



বাংলাদেশ পল্লী উন্নয়ন একাডেমি (বার্ড)
কোটবাড়ী, কুমিল্লা-৩৫০৩, বাংলাদেশ

Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD)
Kotbari, Cumilla, Bangladesh



Rural Women's Organization for Development: A Case of BARD Experiment

Saifun Nahar
Deputy Director &
Project Director: RWSEEDE

**Bangladesh Academy for Rural
Development (BARD)**

**Ministry of Local Government, Rural
Development and Cooperatives**





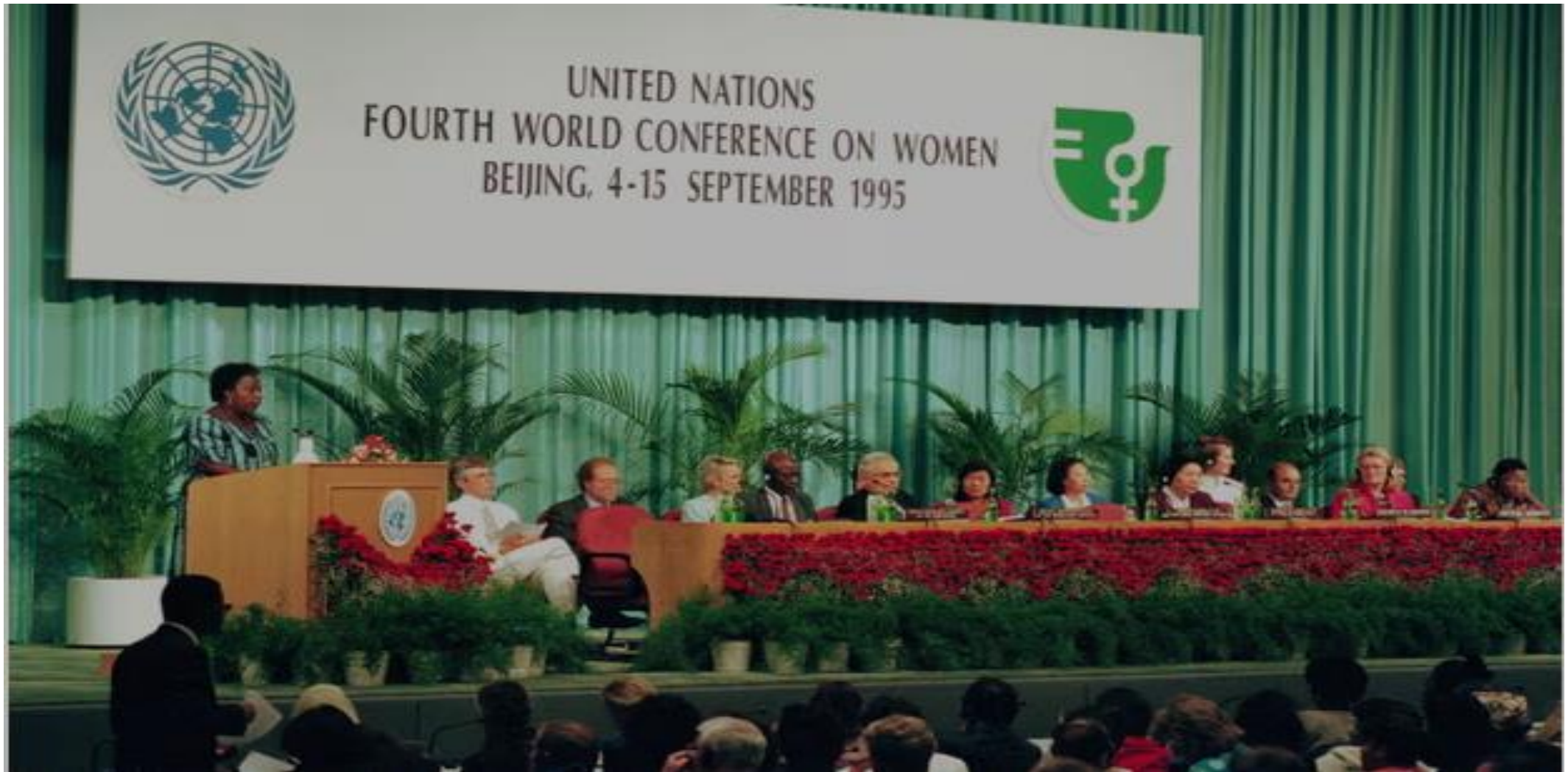
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
RURAL WOMEN

