beijing Platform for Action and the objective number 12 of the Education Policy is specific about the removal of gender biases in education. It fully recognises the need of improving the position of women for ensuring development of the society/country. The policy-makers further mentioned, the Education Policy aims to create awareness and confidence among women, increase an urge among them for equal rights, and inspire and make them capable to participate at all levels of national life.

Although the country's education policy has little direct focus on population, the representative from the Ministry claimed that education influencing marriage age for girls, fertility of the women, population growth, population distribution and similar other concerns takes care of population issues. As reported, the Ministry, with the help of UNFPA Technical Assistance Project, has been trying to raise people's awareness about population, reproductive health, reproductive rights and gender issues and providing life-skill based reproductive health education to adolescent boys and girls. The Ministry is making endeavours to incorporate population, reproductive health, reproductive rights and gender issues into the national curriculum but this is proving a difficult task. The Ministry administers four stipend projects for girls through which schooling among girls has been rising which has been affecting in turn the age at marriage for girls, the fertility of the women and population growth. The ministry has been able to achieve much success in stipend programme for accelerating the progress of girls secondary and higher education and ensuring gender equality in secondary level education. Through this programme, the stipend programmes have also been able to raise the marriage age for girls substantially and reduce the fertility level and population growth.

As mentioned by the sectoral representative, ministry's efforts to incorporate/integrate gender concerns into the sectoral policies and programmes are satisfactory but in the case of population, it is not so, its dealing with population concerns has remained inadequate.

The MOSC&ICT in its policies maintains no definite focus on population and gender, but in its activities, it maintains a gender bias in favour of women; the regular training programmes that it conducts, it keeps 30 percent of the seats reserved for women. Also, in awarding scholarship for training programme, the ministry gives priority to the qualified women candidates over the men.

The representative from the Agricultural Division of the Planning Commission mentioned that the Planning/Agriculture Division as such has no policy of its own; it follows the policies adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture and it acts as a party in the formulation of the agriculture policy by the Ministry. However, as mentioned by the representative, the main focus of the division being the farm population, it actually deals with the well being of the largest section of the country's population. The crop wing of the Agriculture Division has more than 61 development projects, of which 50 are major and they all deal with farming and farm population. The Division has no direct focus on women but, as claimed, large number of women currently being working in agricultural sector, the sectoral activities involve women and deal with their welfare.

The representative from the Ministry of Agriculture noted that the policies of this sector involve population and gender; in the case of formulating agricultural policies the ministry always considers population size, growth and growth potential, and is concerned about rural to urban migration. It is also concerned about ensuring food security to all people, income to all rural population and has an aim to reduce poverty among population.

In order to reduce rural to urban migration, the ministry pursues conscious policy to involve women in the agricultural activities through undertaking different policy measures such as facilitating trade, resources, training, etc. for them. Apart from migration measures, it has gender based policies through which it wants to improve women's participation in all kinds of agricultural activities, distribute '*khas*' land to female members, especially to the widows/separated/deserted women, provide credit and extension training to women, identify the constraints for participation of women in agricultural activities and undertake measures to remove such barriers. It also emphasises equal and proper wage for agricultural labourers including women and access of women to agricultural technology.

The DAE (Directorate of Agricultural Extension) representative mentioned that the activities of the DAE are sufficiently women focused; women are targeted in extension and training programmes and it tries to identify the barriers for women's participation in agricultural activities through research in order to undertake necessary measures to remove them. Also, through various projects, it addresses the issues like income generating activities and entrepreneurship development among women with an aim to empower them. DAE through different projects also tries to address women's poverty, equality of them with men and gives women training and orientation about empowerment through which they can enhance their security both in the family and in the society.

Despite the above mentioned efforts, the DAE finds it difficult to ensure women's equality, to empower them at home and society, to give them equal opportunity to work, and to ensure women a favourable atmosphere to work in agriculture. It is also difficult to ensure equal wage between men and women in this sector.

The DAE representative, however, expressed satisfaction with the Directorate activities in addressing gender concerns but expressed no views about population concerns.

The representatives from the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock (MoFL and the Department of Fisheries (DoF) expressed that the population and gender concerns have no relevance for this sector. However, the representative feel that in the policy document there should be some explicit focus on women as they bear disproportionate burden of the country's poverty. The representative further expressed that there should be policy to involve women in the fishery related activities in order to enable them to earn an income. The sector is contemplating to undertake few projects to develop and encourage entrepreneurial capacity among women so that the poor and deprived women can participate in fisheries activities and experience some positive changes in lives.

In the National Fisheries Policy, as envisaged, the Fisheries Department will undertake programmes to motivate women for fisheries activities and will provide them with necessary training to undertake and manage such activities. It also addresses through different projects the issues like empowerment of women through participation in the project activities so that they become able to take part in the household decision-making process and reduce the poverty. The Department to its credit has some successes; it could bring women out of home and involve them in the fisheries activities. It is mandatory in fisheries training programmes to include at least 30 per cent as women participants and in the formation of group/CBO at least 10 percent of the members should be women. The representative from the Department feels that some actions are necessary to encourage women's participation in this sector, such as create access/or users' rights for women to the water bodies; undertake awareness programme; and facilitate credit for them.

