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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study is to explore the various practices by the World Vision Bangladesh through which the empowerment of rural women in Bangladesh is accomplished. The study deals with the various training programs of World Vision Bangladesh through which the rural women developed various trade, their earning sources, and self-capacity to take the fundamental family decision. The survey was carried out in one municipality and four unions of Joypurhat Sadar Upazila where the Area Development Program (ADP) of World Vision Bangladesh has been implemented. For the study, the total 1200 households were selected as a sample by using cluster sampling method. Household survey was conducted for the purpose of primary data collection. On the other hand for qualitative information, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were applied. It was found that majority of the households (77.1%) received various training from World Vision Bangladesh. Among the various training, 25.6% households received training on agriculture. After training, the majority of the households developed petty trade (52.6%). In the study area, major earning driven training namely on tailoring (36.5%), poultry rearing (34.8%) and cow/goat rearing (45.3%). It was also found that women's participation in family decision-making is comparatively low, although most of the women (77.3%) can move outside of the houses as their own wishes. From the study findings, it appears that women's empowerment still remains challenging. Moreover, some others remaining challenges are the lack of demand driven training namely on tailoring, small enterprise and limited loan disbursement among the Community Based Organization (CBO) members. As a result, this is a prime area to work in future for the empowerment of rural women in Bangladesh.

Key words: *Non-government organization, women empowerment, Community Based Organization (CBO)*

INTRODUCTION

Women's empowerment is a multifaceted procedure. It varies according to the geographical context of a country along with the economic, social, cultural and political status of a nation. In the context of Bangladesh, women's empowerment mostly depends on gaining the power of economic solvency. To understand the notion empowerment, Pillai (1995) stated that power is not a commodity to be transacted nor can it be given away, it has to be acquired and once acquired it needs to be and once acquired it needs to be exercised, sustained and preserved. In response to the empowerment issue, women's empowerment has become an urgent agenda in the development arena of all countries. Parpart (2002) stated that the empowerment of women has gradually become a widespread concept within the discourse on development. Numerous international agencies, national organizations, governments and others research organizations like United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO), Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Organization of Economic co-operation and Development (OECD), Swedish International Development Corporation Agency (SIDA), World Bank as well as various grassroots organizations are very enthusiastic for empowering the women in Bangladesh. However, there is no consensus definition of empowerment among researchers; therefore, the empowerment of women can mean different things in different contexts depending on the situation and perspective (Mosedale 2005). Women's empowerment is of great importance because it is the most important precondition for the elimination of world poverty and enhancement of human rights (DFID 2000). One notable recent development in Bangladesh is the visible increase in women's participation in the formal labor force. It is found that as regards to employed persons 15 years and over by formal and informal aggregated sectors, women labor force in the informal sector was 92.3% and in the formal sector it was 7.7%. On the other hand, for men labor forces both in the formal and informal sector were 85.5% and 14.5%, respectively. Conversely, in urban areas, 81.0% women were in the informal sector and 19.0% were engaged in the formal sector. 72.2% men were in the informal sector and 27.8% were in the formal sector. In the rural area, 95.6% women were in the informal sector and 4.4% were in the formal sector. For men, 89.3% were in the informal sector 10.7% were engaged in the formal sector. (BBS 2010; Labor Force Survey and BBS, 2005; Household Income and Expenditure Survey)

Recently, different NGOs emphasizing women empowerment by including poverty reduction and introducing different development projects and programs like microcredit program The United Nations Population Information Network indicates five dimensions of women's empowerment including women's sense of self-worth; choices; access to opportunities and resources; the power to control their own lives; and the ability to influence the direction of social change (POPIN 1995). In the same way, Sen and Batliwala (2000) stated that the issue of women's empowerment depends upon having sufficient control over resources, personal capacity and sense of self-confidence and self-efficacy, as well as on changing traditional ideology.

Expansion of micro-credit programs in the rural areas of Bangladesh gradually helps to empower the poor women. Many rural women have the psychological capacity to do something, but most of the rural women face numerous problems, such as the lack of capital, resources, business ideas, knowledge about the marketing

process, and cooperation from their family members and society. But various research reports documented that the overall development of a country depends, first of all, on maximum utilization of human resources. It is also acknowledged that national development cannot be achieved without the proper development of women's situation. In the context of development discourse, the various activities of NGOs are very helpful and advantageous. NGOs have been undertaking great tasks for humanitarian, environmental protection, and sustainable development programs. To improve the social and economic empowerment of the poor, NGOs are running a wide range of development programs such as: educational programs, micro-credit programs, social welfare programs, pure drinking water and sanitation programs, family planning and HIV programs, agriculture programs, human rights and advocacy programs, women empowerment programs and so forth.