15 October

Theme:
Rural Women Cultivating
Good Food for All



Gender equality and women empowerment is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, but also integral to all dimensions of inclusive and sustainable development.



Since 1995 Beijing Platform for action of Fourth World Conference on Women, this empowerment concept gets importance by five phases viz. welfare, access, conscientization, participation and control.



Rural women are key agents for development. They play a catalytic role towards achievement of transformational economic, environmental and social changes required for sustainable development. But limited access to credit, health care and education are among the many challenges they face.





At first women needs to organize themselves in a group based organization or individual initiatives as well for empowerment. But rural women are in more vulnerable position to organize themselves in a group.

But, organization activities can solve their social and economic problems as well as other related issues which will lead them to reach the road to empowerment. They can be enlightened by acquiring themselves to the power of self-help, achieving social equality as well as equity and group solidarity.

Rural Women Organizations in Bangladesh

Identifying women as potential leaders and encouraging and supporting them through advanced training, mentoring, and coaching has also been identified as a successful policy. Since organizations are based on values like self help, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity, they can play a strong role in empowering women, especially in developing countries like Bangladesh. Organizations allow women who might have been isolated and working individually to band together and create economic of scale as well as increase their own bargaining power in the market.





Due to gender norms on the traditional role of women, and other instilled cultural practices that sidestep attempted legal protections, women suffer a disproportionately low representation in organization membership around the world. Representation of women through active membership (showing up to meetings and voting), as well as in leadership and managerial positions is even lower.



From 1972 there are many NGOs are come forward to work with rural women and incorporate them in group base organization and involve them in different development activities in Bangladesh along with government. But still now most of the NGOs are working only credit based activities.

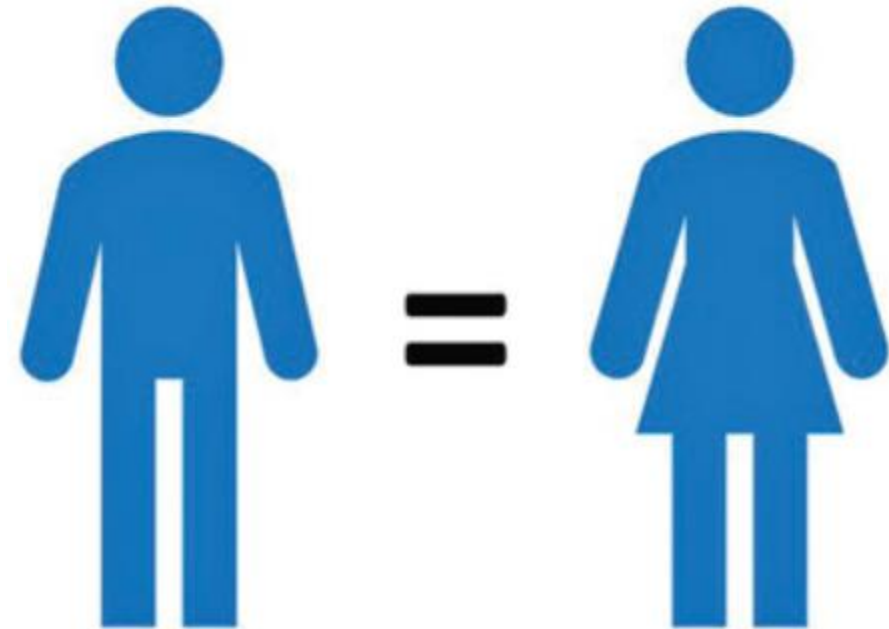


Bangladesh ranked 1st in gender parity among South Asian nations by the World Economic Forum