The Ministry of Jute and Textile has no clear policy or policy statement on population and gender. But as the representative mentioned, policies focusing women are necessary and measures need to be taken to engage them i.e. women in handloom, sericulture, and jute diversification programmes.

The Ministry of Mass Communication is a cross cutting sector for integration of population, reproductive health and gender. *Bangladesh Betar*, which is the major means of mass communication, has no formal policy on population and gender although a lot of its programmes are devoted to them. *Bangladesh Betar* has a unit called "Population, Health and Nutrition Cell" which produces programmes on these issues and, as reported, this Cell broadcasts about 475 minutes of programmes daily on population, reproductive health and gender issues through different stations.

The policies of the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Directorate of Social Services (DSS) have gender focus; the "National Social Welfare Policy" formulated by the Social Welfare Ministry follows the principle of giving of highest degree of dignity and social recognition to all individuals irrespective of sex. It gives emphasis on mainstreaming women in the development process, hence, in most of its

projects/programmes such as in credit programme, income generating activities, urban and rural development programmes etc. the women share is emphasised and stressed. Even in various safety-net programmes like Old Age Allowance programme the policy has been to recruit 50 per cent of the beneficiaries from the women. Yet, the representative expressed a feeling that there should be a clear gender policy in the Ministry for ensuring the welfare of vulnerable women or serve their causes.

4.2 Views of the Field Managers and Stakeholders

As gathered during consultative workshop organised at two district headquarters, Cox's Bazaar and Sylhet the local level officials deputed at the district and sub-district levels to implement the development projects/programmes of different sector ministries are aware in general of the country's population and women concerns but compared to the former their level of awareness is greater with regard to the latter viz., about the concerns for women. This observation holds good for different local-level stakeholders too; they too are found more conscious about women's issues than the population concerns of the country/locality. However, views of both groups regarding population and gender concerns are presented below.

Views about Population

According to local level stakeholders, the major local level population concerns are high infant mortality, high maternal mortality, high fertility including adolescent fertility, low contraceptive use, migration from rural areas referring to both rural to urban and rural to overseas migration, and low age at marriage for girls.

As reported during workshop, the District Coordination Committee on Population and Family Planning meets generally once a month, while the Upazila Coordination Committee for this meets very infrequently. The District Committee in its monthly meeting generally discusses the monthly performance of CPR, the reasons of success/failure in achieving the CPR target in the previous month and in the case of under-achievement the meeting decides/suggests on the measures/strategies for bringing improvements in the performance in order to achieve the target for next month. The Coordination Committee on Population also discusses the reproductive health issues and the problems relating to them in the locality, but such discussions mostly remain confined to adolescent fertility.

The district-level officials of different sector ministries further reported that while implementing the development projects/programmes, they frequently try to address almost all the population concerns that are discussed at national level but issues that generally receive special attention at local level are particularly in Sylhet District: the unemployment problem, the inadequate provision/facility for human resource development, poor delivery of health and family planning services, insufficient number of service providers in the health and family planning welfare centres, migration of rural people to urban areas, the slum living in urban areas of the migrated people forcing them to live in a poor and unsatisfactory condition. It is further reported that at local level, through different projects/programmes, the local

level functionaries can address reasonably satisfactorily the population concerns like infant, child and maternal mortality, contraceptive use, adolescent fertility, problems of older people, and problems of the farm and school population.

Gender Concerns

About gender concerns referring to women's issues, the district-level officials and other stakeholders mentioned that at local level, the major women related concerns are: lower level of education and literacy among women and girls, inadequate employment opportunities for them, low age at marriage for girls, non-registration of marriage, practice of dowry and polygamy, discrimination against women at home, high fertility, unfavourable attitude towards women and girls in the name of religion, and increasing use of women as sex worker particularly in places like Cox's Bazar where tourism has been flourishing.

For women, at district level, there is a WID Coordination Committee and this Committee is supposed to coordinate and oversee the activities relating to women. This Committee reportedly holds monthly meetings irregularly and such meetings take place generally alongside other meetings receiving mostly less importance and less attention from the members, hence, turns often into futile exercises; nothing substantive is discussed and resolved. The situation is worse in the case of Upazila WID Coordination Committee; it rarely holds meetings and few district and sub-district level officials are found not much aware of the WID Coordination Committees even. This confirms highly inactive state of the WID Committees at local level i.e. at district level and below.

However, whenever a meeting of the WID Coordination Committee takes place, it generally discusses the progress of the projects that are being implemented locally by the Women's Affairs Department and sometimes makes general reference to the women-related MDGs. The meeting hardly makes any focused discussion on any matters/problems of local level women.