World Vision, one of the leading non-government organization of Bangladesh initiated its developmental plan and programs in Joypurhat area with an aim to accomplish the transformational sustainable development of the targeted people by increasing household income, protecting women rights, increasing literacy rate and health-related knowledge, the favorable environment of development processes and access to quality education and well-being of children. Generally the main working areas of World Vision Bangladesh for every ADP are providing emergency relief, improving health status of targeted community, mother, and children, ensuring safe motherhood, economic development, secure livelihood, promoting justice and good governance, developing women leadership and managerial knowledge and skills, enhancing child leadership and child rights, gender and development, raising public awareness, arranging skill training on various issues, arranging workshop with Area Development Program Manager (ADPM), Community Based Organization (CBO), Community Based Disaster Management Committee (CBDMC), Child Welfare Management Committee (CWMC), School Improvement Program Committee (STEP), Upazila Nirbahi Officer (Local Administration Chief (UNO), Government of Bangladesh (GOB), Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), establishing strong network and linkage with GO, NGOs, CBOs and other service providers, ensuring technical and vocational education and available support/assistance for students. For this study, we aimed to analyze the empowerment process of the rural women in Bangladesh. The overall objective of the study is to examine the role of World Vision Bangladesh on empowerment of rural women in Joypurhat Sadar Upazila.

METHODOLOGY

Study location

The study was conducted in Joypurhat Sadar Upazila. Upazila occupies an area of 236.79 sq. km. The Upazila is bounded on the north by Panchbibi Upazila and India, on the east by Kalai and Khetlal Upazilas, on the south by Khetlal and Akkelpur Upazilas and Badalgachhi Upazila of Naogaon Zila and on the west by Dhamoirhat Upazila of Naogaon Zila and India. The total population in this Upazila is 2, 89,058 where the male is 1, 47,096 and female are 1,41,962. Literacy rate in Joypurhat Upazila is 65.41% of where the male is 69.0%. The total village of Joypurhat Sadar Upazila is 146 and households are 76,385. (BBS 2011; Population Census). The area development program (ADP) of Joypurhat Upazila covers 90 villages and 14 Mohallas under one Municipality and 4 Unions namely Mohammadabad, Bhadsa, Dogachi and Dhalahar. The targeted households for the Joypurhat ADP are 15,350.

Study design and data collection

This study is mostly based on primary data and the data was collected from a household survey on Phase Evaluation of Joypurhat Area Development Program, 2014. To collect data, both quantitative and qualitative methods were applied. A survey was conducted to collect quantitative data. For the qualitative data, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were conducted. The survey covered one municipality and four unions of Joypurhat Sadar Upazila, where the Area Development Program (ADP) of World Vision Bangladesh (WVB) had been implemented various programs. All the stakeholders who were benefited by the implementation of Joypurhat Area Development Program were considered as the target population of this study. A total of 1200 households were sampled by using cluster sampling method for collection of data on the demographic and socioeconomic profile of the respondents. First, 30 clusters were proportionally identified with then the identified clusters were divided into different segments comprising 100-120 households. Finally, 40 households were interviewed from each selected cluster (30×40=1200 Households). The survey was carried out with the help of semi-structured and structured questionnaires.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

This study intends to establish a theoretical and conceptual framework regarding the role of NGOs to women empowerment. The conceptual framework has been constructed on the basis of literature review, different approaches of women empowerment and field level information which is illustrated in Figure 1. It considers the diverse programs, projects and activities of the non-governmental organization which significantly contributes to the women's empowerment.

