



**EMWOSE**  
Women from ethnic minorities in social enterprise

Interview form

# Overview

Name: Andrea Rahaman

Company: MATI Bangladesh

Website:  
<http://matibangladesh.org/?lang=de>



My name is Andrea Rahaman, I worked for 12 years in Bangladesh for the local branch and coordinated projects there and talked a lot with the target group, what their needs are and then translated this into project applications and since 2017 I am back in Germany and now work for the German partner association and do fundraising and public relations.

That was a coincidence, so I have long been interested in development aid / development cooperation, then first taught in Münster at a language school and accidentally saw that Mati e.V., the German association, was looking for volunteers for a 4-week assignment in Bangladesh, then I contacted them and made it very clear that I only wanted to go on the project if I had a concrete task. After they read my CV, they said, well, as a teacher you could teach a methodology course for our village schoolteachers, then I thought, well, that sounds like a task, then I traveled to Bangladesh for the first time in September 2005, actually only for a limited period of 4 weeks. And Lenen Rahaman, my later husband, has accompanied this mission there on site, but always had a lot to do, because he was also not permanently in Bangladesh at that time, but still commuted between Germany and Bangladesh and he has then practically transferred to me the leadership over the group of volunteers and I have then coordinated the work mission and he has called me often to ask how it goes, and after a while, he asked me if I could imagine to stay longer on site because he is looking for someone who shares the management with him.

# Interview transcript

## Keywords:

Bangladesh, management, fundraising and public relationship, women, economic and social participation, self. confidence

When this health consultation started, the first women's groups were founded, it was clear that Mati wanted to support women specifically and work together with women to enable them to participate more in social and economic processes, and in the beginning, women's groups were practically always the female heads of households in a certain narrowly defined geographical region, i.e., practically the neighboring huts, who formed a women's group together. Whoever wanted to work with Mati joined this women's group, which always had 20-25 members and was supported by a social worker from Mati's side, who met with them once a week at a fixed time and in the beginning, it was just like that, when the women met there with a Mati employee, the men were still in sight and observed it first. At the very beginning a few stones were thrown, but relatively quickly the men accepted that their families benefit from the women's involvement with Mati. For the women themselves, you can clearly see that even today in Bangladesh in the process, when they first come to the women's groups, the cloth is pulled over their mouths, they giggle into their hands, then they hardly dare to give a clear answer to a question, they always look uncertainly at their neighbors, what they are doing now, when they have been in this group for a few months, they suddenly speak freely, In many of our projects, we have simply noticed when we have told the women what has changed at the household level, that this self-confidence, which they have found by clearly expressing their opinion in the women's group, that they also take it into the household, and the women then say interesting things like: Yes, I now have my own income from my vegetable garden and the vegetables I sell there, and the other day I simply decided to buy a few chickens and I didn't wait until my husband came home to ask for permission, but I just did it and only told him afterwards.