The projects/programmes of different sector ministries that are being implemented at local level currently deal with issues like raising awareness in the community about women's rights and reproductive rights, addressing women's needs for micro-credit, organising skill development training for self-employment of women, helping build leadership capacity among them, ensuring access to health care and making efforts to keep health services available for them at the local health centres, working for women's socio-economic development and conducting courtyard meetings (*Uthan Baithak*) to increase knowledge and understanding about women's rights, their opportunities, alternatives in the society, etc. It is gathered further from the workshop participants that of different women's issues addressed by various sector ministries, the issues that could be addressed better and with relative ease at local level are: acceptance of family planning methods, education of girls, early marriage, micro-credit, skill development and encouraging women for income-earning activities. But issues that are difficult to address are: domestic violence against women and their personal rights relating to marriage, divorce, etc.

It is further gathered from the workshop that at local level, the BRDB generally takes care of women's need for micro-credit to empower them economically, to bring improvement in their socio-economic conditions, to help them in leadership development, etc. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) creates awareness about their health needs and makes endeavour to ensure availability of necessary health care services including delivery care, emergency delivery services, etc. at health centres. The Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MoWCA) creates awareness about discrimination and violence against women, makes women aware of their human rights, their rights to get protection against violation of their human rights, imparts skill development training, and makes women aware of their entitlement in different safety-net programmes like old age allowance, widow allowance, VGD programmes, etc. The Ansar and VDP works for socio-economic upliftment of the Women Battalion of it; it provides them skill development training, trains them on sports and culture, and gives them micro-credit to organise economic activities. They..... also administers activities to raise community level awareness against child marriage, adult education for women, employment of women leading to self-reliance, etc. It also established a bank to facilitate entrepreneurial activities of its women members.

The Islamic Foundation addresses many women's issues such as creating awareness among women about safe maternity, aware them of the needs of proper reproductive health care, importance of women's health, threat of HIV/AIDS and dowry, but runs these awareness campaigns in the light of Islam.

An illuminating observation is that at the district level workshop, when the concept of integration of population and gender was introduced, most of the government officials, particularly those from the health and family planning departments, were unwilling to discuss it and were referring to their experiences of unification of health and family planning programmes in the past which generated intense inter-cadre fights, leaving significant negative effects on the programme development (IMED, 2003 P.XX). This only reflects that the meaning of integration of population and gender concerns into the sectoral activities is not yet much clear to the concerned people particularly to the field level officers who are responsible for implementing sectoral programmes and projects at local level. The officials are found not much aware of the interactions among population, gender and development and neither they are found much aware of the importance of such interaction for ensuring sustainable development in the society.

CHAPTER 5

GAPS, BARRIERS AND CONSTRAINTS TO INTEGRATION OF POPULATION AND GENDER CONCERNS INTO THE SECTORAL POLICIES/PROGRAMMES/ACTIVITIES

The efforts to understand the integration of population and gender concerns into the national and sectoral development policies/programmes/activities using both primary and secondary information, revealed few gaps, barriers and constraints that have been restricting appropriate integration of population and women concerns into the sectoral activities or creating impediments to such integration. The identified gaps and barriers are documented below:

- **Inadequate Policy Guidance:** As of now, several sector ministries have no policy or a policy in adequate or clear terms which can provide necessary guidance to integrate these concerns while formulating the sectoral programmes/projects/activities. Also, as reported, lack of policy or policy direction in this regard generates a lack of interest and motivation on the part of sectors to undertake necessary initiatives to formulate sectoral policies and programmes giving due recognition to population and gender concerns. A Planning Commission official mentioned that even in the Planning Commission, there is no clear policy as to how to address population, reproductive health and gender concerns into the development process or in dealing with development programmes/projects.
- **Lack of Awareness about International Treaties:** As gathered during the workshop, there persists a general lack of awareness about the international treaties, agreements or conventions like CEDAW, ICPD, the Beijing Platform of Action (PFA), etc. that the country has ratified and pledge-bound to honour and implement. Such unawareness persists among policy-makers and planners of the country too; hence, they are little able to appreciate the importance and need of integrating population and gender concerns into the sectoral policies/programmes/activities which is the core message of these treaties/conventions.
- **Inadequate Understanding of the Relationship Among Population, Gender and Development:** It is gathered that the planners and policy-makers of the country are often not much aware of the inevitable interactions between socioeconomic and demographic factors due to inadequate orientation, understanding and knowledge of such interactions. As a result, the planners sometimes cannot ensure filling up the relevant columns in the DPP (Development Project Proforma), which asks for information on the impacts of the development projects on women or population which could serve as a tool to monitor the integration and integration process/progress of

population and gender concerns into the development activities. Such unawareness persists at the implementation level causing inefficient implementation of the sectoral programmes/projects/activities.