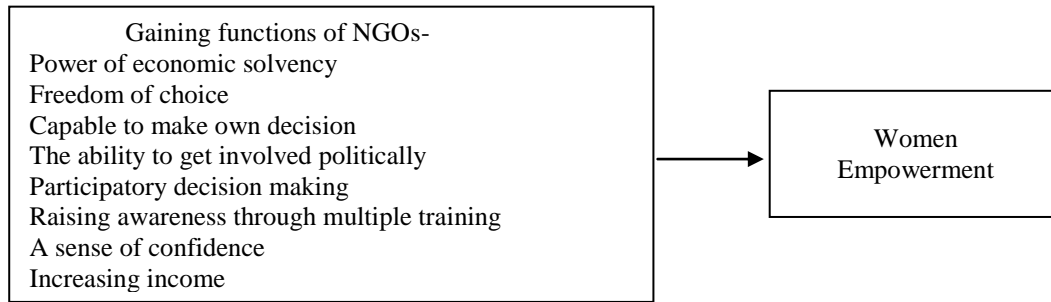


Fig. 1. Conceptual framework of functions of NGOs for women empowerment

Source: Created by the Author

Empowerment theory

NGOs capability to empower individuals has been a significant perspective. Willis (2005) mentioned that the kind of power that we often think about is the power to be able to get other people to do what we want or the power that other people have to make us do something. This can be termed power over and is often regarded as the most important form of power because it is associated with processes of marginalization and exclusion through which groups are portrayed as powerless. Rowlands (1997 and 1998) considered this typology as the power to, power with and power within. All of these forms of power are linked, but recognition of the diversity of power beyond the power over helps in the construction of policies and programs to assist the powerless.

The word power is a multidimensional concept with different meanings. From the contextual point of view, power receives a different definition which in turn determines that of empowerment. When the term 'empowerment' defined in terms of power over, it means simply –“bringing people who are outside the decision-making process into it” (Rowlands 1995 and 1997). From this context, empowerment implies people’s participation and decision-making in political and economic areas.

The key essences of empowerment are mainly the kind of implications can direct to empowerment. It is often claimed that NGOs can empower communities but in reality it is not the fact. This is because empowerment is something that comes from within (Townsend and Janet, 1999). From the literature review, it is found that NGOs just work as a catalyst and individuals have to choose to take part in the various opportunities provided by the NGOs that means the various roles of NGOs cannot be viewed as only direct way for empowerment rather they can create a scope within which individuals can empower themselves. Staudt *et al.* (2002) conclude that the empowerment serves as a local grassroots catalyst creating dreams among poor people.

Empowerment indicators of the World Bank

From the perspective of global-local cultural belief systems, World Bank developed a holistic definition of empowerment which includes self-strength and control, self-power, self-reliance, own choice, life of dignity in accordance with one's values, independence, capable to make own decision. This statement indicates empowerment implies establishing the freedom of choice, increasing one's authority and control over the resources. World Bank has identified four basic elements of empowerment such as; access to information inclusion and participation, accountability, local organizational capacity (World Bank, 2002). Mainly underprivileged people need some physical and financial supports which include land, housing, livestock and savings for enabling people to survive any shocks. Conversely, capabilities are inner assets of people that are ascribed and achieved and enable people to use their assets in a different way. The diverse aspects of human capabilities are skills, knowledge, good health, education. It is the main determinants of achieving livelihood outcomes. Elements of social capabilities are the capacity to develop network and coordination, formalized group setting and trust, reciprocity and exchange, social belonging, leadership, and self-identity. Political capability represents the capacity to present oneself or others, access to get information from other association and scope to politically participate in the community. It is found from the diverse aspects of human capabilities that there is no single framework of empowerment. The complete model or framework and proper strategic action for the women empowerment are primarily based on the countries socio-economic and political outlook. World Bank (2002) has identified four basic elements of empowerment like, access to information, inclusion and participation, accountability and local organizational capacity which are discussed below.

i) Access to information

Timely and quality information is required to take the various programs for a community. It is the right strategic way to evaluate and monitors the on-going progress of a program with a view to achieving the program end goals. In addition, at the local level, making information’s available is now immense importance to design, manage, monitor and evaluate the programs and projects and also to implement the different strategies for rural development.

ii) Inclusion and participation

Participation is a development approach, which requires the need to engage destitute segments of the population in designing the new policies and projects. Recently, women's participation in every sector has become a leading issue in the development discourse. Sustainable economic and social development cannot be fully achieved without the active participation of women at the various sectors of decision making. In view of World Bank (2002) 'Participation' addresses the question of how they are included and the role they play once included. The inclusion of poor people and other traditionally excluded groups in priority setting and decision making is critical to ensure that limited public services build on local knowledge and priorities, and to build commitment to change. Human Development Report (1993) stated that "participation as the means that people are closely involved in the economic, social, cultural and political process that affects their lives".

