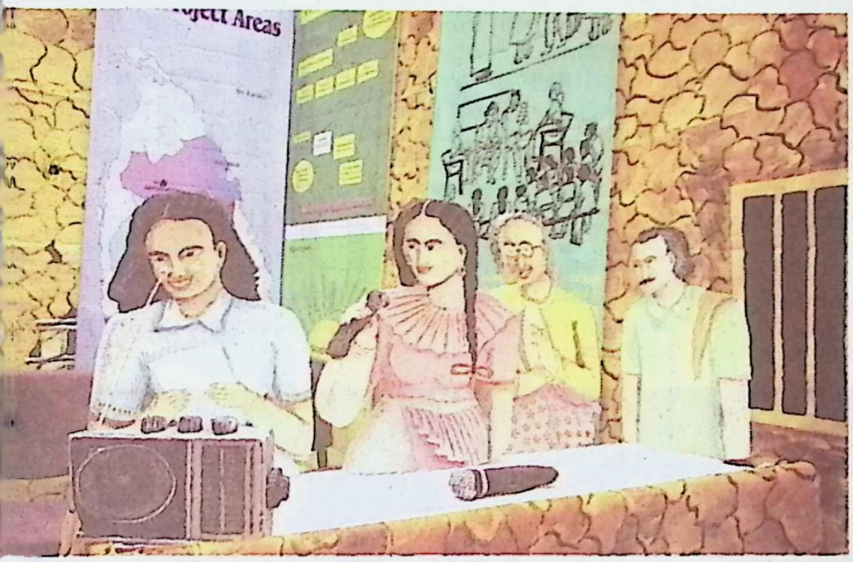
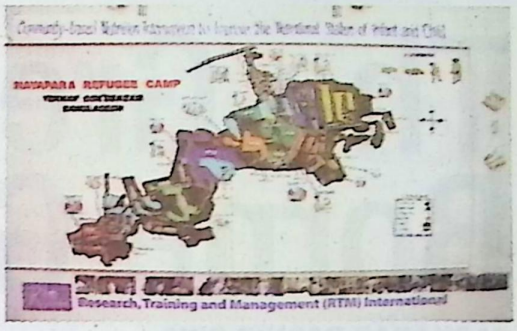
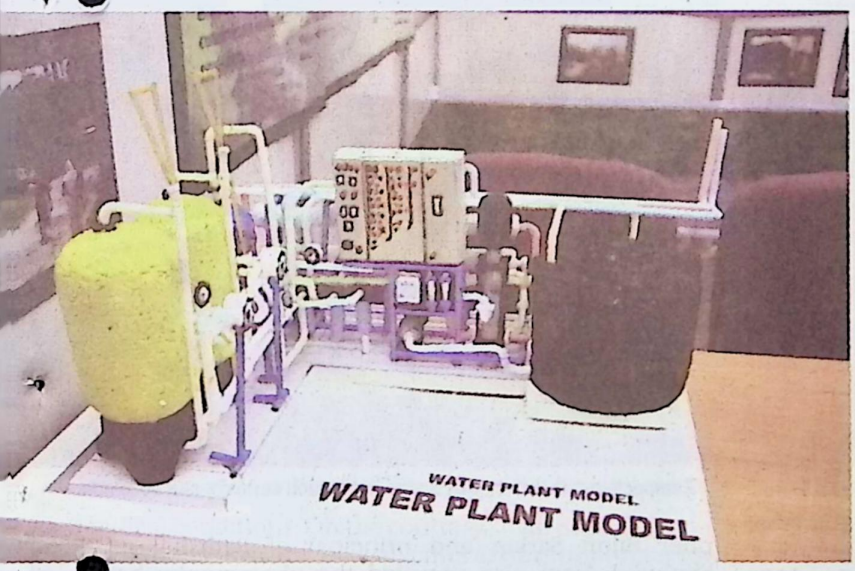






Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka have vied for a grant up to $40,000 each to implement innovative ideas on how to improve nutrition in their respective countries; 21 projects have been successful.

At the end of the competition four proposals from Bangladesh have won grants; a Bangladeshi organisation has also won the People's Choice Award. The World Bank, the World Food Programme, the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), Micronutrient Initiative, PepsiCo, UNICEF, the Gates Foundation, and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) have partnered to finance the Innovate for Nutrition- DM.

One of the four Bangladeshi winners is International Centre for Diarrhoeal Diseases Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR, B), which advocates healthy feeding practice in the poverty-torn neighbourhoods through what it calls a performance-based payment. Highlighting the inequity between the slum and non-slum people, its project proposal says that, "Traditional birth attendants are a significant part of the informal health care system in the urban slums as they attend to almost 68 per cent of births. The project aims to use performance-based payment to the birth attendants to promote key infant and young child feeding in the slum population."

Training and Assistance for Health and Nutrition Foundation, another organisation that has been given a grant, works in both urban and rural areas. It "empowers" women and adolescents so that they can improve infant and young children's nutrition. The project plans to find women in different communities to train them as 'peer counselors', who will "promote exclusive breastfeeding, identify culturally acceptable and affordable complementary foods and provide a micronutrient mixture to the target beneficiaries."

The People's Choice Award has gone to a Bangladeshi civil society organisation called HIV/AIDS and STD Alliance Bangladesh (Hasab), which wishes to help sex workers and people living with HIV-AIDS to "improve the nutritional status of their children" who are under two years old.

The project of Concern Worldwide, which has also won a grant, wishes to "partner with the Kurigram municipality to improve infant and young child nutritional status of children in Kurigram." It aims to create leadership at the municipality level in the poor district who are going to "plan, coordinate and monitor" nutrition services for infants and young children. Kalini's hut is only about 20 miles away from downtown Kurigram. Every year seasonal unemployment comes after the aman harvest; a silent famine plagues this otherwise sleepy little Bangladeshi hinterland. Emancipation for Kalini is still a far cry.