- **Dearth of Trained Human Resources:** During workshop many policy-makers noted that there is severe shortage of adequately skilled/trained manpower to deal with integration of population and gender concerns at all levels viz., at the level of policy-making, developing strategies for this, designing the appropriate programmes/projects which would serve this purpose, implementing the projects/programmes at field level, etc. More importantly, as gathered, the government also has no programme to develop skilled manpower in this regard.
- **Inadequate Project Design and Ambiguous Administrative Orders:** As gathered, even if there are adequate policies or policy statements to integrate population and gender concerns into the sectoral activities, sometimes the design of the projects/programmes devoted to realise this objective remains inadequate, inappropriate and poor. Also, as gathered from the workshop, the administrative instructions remain sometimes very ambiguous giving no clear direction for guiding the programme/project activities in this regard.
- **Inadequate Resources:** As expressed by workshop participants, the development strategies aspiring integration of population and gender concerns into the development process/programmes/projects frequently require additional resources but allocated resources for the programme/projects are often insufficient to carry out the job in adequate or desired manner.
- **Lack of Coordination and Monitoring:** For ensuring integration of population and gender concerns into the sectoral activities, although various councils, coordination committees, focal points such as the National Population Council, National Council for Women's Development, WID Focal Points, WID Coordination Committees and Coordination Committees for Population and Family Planning are established at different levels, these bodies do not function properly; they do not hold the scheduled meetings even regularly and care less to carry the assigned jobs to them which result into less emphasis and less importance on such integration. Their malfunction also affects adversely the coordination and monitoring of the integration of these concerns into the field level activities.

It is reported that the Planning Commission of the country has no strong system/mechanism to monitor the integration of these concerns/issues into the sectoral programmes/projects/activities. Due to this lacking, realisation of desired integration of population and gender concerns even under well-articulated policies and well-conceived projects/programmes for this purpose frequently fails. Reportedly, there is no proper coordination and collaboration between the two nodal ministries, namely MoHFW and MoWCA, and as suggested by

different policy-makers, the coordination and collaboration for this even within the sector is weak at present.

- **Inadequate Linkage Among GO, NGOs and the Private Sector:** The institutional mechanism to establish necessary linkages, collaboration and coordination among GO, NGOs and the private sector to ensure comprehensive and coordinated integration of population and gender concerns is still underdeveloped and weak despite the NGOs and the private sector, particularly the former, conduct significant amount of work addressing the gender concerns.
- **Insufficient Evaluation of Projects/Programmes:** New programmes/projects having a gender focus or the gender-sensitive development projects by different sectors are undertaken generally without evaluation of the earlier phase or previous such projects. As a result, the design and formulation of a new project or new phase of an ongoing project while approaching integration of gender concerns repeat the same mistakes, drawbacks, pitfalls and inefficiencies that are encountered by the earlier projects/programmes or earlier phase of them. This unscientific approach, thus, restricts an effective integration of necessary concerns into the development activities. The policy-makers are of the view that this is a major hindrance in devising appropriate policies, programmes, and strategies to ensure necessary integration of the gender concerns into development programmes/projects/activities.
- **Insufficient Institutional Measures:** Most of the sector ministries/divisions/departments did not take a initiative yet to amend the relevant item in the Allocation of Business (AOB) or to amend the charter of duties/ordinances across different agencies/corporations under the ministries/sectors in order to ensure effective integration of population and gender concerns into the activities of respective sectors/department. Due to this, the concerned person of a sector/department remains unaware of the sectoral/departmental responsibilities in this regard.
- **Inadequate Research, Evidence and Database:** For proper integration of the population and gender issues, the research studies imparting knowledge and understanding about integration policies, strategies, processes and actual integration of them at local level development activities are necessary. From a demographic angle and gender lens, there is not much analysis and evidence to feed policy decisions for this and sometimes there is absence of necessary database, evidence base for providing necessary basis for policy formulation in this regard or for developing the projects/programmes/activities which would suit integration of these concerns.
- **Lack of Community Participation:** As well known, the participation of the community in any matter is a powerful means to influence the policy, programmes, and strategies; but there are no organised socio-political institutions, particularly at the Upazila level and below, to

ensure adequate mobilisation of the society for a cause. The conservative atmosphere of the country particularly that persists in rural areas because of the widespread illiteracy, religious taboos and poverty restrict often the community participation in these regards particularly to uphold the gender concerns. This sometimes leads to inadequate political motivation and commitment to pay attention to these causes.

- **Cultural Constraints:** In addressing the population and gender concerns, particularly the gender concerns, the negative mind-set of the local community, the misconceptions and misinterpretation of Islam by it, low-level of education at the community level, etc. give rise to lack of appreciation for women's causes, economic and social security, their rights and well-being, etc. These and the poor law and order situation that often persists at the community level put obstacles to realising the gender goals. A policy-maker from MoWCA suggested that males should be involved in carrying out gender-related activities in the community. The unfavourable practices and circumstances like lack of employment opportunities for women, non-payment of equal wage to them, lack of security for women in the work place and schools, lack of positive attitude towards women both at home and in society, etc. also often make integration of gender concerns difficult at local level activities.

CHAPTER 6

OBSERVATIONS, SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Observations

The major observations arrived at in this study by reviewing the secondary information namely, the national and sectoral policies, plan documents, strategies, reviewing the sectoral activities and using primary information as gathered from the policy-makers, planners, government officials at local level, and other stakeholders of development activities both at the centre and at the local level are summarised and presented in this chapter. The observations are presented in two parts; the first part dealt with the current status of integration of population and gender concerns into the national and sectoral policies, programmes and activities, and the other part highlighted the gaps and barriers that are restricting an effective and desired integration of them into the sectoral policies/programmes/activities. This chapter also presented the suggestions/recommendations including those put forward by the different policy-makers, planners and other relevant personnel with regard to effective and meaningful integration of them.