iii) Accountability

Empowerment and accountability are interconnected. Accountability refers to the ability to call public officials, private employers or service providers to account, requiring that they are answerable for their policies, actions and use of funds. There are three main types of accountability mechanisms: political, administrative and public. Political accountability of political parties and representatives is accomplished through elections. Administrative accountability of government agencies achieved through internal accountability mechanisms, both horizontal and vertical within and between agencies. Public or social accountability mechanisms hold government agencies accountable to citizens. Citizen action or social accountability can reinforce political and administrative accountability mechanisms. A range of tools exists to ensure greater accounting to citizens for public actions and outcomes. Accountability for public resources at all levels can also be ensured through transparent fiscal management and by offering users choice in services.

iv) Local organizational capacity

Local capacity building refers to increase the ability and know-how of people and mobilize the local resources in the different way to reduce the local complexity. The organizations operated by poor people are informal through which women can provide money and other urgent logistic and benevolent services each others. Formation of Community-Based Organization (CBO) in rural areas of Bangladesh by Non-governmental organizations is a great example for ensuring development. All CBOs have by-laws, various sub-committees such as; disaster management committees, loan committees, education committees and child management committees operate by CBO executive committee. Most of the executive committee members were found to be accountable of their functions and responsibilities. It is widely recognized that local organizational capacity is a prerequisite for development. Krishna *et al.* (1997) also reached a conclusion that a critical success factor is creating organizational capabilities at local levels that can mobilize and manage resources effectively for the benefit of the many rather than just a few. Thus, poor people's organizations, associations, federations, networks, and social movements are key players in the development of the institutional landscape.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Information on training

Every NGO has diverse types of the training program for the capacity building of their organizational members. NGO provides multiple training like social awareness and development, leadership development and management, accounts and record keeping, basic health awareness, Traditional Birth Attendants (TBA), pond fish cultivation, tree plantation, nursery development, sericulture, poultry rearing and cow fattening, small business, technical training, etc.

Field data shows that out of total 1,200 households, the majority of the households (77.1%) received training from World Vision Bangladesh. Among the various training, households received training on agriculture is 25.6% followed by health and nutrition related awareness development is 29.3%, disaster management is 20.21%, leadership management is 14.85%, training on loan is 12.8%, Income Generating Activities (IGA) is 6.4%, accounting and book-keeping are 4.7%, and skill development is 3.4%. Households participation rate on equipment training (sewing machine/Latrine/tube-well/agriculture equipment etc. is relatively higher which were estimated 50.5%. At the local level, people have also received training on human rights which recorded for direct beneficiaries 24.9% and for indirect beneficiaries 16.7%. In Joypurhat ADP impacted area, community people are also aware of human rights. According to the response of the beneficiaries, human rights means rights to meet basic needs, religious freedom, equal rights of men and women, freedom of speech and rights of the minority which were recorded 79.2%, 44.8%, 65.6%, 18.2% and 10.9%, respectively. The households received training on human rights from many sources such as; 61.0% received human rights training from World Vision Bangladesh, 16.3% from government and 13.8% from others NGOs.

Training on small enterprise

The structural transformation of the Bangladesh economy has been changing rapidly over the years. It was found that total economic units of Bangladesh followed an increasing trend during the three censuses 1986,

2001 and 2003, and 2013. The total number of economic units in 1986 was 21, 69,419 which rose to 37, 08,144 in 2001 and 2003 and then to 80, 75,704 in 2013. The variation of economic units implies that total economic units in a formal and non-formal sector are going to increase. Thus, agricultural farm- based economy has been quickly transforming to a mixed profession with considerable income and employment opportunities. The informal sector has been an important component of this growth dynamics. In addition, the service sector contributes significantly in our total GDP were estimated at 49.30% followed by industry 31.99% and agriculture 18.70% (BBS, 2013, Economic Census).

