

THE VOICE

Voice of Grassroots Women Entrepreneurs, Bangladesh



AUGUST 2026

Newsletter

From Grassroots Enterprise to National Economic Leadership

AUGUST OVERVIEW

August 2026 was a month of advocacy, partnership and renewed focus on inclusive women's entrepreneurship. AGWEB continued to place rural, disadvantaged and grassroots women at the centre of its work—connecting enterprise development with skills, finance, market access, institutional representation and policy dialogue.

The month also strengthened AGWEB's engagement with national and international development platforms through participation in a UNDA programme and a strategic meeting with the FBCCI Administrator.

Women Entrepreneurship in Bangladesh – August Perspective

1. Economic Role

Women-led micro, small and medium enterprises are increasingly important to household income, local employment, supply chains and community resilience across Bangladesh.

2. Persistent Barriers

Grassroots women still face limited access to affordable finance, collateral, formal business knowledge, technology, market networks, procurement opportunities and institutional representation.

3. Rural Reality

Many promising women entrepreneurs operate from homes or small community businesses. Their challenge is often not lack of talent, but the gap between talent and finance, formalization, quality standards, and market access.

3. Growth Opportunity

Digital commerce, financial literacy, product development, better market linkage, and stronger representation in business institutions can help women move from subsistence activity to sustainable enterprise.

August 2026 Key Engagements

UNDA Programme Participation

Create a single digital and physical service point for trade licences, tax identification, VAT, company registration, standards, environmental permissions and sector approvals. Provide district help desks and reduced first-year fees for qualifying women-owned micro and small firms.

Meeting with the FBCCI Administrator

Offer matching grants, common production facilities, testing laboratories, packaging support, product certification, quality systems, export readiness, trade-fair participation and buyer-linkage programmes. Policy must reward firms that create jobs, adopt technology and enter formal value chains.

Voice for Rural & Disadvantaged Women

Require government-supported fairs, retail programmes, export missions and digital marketplaces to include transparent women-owned business participation. Encourage large corporations and state-owned enterprises to publish supplier-diversity targets and payment timelines.

What AGWEB Is Working For

- Entrepreneurship training and practical business skills for grassroots women
- Financial literacy and improved access to appropriate SME/MSME finance
- Digital skills, e-commerce readiness and market connectivity
- Product development, quality improvement, packaging and branding
- Mentorship, networking and leadership development
- Policy advocacy for women-friendly business regulations and institutional support
- Market access, buyer linkage and participation in fairs, procurement and supply chains
- Economic inclusion of disadvantaged, rural and underserved women

Policy Priorities The Road Ahead

Priority	AGWEB Focus
Finance	Simpler, collateral-sensitive and affordable financing windows designed around the realities of women-led micro and small businesses.
Formalization	Easier registration, tax literacy and compliance support so informal women-led enterprises can enter the formal economy without unnecessary complexity.
Market Access	Dedicated linkages with government procurement, corporate supply chains, export channels, fairs and digital marketplaces.
Capacity Building	District- and grassroots-level training in finance, costing, bookkeeping, quality, digital marketing and business planning.
Representation	Meaningful participation of women entrepreneur associations in chambers, policy consultations and national economic decision-making.

THE VOICE

Message from the President

“ A woman at the grassroots level does not need sympathy — **she needs opportunity, access, knowledge and a fair place** in the economy. **AGWEB's** responsibility is to help build that bridge, from a small local enterprise to sustainable economic independence and leadership. ”

Mousumi Islam

Founder
AGWEB



September Focus

AGWEB will continue strengthening institutional partnerships, expanding grassroots engagement, advancing practical capacity-building initiatives, and advocating for a business environment where women entrepreneurs can access finance, markets, technology, and decision-making platforms on fair terms.

Data caution: figures on women in business differ because sources use different definitions, including women-owned, women-led, registered businesses, SMEs, economic establishments and informal enterprises. AGWEB recommends that the government adopt one harmonised national definition and reporting standard.

About AGWEB



The Association of Grassroots Women Entrepreneurs, Bangladesh (AGWEB) works to advance entrepreneurship, financial inclusion, market access, digital capacity, leadership and policy representation for women entrepreneurs across Bangladesh.