6.1.1 Current Status of Integration

Population Concerns

- The Population Policy and the National Policy for Women's Advancement (NPWA) stating respectively the population and gender related objectives of the country serve as the "foundation documents" for mainstreaming/integrating population and gender concerns into the sectoral policies, programmes, and strategies.
- According to the country's latest population policy, the concurrent population concerns of the country are: fertility, infant, child and maternal mortality, and contraception use by the eligible couples. At local level also, these are found to be the major population concerns. But other concerns noticed at local level include migration referring to both internal and international migration, low age at marriage for girls, and adolescent fertility.
- Initially, soon after independence, following the population threat i.e. high fertility and population growth posing a problem to the country's development efforts, the population issues or the demographic factors enjoyed a single minded attention from all concerned including policy-makers, planners, donors, etc. Consequent to this, the population control programmes received priority attention from all relevant sectors enjoying a multi-sectoral focus/status although MoHFW was primarily responsible for providing population control services to the population.
- This phase of exclusive attention to the population concerns continued until 1997. After that, with the introduction of the sector-wide

programme (HPSP, followed by HNPSP) in 1998, the policy focus of the MoHFW got shifted to the reproductive health of which the population became a component only. Since then, population has been experiencing a declining importance with the sectoral policies and programmes. This trend has been still continuing.

- Even the PRS replacing the five-year plans showed not much interest in population concerns; nothing was mentioned about population in the main document of the first PRS, although the Second PRS (2008-11) made some mention of population concerns and discussed the implications of population growth for development and revised the demographic goals of the country.
- The major population issues currently addressed by the MoHFW are TFR, IMR, CMR, MMR, and CPR; the Ministry of Rural Development and the Ministry of Agriculture address the concerns for rural to urban migration. The policies and strategies of most of the remaining sector ministries are currently little concerned with population issues.

Gender Concerns

- At the beginning, the approach towards the country's women was welfare-oriented. The socio-economic development of them started drawing attention from the 1980s and a major objective of the country's Second Five-Year Plan (1980-85) was to encourage women's participation in economic development through creating opportunities for skill development, entrepreneurship development and micro-credit.
- Women are placed in the macro framework and received multi-sectoral thrust in the Fourth Five-Year Plan (1990-95) with their poverty in focus to reduce gender disparity. Following CEDAW, ICPD, the Beijing Platform for Action and the MDG Declaration, women kept on drawing more and more attention translating the gender/women's related goals into the national development goals; the country's both PRS in their policy frame took adequate notice of women concerns and most of the sector ministries in recent years developed their policy and programmes keeping women/gender concerns in mind. Even the sectors that have no explicit policies on gender are found gender sensitive in their activities.
- The concern for women currently is not limited to their economic well being only, it covers a wide range of issues like women's human rights, citizen rights, reproductive rights, equity/equality with men in all spheres of life, discrimination and violence against them, trafficking of women, etc. At local-level, the frequently addressed gender issues by different sector ministries are employment and income earning activities of women, training and skill development of them, education and micro-credit for women/girls, raising awareness among women about their human rights, reproductive health and health rights, the right to protect their human rights, low age at marriage for girls, violence and discrimination against women, etc.

- At local level, it is easier to address issues like the family planning needs of women, employment and income-earning opportunities for them including needs for micro-credit, education and low age at marriage for girls. In contrast, the most difficult gender issues to address are the issues of women's equality with men and their freedom.
- Compared to the population issues, currently the gender concerns dominate the policy/programme perspectives of the country and receive much higher attention while formulating policies/programmes by different sector ministries; the population receives only the marginal attention.

6.1.2 Gaps and Weaknesses in the Integration Process

- Except the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Rural Development, and the Ministry of Food, most of the remaining sector ministries have little direct attention on population.
- Although most of the sector ministries have policies to mainstream gender concerns, few of them such as the Ministry of Mass Communication, the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock and the Ministry of Science and ICT have no formal policies with regard to integrating gender concerns, although they are found to be gender-sensitive.
- Sometimes, despite there is clear policy and policy direction, the formulation of programmes/projects by different sector ministries remains inadequate to serve the policy needs for integrating population and gender concerns into the sectoral activities. Also, the administrative instructions in this regard sometimes remain too ambiguous to convey any clear message/direction about such integration at programme/project level and also at local level for implementation of these programmes/projects.
- There is dearth of trained human resources or skilled manpower at all levels, including policy-making, development of strategies, formulation of programmes/projects and even at implementation level in order to be conceived properly and deal efficiently the interrelationship between population, gender and development into the sectoral activities. Indeed, lack of such manpower persists even in the Planning Commission of the country.
- The resources committed for the programmes/projects of different sectors having an objective of integrating population and gender concerns into them are often inadequate to ensure inclusion of this new dimension of development, particularly at implementation level.
- The integration process at the sectoral level often suffers from poor coordination and monitoring. The instruments created for this by the government such as the National Population Council (NPC), the National Council for Women's Development (NCWD), various committees and focal points, etc. do not function properly; they do not hold even regularly the

scheduled meetings, or hold them in a very cursory manner serving no purpose. Hence, the system failure is a major constraint in mainstreaming population and gender concerns into the sectoral policies/programmes/activities; there is no proper coordination and collaboration even between the two nodal sectors for this, namely MoHFW and MoWCA.