Small and Medium Enterprises are a significant driver of economic growth of every country. It is a key approach for the development of new entrepreneurs, development of human resources and poverty alleviation. Microcredit brings remarkable changes in the production system, discovers market opportunities for products and ultimately changes the business environment. In Bangladesh, the impact of micro-enterprises on specific socio-economic variables such as children's schooling, household nutrition, and women's empowerment are highly traceable (Choudury and Miyagi, 2006). But most of the time, due to the various uses and form of microfinance; it is very difficult to define micro enterprises. Micro enterprises are highly heterogeneous (Harvie 2003). Government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have different strategic approaches to promote the growth and development of micro-enterprises in the rural areas of Bangladesh.

There is a proposition that access to credit services under non-financial interventions is the right means to provide the poor with opportunities to take the active role in the irrespective economies through income generation, bargaining power and social empowerment. This is also well focused in various reports and publications (Mayoux *et al.* 1998).

Table 1 shows the various trade developed by the households. It was found that out of total 173 households, the percentage of trade that developed both the direct and indirect beneficiary households are on petty trade 52.6%, followed by cow rearing 28.3%, sewing 6.9%, tailoring 4.0%, poultry rearing 4.0%, automobile 1.7%, goat rearing 1.7% and vocational 0.6%.

Table 1. Percentage distribution of trades developed by the households

Trade items	Direct	Percent	Indirect	Percent	Total	Percent
Sewing	5	6.0%	7	7.8%	12	6.9%
Tailoring	4	4.8%	3	3.3%	7	4.0%
Automobile	1	1.2%	2	2.2%	3	1.7%
Vocational	0	0.0%	1	1.1%	1	0.6%
Cow rearing	28	33.7%	21	23.3%	49	28.3%
Goat rearing	2	2.4%	1	1.1%	3	1.7%
Poultry rearing	4	4.8%	3	3.3%	7	4.0%
Petty trade	39	47.0%	52	57.8%	91	52.6%
Total	83	99.9%	90	99.9%	173	99.8%

Information on marketing

In markets, the producers sell their products. Mostly agriculture is the fundamental aspect of the rural people livelihood strategies, although several people are engaged themselves in non-farm agricultural activities, for instances: agro-processing, trading, and supplementary off-farm occupations. But practically, access to market and ensuring a fair price to their products in rural markets is still remaining challenging in Bangladesh. The common constraints that the households have been facing for marketing purposes includes; unavailability of transports, poor road condition, low price due to the advance sale of products and long distance of markets from dwelling places. In Joypurhat area, mainly the households sell their products in the local village market, local *haat*, Upazila town market, district town market. They also buy the commodities to go in a market at the prevailing price and buy in advance at less than market price etc. The direct beneficiary households sell their products on local village market is 56.9%, local *haat* is 5.2%, Upazila town market is 4.3% and district town market is 7.4%. Furthermore, out of total 1,200 households, the highest percentage (97.3%) of direct beneficiaries buys their commodities at prevailing market price going to market. On the other hand, only 1.7% middleman buys commodities from a house. From FGD and KIIs, it is found that distance to markets, lack of roads, high transport costs and poor communication infrastructure for disseminating information on the markets, products and prices are a central concern for the study people.

The economic empowerment of women is a precondition for the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). But evidence suggests that mostly rural female farmers, in particular, poor farmers are greatly constrained by access to credit, inputs, modern technologies, training and land ownership. In these circumstances, along with other inputs, availability and access to adequate, timely and low-cost credit from government and non-government institutions is important especially for small and marginal farmers to the construction of sustainable and profitable farming systems. In the study area, mainly agricultural farmers take

the loan from banks, NGOs, local money lenders, friends and from relatives. During the field level data collection, it was found that out of total 1,200 households, most of the households take the loan from NGOs (67.1%). Households take the loan from CBO is 14.1% followed by the bank is 8.3%, from money lenders is 4.2% from relatives is 4.2%, and from WVB is 2.5%. This result is consistent with the view that households participation in micro-credit programs helps to improve their livelihood. WVB along with other local working NGOs have been playing a significant role in engaging women in income generating activities, as a result, women can play a significant role in their families. The households take the loan for different purposes like establishing small business (25.8%), purchasing cow/goat (21.9%), child education (2.5%), house repairing (15.8%), purchasing raw materials for own business (9.5%), health caring (6.2%) and for food consumption (17.9%).

Table 2 shows the multidimensional earning sources of the households. It was found that the households earnings from agriculture (own and share cropping land) are 36.5%, from poultry rearing is 34.8%, from domestic animal rearing (cow/goat etc.) is 45.3%, from business is 22.7%, from own labor is 38.8%, from rickshaw/van pulling is 14.3%, from services is 10.8%, from foreign remittance is 0.3% and from Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) and Vulnerable Group Food (VGF) is 0.8%.

