

Doc 3.11. Development of a gender module under the CBT project in Bangladesh

Description of the project

The project promoted a gender responsive environment in parallel with providing technical and business training. It was considered of great importance in the social context of Bangladesh, that gender constraints be addressed if women are to be promoted as self reliant and active entrepreneurs or waged workers, including in non-conventional trades. This “gender responsive approach” implies policy decisions at many levels : at the community/household level, at the institutional level of the executing agency, training institutions [MoLE BMET/TTCs], partner NGOs and other private sector institutions.

Therefore, the approach used was to first analyze the gender constraints in training and employment, then field-test and integrate various strategies in the CBT programmes. For example, the concept of gender and development has been universally incorporated in every curricula/training module. A core group of gender trainers has been formed with the capacity to train rural women on gender issues and issues of rights of workers. Efforts have been made to open new options to women in more technical and non-conventional occupations. The project has held training activities in proximity to the target group, at convenient times for the trainees and providing small training allowances. All of these field-tested strategies need to be translated into local and national policies and programmes. In support of a gender responsive approach a trainers Manual on Gender Awareness and Development has been developed and field-tested successfully

Initiatives applied during the project for a Gender-responsive CBT implementation

Emphasis was set on women’s employability, access to technical skills in a range of new non-conventional trades/occupations, training in business development and confidence building skills. A holistic approach on gender training was delivered for (women) participants along with workshops addressed at institutions, their families and communities. Activities comprised group organization for production and marketing to improve women’s bargaining and negotiating capacity, post-training support, and linkages to markets, credit, amongst other support services.

Development of a “Core Group’ of trainers for the BMET/TTCs and partner NGOs on gender dimension: special orientation courses for NGO social mobilisers and continued advocacy at the local level; ToT on gender awareness and workplace environment for local CBT teams (for TTC instructors, regional offices, programme supervisors and social mobilisers of the NGOs). TTCs women instructors were encouraged to become more involved in CBT’s implementation, and interact with the target group as well as preventing gender bias in curricula and training materials. Gender training was integrated into the curriculum together with technical and business skills; user friendly training provision: flexible and practical training curricula, and gender-sensitive modalities (timing, venue, modalities, facilities, child care arrangements).

It was recognized that more attention needs to be given in addressing issues of childcare arrangements at the training venue and making this a part of the policy of all programmes addressing employment issues. Issues of property rights or asset ownership, whether, through inheritance or procurement, affect women’s access to loans and independent business decisions posing barriers to access livelihoods.