2023 South Asian Ranking (Global Ranking in parentheses)

1. Bangladesh (59)
2. Bhutan (103)
3. Sri Lanka (115)
4. Nepal (116)
5. Maldives (124)
6. India (127)
7. Pakistan (142)
8. Afghanistan (146)



Source: World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report 2023

BARD's Experiments on Rural Women Organizations

Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) is working as a catalyst to ensure education and enhance financial capabilities of the rural people in agriculture and business with special emphasis on women irrespective of gender, religion and caste. The need for integrating rural women in development was felt by BARD in early sixties and initiated the experimental projects on Women's development by creating village based organization in its laboratory area.

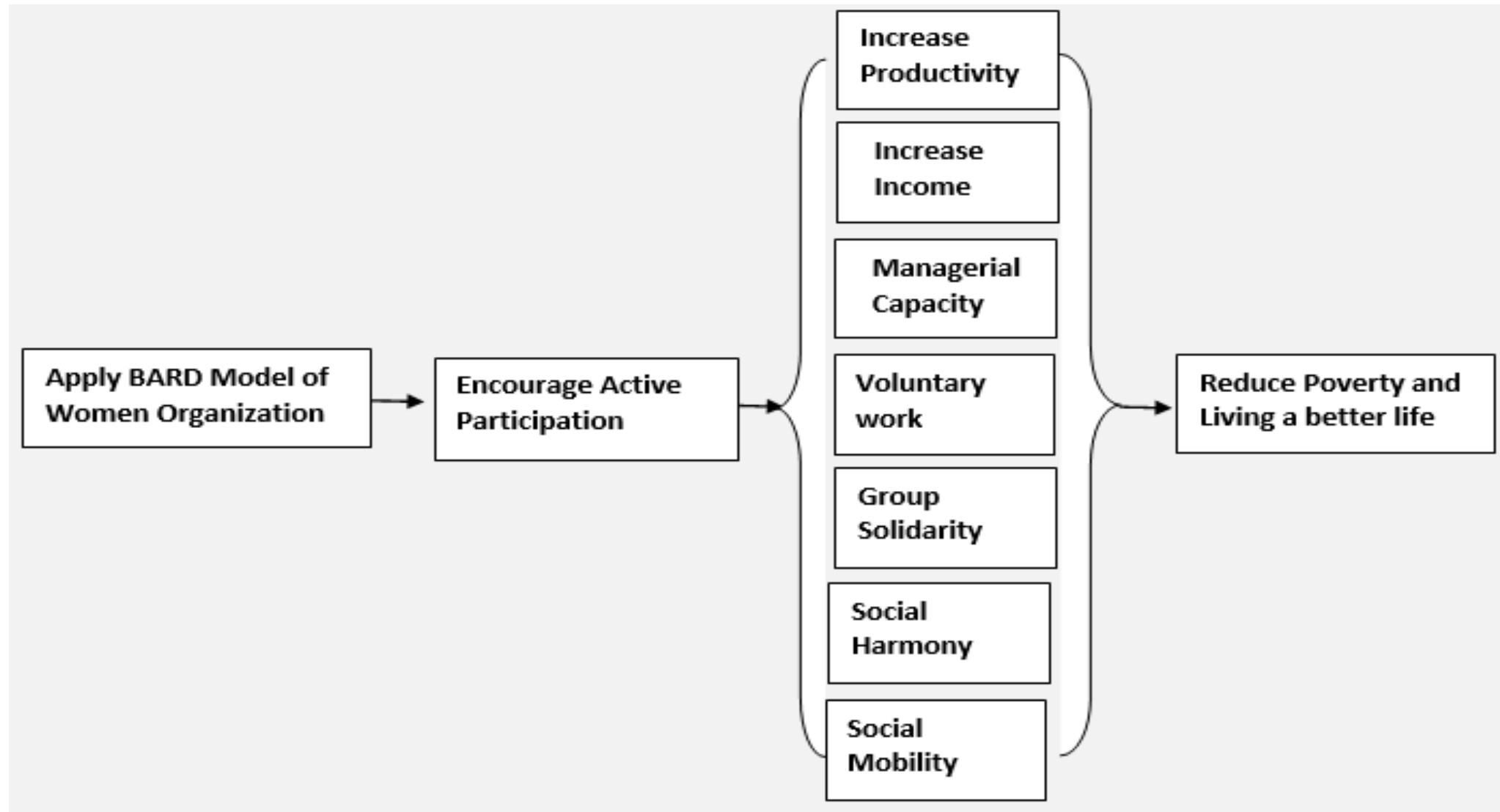




BARD undertake education and women development activities as given below:

- **Women Education & home development project (1962-69)**
- **Women Education Program (1963-1974)**
- **Village School & Rural Community School Development Program (1986-89)**
- **Women's Health Development Program (1962-91)**
- **Women Dai Training & Health Program (1973)**
- **Village Child and Vulnerable Women Development (1980-85)**
- ✓ **Women's Education, Income and Nutrition Improvement Project (WEINIP)**
- ✓ **Gender Rights Operation and Violence Elimination Project (GROVE)**
- ✓ **Rural Women Sustainable Education and Entrepreneurship Development for Empowerment are recent initiatives of BARD**

Conceptual Framework



Overview of WEINIP village women organizations

Women's Education, Income and Nutrition Improvement Project (WEINIP) was started to improve status and empower females and evolve a replicable model for the development of rural women in Bangladesh. After some modification now WEINIP activities of BARD is comprehensive in nature and follows the consists of sustainable village organization, build capacity with continuing education through horizontal learning and training system provided to the Village based women's societies (VWS) members for the development of the quality of life in the rural areas.





The main objective of the project is to create opportunities for rural women especially among disadvantaged and poor families to participate actively in the mainstream of social and economic development activities and to increase income for their empowerment.

Summary of achievement of the project during July 2022 - June 2023.

SL. No.	Factors	Unit	Measure (App)
1.	Investment to Projects	BDT (million)	1.6