Table 2. Percentage distribution of the households according to the sources of income

		Direct		Indirect		Total	
Source of income	Agriculture (own and share-cropping land)	229	41.3	209	32.4	438	36.5
	Rearing of Poultry	210	37.8	207	32.1	417	34.8
	Rearing of Domestic animal (cow/goat etc.)	292	52.6	252	39.1	544	45.3
	Pisciculture	26	4.7	20	3.1	46	3.8
	Selling tree	17	3.1	11	1.7	28	2.3
	Service	52	9.4	77	11.9	129	10.8
	Bonus	7	1.3	9	1.4	16	1.3
	Business	120	21.6	152	23.6	272	22.7
	Labor	234	42.2	232	36.0	466	38.8
	Rickshaw/Van pulling	72	13.0	99	15.3	171	14.3
	Renting House/shop	1	0.2	5	0.8	6	0.5
	Foreign remittance	1	0.2	2	0.3	3	0.3
	Stipend	3	0.5	0	0.0	3	0.3
	Handicrafts (selling)	14	2.5	11	1.7	25	2.1
	Help from relatives/others	27	4.9	37	5.7	64	5.3
	Other allowance	5	0.9	8	1.2	13	1.1
	Tuition	8	1.4	4	0.6	12	1.0
	VGD/VGF card	6	1.1	3	0.5	9	0.8
	Begging	2	0.4	3	0.5	5	0.4
Others	65	11.7	79	12.2	144	12.0	
	Total	555	100.0	645	100.0	1200	100.0

Generally, holistic empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, educational and economic strength. On the other hand, women's empowerment gives emphasis on women's freedom of choice and power to control their own lives within the household and at the societal level. It is observed from the survey findings that households involvement with development committees like wash, nutrition, school management committee, child monitoring committee, disaster management committee is very high which estimated 85.6%. The household's involvement with CBO leader is 9.3%. In addition, now the rural women are very much conscious about their political rights. As high as 94.9% households have knowledge on Union Parishad (UP) chairman in the ward and 86.5% have knowledge on Union Parishad member in the ward level. This finding indicates that rural households are now more politically empowered.

Decision- making role played by the rural women

Table 3 demonstrates the key family decisions taken by the households. In Joypurhat Sadar Upazila, the important decisions are taken by the women are about the education of children (5.3%), income earning (3.4%), service or business (2.8%), marriage (3.0%), buying or selling of land (3.1%), joining organization or others (5.5%). From table 3 it is evident that women's role in family decision making is very low. The majority of the decisions are taken by the male counterparts.

Table 3. Percentage distribution of important family decisions taken by the household members

Household decision issues	Direct		Indirect		Both	
i) Education of children						
Male member	104	18.7	117	18.1	221	18.4
Female member	35	6.3	28	4.3	63	5.3
Male and female member jointly	416	75.0	500	77.5	916	76.3
Total	555	100.0	645	100.0	1200	100.0
ii) Income earning						
Male member	202	36.4	244	37.8	446	37.2
Female member	23	4.1	18	2.8	41	3.4
Male and female member jointly	330	59.5	383	59.4	713	59.4
Total	555	100.0	645	100.0	1200	100.0
iii) Service or business						
Male member	275	49.5	324	50.2	599	49.9
Female member	17	3.1	16	2.5	33	2.8
Male and female member jointly	263	47.4	305	47.3	568	47.3
Total	555	100.0	645	100.0	1200	100.0
iv) Marriage						
Male member	134	24.1	165	25.6	299	24.9
Female member	20	3.6	16	2.5	36	3.0
Male and female member jointly	401	72.3	464	71.9	865	72.1
Total	555	100.0	645	100.0	1200	100.0
v) Buying or selling of land						
Male member	146	26.3	150	23.3	296	24.7
Female member	22	4.0	15	2.3	37	3.1
Male and female member jointly	387	69.7	480	74.4	867	72.3
Total	555	100.0	645	100.0	1200	100.0
vi) Joining organization or others						
Male member	143	25.8	157	24.3	300	25.0
Female member	40	7.2	26	4.0	66	5.5
Male and female member jointly	372	67.0	462	71.6	834	69.5
Total	555	100.0	645	100.0	1200	100.0

In Joypurhat ADP impacted area, women play significant decision-making roles as regards to moving outside of their house. As high as 77.3% women's were identified who can move as her own wish in their parent's house. The percentage of movements in other places by the women like relatives house is 74.2 followed by medical center for treatment is 73.1, social and religious festival is 62.3, and school of children is 59.0, non-government organization/government office is 51.0, the market is 35.8, the political gathering is 15.9 and cinema hall is 12.0.