- The evaluation of the completed projects and the monitoring of the ongoing ones are hardly done by different sector ministries; this gives little scope for receiving feedback from completed or ongoing projects or to learn from them for better formulations of the programmes/projects which can ensure effective and meaningful integration of population and women concerns into the sectoral programmes/projects/activities. As a result, the new programmes/projects often repeat the same mistakes, inefficiencies, laps/gaps, etc. that were present/practiced in the previous programmes/projects.
- The policy-makers, planners and other relevant officials are frequently not aware of the international treaties/conventions like CEDAW, ICPD, MDGs, etc. that the government has ratified and is pledge bound to implement. This lack of awareness and understanding on the part of policy-makers/planners often acts as a barrier to undertaking necessary initiatives for required policies/programmes/strategies that are necessary for effective integration of population and gender concerns at the sectoral level.
- Most of the sector ministries/departments have not amended yet the relevant item of Allocation of Business (AOB)' to amend the charter of duties in order to identify a person who should be responsible for looking after the integration of population and gender concerns into the sectoral programmes/activities. As a result, there is none or no identified person who should look after such integration at sectoral level.
- Research studies, evidence base and databases in this regard are often inadequate to provide necessary support/feedback to sectoral policies and programmes.
- The community participation, which is a powerful means to influence policies and programmes, is either absent or not adequate to influence the integration of these issues particularly the gender issues both at policy and implementation levels. There is no mechanism to mobilise public support in these regard particularly at local level.
- Collaboration of the government with NGOs and the private sector is weak, although the latter does a significant amount of work, particularly to address gender concerns of the country. This is causing a non-coordinated approach towards addressing gender concerns.

6. 2 Suggestions/Recommendations:

In view of the current status of the integration of population and gender/women concerns into the sectoral development processes and the gaps, lapses and weaknesses that are found persistent in the process of doing so, few remedial measures are suggested by the policy-makers, planners, local level officials and different stakeholders. The suggestions forwarded by them for an effective and comprehensive integration of population and gender concerns into the sectoral activities are as follows:

- i) It is to be ensured that all the sector ministries have policies, programmes and strategies in place in adequate language for integrating the population and gender concerns into the sectoral activities.
- ii) Various instruments such as the National Population Council (NPC), the National Council for Women's Development (NCWD), WID Focal Points at the Ministry-level, the WID Coordination Committees and the Population and Family Planning Coordination Committees created by the government at different levels for ensuring integration of these concerns into the sectoral activities are to be made active, functional, and committed to do the job. They are to be made sufficiently strong and well equipped as regards manpower and other logistic supplies for performing their job efficiently. To activate these instruments a primary step would be to make them hold prescribed meetings regularly and hold them with due emphasis and importance. Most of these committees, particularly the district and sub-district level committees, require reconstitution by drawing more and new members from the community including elected representatives.
- iii) The Planning Commission being the country's apex organisation should act as the policy planning body to ensure integration of population and gender concerns into the sectoral policies and programmes; it provide strategic support and appropriate resources to different sectors to ensure integration of them into the sectoral activities. Within the Planning Commission, this responsibility may be assigned to the SEI (Socio-Economic Infrastructure) Division which in collaboration with other sector divisions, etc., the Agriculture Division, the Physical Infrastructure Division, etc., will develop strategies for integration of these concerns into the sectoral activities after reviewing the existing needs, examining the resource allocations and identifying the development priorities. A Steering Committee may be formed at the SEI Division by drawing members from GO, NGOs, academicians and civil society for the efficient management and guidance of this integration process.
- iv) The National Population Council (NPC) and the National Council for Women's Development (NCWD), which are headed by the Head of the Government, should act as the guide and watchdog for ensuring population and women development and should regularly monitor the implementation

of the integrated programmes of different sectors. Hence, the relationship of NPC and NCWD with the Planning Commission needs to be made stronger and more functional with appropriate modalities in place.

- v) MoHFW and MoWCA, the two lead ministries, should strengthen their role to ensure integration of population and gender concerns into the sectoral activities. They may be entrusted with the responsibility of mobilising other sector ministries to make need assessments for undertaking the integrated programmes and strengthening the interagency cooperation and collaboration within the ministries.
- vi) To ensure adequate integration of population concerns, a POP-DEV (Population and Development) Focal Point like a WID Focal Point may be established at the ministry level. A liaison person may be deputed in each ministry, who will facilitate implementation of various activities of the ministry in the larger context of the Population Policy.
- vii) To ensure integration of these issues for achieving sustainable development in the country, a mandatory provision to integrate these issues into the sectoral development process may be made in accordance with the country's Foundation Documents. Also, the Development Project Proforma (DPP) should add a column describing how the proposed project would address population and gender concerns of the country or what possible implications the project/programme would have on these concerns.
- viii) There is a need of perspective plans with a definite time-frame and well defined indicators to monitor the progress of integration of these concerns into the sectoral activities. Such integration requires amendment of the 'Allocation of Business' (AOB) emphasising explicitly the ministry's role in this regard.
- ix) Capacity development through appropriate manpower policy is necessary to deal efficiently the mainstreaming of these issues at the policy, programme, strategy and implementation levels. The provision for appropriate training programmes highlighting the linkages among population, gender and development may be tailored, thus, to meet the needs of the trained human resources.
- x) The policy-makers, planners, project managers and other relevant officials need to be made aware of the international treaties and agreements like CEDAW, ICPD, the Beijing Platform of Action (PFA), MDGs, etc. that the government ratified and committed to implement. This would at only enable the relevant personnel to appreciate the importance of including/integrating population and gender concerns into the development process, but also generate a favorable attitude within the sector for undertaking appropriate policies, strategies and programmes for mainstreaming them.
- xi) The task of integrating population and gender concerns requires regular and periodic evaluation and monitoring of the integration process so that the