2.	Loan Disbursement for Business Growth	BDT (million)	2.01
3.	Entrepreneurship Development	Person	130
4.	Employment Generation	Person	400

Source: Project Document, 2023



Activities to improve the quality of human lives by resolving social issues (e.g. ending poverty)

- 1. Empower rural poor women and youth by enhancing their managerial skill and leadership capacity through providing effective training for reducing poverty and achieve relevant goals of SDGs;**
- 2. Establish exhibition centers for increasing the income generation of women entrepreneurs and provide link them in product marketing;**
- 3. Provide appropriate technology and materials available from all government and non-government development agencies and using information technology and establish effective network for quality services; and**
- 4. Develop the creative abilities of women and young people for entrepreneurial development and to build capital for self-reliance, to provide loans on easy terms at low interest rates and to distribute dividends at the end of each financial year.**

Operational Strategy



Organization Activities



Economic Activities



Human Resource Development



Education and Co-curricular Activities

Activities to practice social justice and loving neighbors through services and self-sacrifice

The project is implement participatory plans for educating individual, family and community leader upholding social values and rights practices towards gender equality and save motherhood, health and environmental development.

Operational Strategy



Health, Nutrition and Reproductive Rights



Rights and Laws



Environment Development

Activities to practice new models for the formation and sustainable growth of the Asia-Pacific Community

It has been emerged as an instrumental base in strengthening rural organizations specially, raising people's awareness about education, nutrition, health care, awareness about disease prevention i.e. health education in community level and their socio-economic development through providing need and trade based training to rural women to become self-reliant.



Activities to practice new models for the formation and sustainable growth of the Asia-Pacific Community.....

Operational Strategy



Annual General Meeting (AGM)



Annual Planning Conference

Loan Taken from own and other member's savings and benefit sharing with every society members

Planning, Dissemination and Documentation



Case Study-1: Sufia Begum



Case Study-2: Saleha



Case Study-3: Amena







THANK YOU