DISCUSSION

Based on the Focus Group Discussion, KII and study findings it reveals that momentous progress has been done in the livelihood patterns of the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the study area. The remarkable progress includes; raising awareness as regards to health and hygienic, reproductive health, human rights, women rights, child rights, increasing income, and increase the crops production level, handicrafts and creation scopes for people's participation in secondary professions. In addition, the training and other supports for the Community Based Organization (CBO) members plays a pivotal role in organizing the rural poor people and to develop people's ownership and participation in economic development that resulted in increased savings by the members, facilitating credit supports and market facilities. Livelihood project of World Vision Bangladesh provides income generating activities (IGA) related training for the people and after receiving training, the community people became self-dependent.

The crucial success of different projects of World Vision Bangladesh is women empowerment. The training and services provided by the different projects of World Vision Bangladesh helped in empowering the women in many areas such as; family decision making, conflict management, dowry, early marriage, and child labor. From Focus group discussion and key informant interviews, it was found that, to maintain inter-community harmony, which is a pre-condition for all development efforts, World Vision Bangladesh should give emphasize on integration by providing training on conflict management and leadership development, coordination and cooperation with other government and non-government organizations.

The various activities of World Vision Bangladesh develop an effective strategy for enabling the community people and mostly the rural vulnerable women. Finally, in the study area women take part in various family decision making process like, women go alone as her own wishes in political gathering, cinema hall, medical center, take part in the education of the children, the decision about income, earning, running business, buying or selling land and child marriage. In Joypurhat area, the majority of the CBOs are now capable of performing its activities independently and the CBO members now deposit money regularly which is an indication of economic empowerment of women.

On the other hand, in the ADP impacted area, there are some challenges like lack of communication system, lack of training especially on tailoring, micro/small enterprise, high rate of early marriage, limited loan disbursement. As regards to loan, only 38.8% households have identified who had taken the loan from Community Based Organization (CBO) last year. Survey data indicates that the disbursement of loan among the CBO members is very low but from Focus Group Discussion (FGD), it was found that the demand for the loan is very high by the women for operating income generating activities (IGA) related trade. From the context of empowerment theory and local organizational capacity building approach, the role of World Vision Bangladesh is very much effective because World vision Bangladesh are now playing a fundamental role to empower the women in the area of increasing female education, strengthening female leadership at grass root levels, capacity building and raising the social awareness.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study discussed the empowerment of the rural women and their involvement with the various programs of World Vision Bangladesh. In this research, women's empowerment mainly refers to the ability to earn, freedom of choice, the ability to involvement with various development organizations and family decision making. World Vision Bangladesh is playing a remarkable role towards women empowerment by increasing female education, strengthening female leadership at grass root levels for protecting the women. Despite all of these actions, there are some challenges that need to be ensured. For instances, there are some training that should provide among the members by the World Vision Bangladesh and also by the government like value chain, accounting and book-keeping, marketing, IGA, skill training and micro/small enterprise to improve the knowledge and expertise of the rural women. At the same time, rearrangement of training for the women is also necessary. Most of the farmers are women and they received various training, but the availability of expert trainers, more time and budget allocation regarding rural training need to be ensured. Moreover, frequent dialogue, meeting, and interaction with different stakeholders like, various governmental departments such as education, livestock, cooperatives, health and other NGOs should be held on regular basis. This type of coordination will help the Joypurhat ADP more functional and dynamic. In addition, ensuring more credit transfer among the beneficiaries of World Vision Bangladesh is essential. Currently, the female members are more trained, skilled along with having market information to launch small trade but due to the shortage of money, they can't develop trades in a large scale. Most of the households took the loan from non-governmental organizations and the scope for taking the loan from Community Based Organization (CBO) and others bank is limited. Thus, more credit support needs to be ensured for the rural women for the improvement of their empowerment.

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