policy-makers and project managers can understand the ground reality, and adopt necessary corrective measures to bring improvement in the process. In this regard, wherever possible, target-oriented programmes with well-defined monitoring indicators may be introduced.

- xii) In dealing with women's issues such as the women's rights, equality of women with men, empowerment of women, etc. a strong advocacy role on the part of the government is required to change social attitude towards women, to remove societal ignorance about them and to stop misinterpretation of religion, which shapes society's mind-set. An awareness-raising campaign at the community level with regard to CEDAW, ICPD, NPWA, National Population Policy, etc. is also necessary for mass enlightenment about population and gender issues. In all these activities, religious leaders should be involved and care is to be taken so that the proper message gets disseminated through proper language and means.
- xiii) Dialogues/workshops/seminars should be organised, preferably once a year, with sub-sectors and concerned ministries to share knowledge, ideas and experiences with regard to the integration of these issues in different sector ministries.
- xiv) For appropriate policymaking and programme development, the policy-makers/planners should have access to necessary and reliable data and adequate evidence base. The research studies are to be encouraged, thus, to create appropriate database and facilitate necessary understanding about integration process and needs.
- xv) The accountability and transparency of the gender-related policies undertaken by the different sectors need to be ensured in order to avoid misunderstanding about those policies. The laws relating to women's welfare such as those relating to the marriage, marriage registration, divorce and inheritance need to be enforced strictly to increase confidence among people including women about the government's mission to ensure women's well-being.
- xvi) In order to mainstream the concerns for women, it may be desirable that poverty among women is addressed first as the country's women often represent poorest of the poor. Also, this having a good prospect of being viewed by the community as a positive move for women is likely to generate a positive attitude in the society and among women towards sectoral efforts to address women's concerns. Each of the sector ministries thus, should take active interest to encourage and involve women into the sectoral activities, particularly in the income-earning activities.
- xvii) The effective integration of the population and gender issues into the activities requires active collaboration between GO, NGOs and the private sector, as the latter two particularly the NGOs administer extensive

programmes, address women/gender concerns. Collaboration among them would strengthen the process of integration and create a conducive atmosphere in this regard.

- xviii) For better integration of population more direct focus on population issues by the sectoral activities is required. In order to ensure this, the Health Policy and the Population Policy of the MoHFW need to be complementary and supplementary to each other, containing uniform messages about demographic and gender concerns in the country.
- xix) In order to bring population into the focus, as suggested, programmes need to be undertaken to increase awareness about population problems and related concerns in the country; various population related indicators like doctor-population ratio, teacher-student ratio, man-land ration, etc. are to be highlighted so that both policy-makers and people become aware of the population problems and take note of them. Also, it is suggested that sector ministries should undertake programmes to encourage women's education and empowerment in order to influence changes in the outlook to create sustainable awareness about population problem and facilitate their integration into the sectoral policies and programmes.
- xx) Finally, as suggested by a policy-maker, for achieving population and gender goals, the country first needs to reduce poverty, remove illiteracy, spread education, make women self-reliant as well as make people including women aware of health and reproductive health needs.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The integration of population and gender concerns into the development process is widely recognised as an effective strategy to development planning to achieve the desired development outcomes. In order to achieve sustainable development and to bring desirable improvement in the lives and living of the country's people, there is an urgent need therefore to take integration of population and gender concerns into the country's development process seriously. Over the last one and a half decades, various sectors have paid little direct attention to the population concerns; the gender issues although received significant focus, their satisfactory integration has remained yet a half-hearted affair. The most important constraint for effective integration of these issues/concerns has been the systemic failure; the machineries/instruments that are created by the government to ensure such integration could perform less so far leaving much of the onus for this failure on the government. Thus, a major step forward in this regard by the government would be to pay urgent attention to address the malfunction of the system on a priority basis.

To inspire different sector ministries for integration of these issues, the country's public policies relating to development require inclusion of appropriate policies, giving due importance and emphasis on integration of these concerns. The country's First PRS, which served as the policy guide, failed on this count; it missed laying all city, adequate importance on population. Although it paid attention to gender concerns and incorporated them into the policy agenda of different sector ministries, many of the concerns remained to be addressed yet adequately. The sectoral policies and strategies for population and gender should be backed by well-articulated sectoral programmes and projects for this purpose in order to bear fruits.

Since the integration of population and gender concerns into the various sectors, namely health, education, agriculture, food and housing, etc. is the ultimate goal, the sector ministries/divisions need to view their individual programmes as complementary to each other and should have a common perception about them. The integrated approach bysectors must be based on the "Commitment-cum-Ownership" concept, with the lead ministry coordinating and monitoring them. A coherent and all-inclusive approach is required therefore for mainstreaming population and gender concerns into the country's development efforts, referring to policies, plans, strategies, programmes and projects.

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Annexure 1

Gender Issues in the Policy Matrices of Different Sectors in the First PRSP

Sector	Main Gender Issues in the Policy Matrix
Macro Economic Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue and increase more pro-women public expenditure • Ensure budgetary allocation for MoWCA's role and WID focal points • Ensure application of gender analytical tools in all development programmes
International Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide one-stop service for international women migration • Encourage participation of women's groups (women trade unions, women entrepreneurs, etc.) in WTO negotiations and in various committees of the Ministry of Commerce • Ensure incorporation of gender concerns into the Trade Policy Review Mechanisms.
SMEs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single definition of SME based on employment size to be adopted by government agencies • BOI's one-stop service will be strengthened to cover SMEs • The base of the conduit lending institutions for credit will be expanded, • Steps to ensure higher growth of SMEs • Appropriate women's entrepreneurship development projects to be undertaken • Encourage women entrepreneurs in small & medium-scale production and business activities
Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage new industries to hire women workers • Provide fiscal incentives for women enterprises • Provide language and skill development training to make women garment workers fit for foreign job markets and also local export market • Provide tariff incentives to import of inputs of cottage and handicraft activities • Give preferential treatment to women in trade fairs at home and abroad • Develop linkages between women's associations and institutional credit institutions
Farm Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve women's participation in all kinds of activities in the agriculture sector • Formulate agriculture policies towards women's specific objectives, strategies along with budgetary allocation in key programmes • Distribute <i>khas</i> land for female members especially widows, separated and deserted women • Implement the law of transferring <i>khas</i> land to women if they become widows, separated or are deserted • Ensure agriculture credit for women • Ensure access to food for women who are unable to feed themselves • Ensure credit for intermediate means of transport to increase mobility of VGD and RMP

Non Farm Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide marketing facilities, training for women producers in non-farm agriculture • Provide marketing facilities, training for women producers in non-farm agricultural activities • Create loan facilities through agriculture banks for production by women producers • Increase women's participation in agro-based food processing, dairy, poultry, fisheries etc. • Increase poor women's participation in social forestation and growing of bamboo, cane, firewood plant in <i>khas</i> land
Emergency & disaster management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide women friendly emergency support (relief, etc.) • Provide special support to disaster affected female-headed households
Transport & Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design transport facilities considering women's special needs and safety • Ensure separate toilet facilities for women at bus terminals/airports/rail stations/petrol pumps/ghats • Provide special transportation for women who work during night shift • Ensure women's representation on the Road Maintenance Board
Physical infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate women's participation and needs in designing and building of infrastructure facilities and project selection • While building infrastructures pay attention to women's need in household activities • Provide female Project Affected Persons (PAPs) land and appropriate compensation on a priority basis during land acquisition • Encourage female participation in labour/landless contracting societies grassroots committees • Increase resources for road maintenance/tree plantation
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take action to change education curriculum to eliminate biases against women • Introduce gender awareness programmes in the education system • Provide teacher's training to female teachers to improve their quality • Improve water supply and sanitation facilities for female students • Provide teaching aids, books, furniture, equipment, laboratory equipment, etc. • Expand market-based technical and vocational education for women • Build sports facility in schools for girls at the local levels to increase women's participation in sports activities
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make government health facilities women friendly along with logistics and supporting staff • Enhance women's knowledge of hospital services and facilities • Provide confidentiality and security to ensure the effective delivery of services • Enhance supply of essential drugs and equipment for women • Encompass development of strong referral system for emergencies during pregnancy and delivery and also upgrade the skills of midwives • Raise awareness about communicable diseases • Finalise a health policy with emphasis on reproductive health and safe delivery services.

Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforce equal pay for equal work (if measurable) and ensure inflation adjusted wage, • Ensure marketable skill development for the retrenched garment workers • Ensure secure working environment for women both at local and international levels • Take initiative for women to enter into overseas employment opportunities • Provide housing and childcare facilities for the working women • Ensure proper training and credit facilities for retrenched workers • Develop a national system of Provident Funds, Pension Funds for the working women (garments, other industries) and insurance cover in the case of casualties and loss of life
Political participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal participation of women in national parliament and local political institutions • Influence political decisions in favour of women • Arrange comprehensive gender sensitisation for parliamentarians • Encourage women leaders to participate in the political process • Allow local women leaders to take up responsible positions in the decision-making machinery • Take initiatives towards making women politically more conscientious • Effective political commitment of leading political parties to touch the basic issue of direct election of women in parliament with specific constituencies