

Annual Report

April 2010 to March 2011

Nijera Kori

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List of Abbreviations:

ADB	-Asian Development Bank
ALRD	-Association for Land Reform and Development
APWLD	-Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

AC land	-Assistant Commissioner (Land)
ASIA	-Asia Solidarity against Industrial Aquaculture
ASK	-Ain-O-Salish Kendra
BELA	-Bangladesh Environments and Lawyers Association
BLAST	-Bangladesh Legal Aids Services Trust
BMP	-Bangladesh Mohila Parishad
BNPS	-Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha
CCDB	-Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB),
CDF	-Credit and Development Forum
CPD	-Policy Dialogue
DD	-Deputy Director
FNB	-Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh
FIVDB	-Friends' In Village Development
GD	-General Diary
HDRC	-Human Development Research Centre
InM	-Institute of Microfinance
LFA	-Logical Framework Annalysis
LGED	-Local Government Engineering Department
MNCs	-Multi-National Corporations
MP	-Member of Parliament
MPO	-Monthly Payment Order
MRA	-Micro-credit Regularity Authority
MJF	-Manusher Jonno Foundation
NGO	-Non Government Organisation
OC	-Officer Incharge
PBS	-Public Broadcasting Service
PIL	-Public Interest Litigation
PKSF	-Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation
RTI	-Right to Information
TIB	-Transparency International Bangladesh
SAHR	-South Asians for Human Rights
SASNET	-Swedish South Asia Studies Network
SSNC	-Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
UNO	-Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UP	-Union Parishad(The lowest tier of local government)
VGD	-Vulnerable Group Development
VGf	-Vulnerable Group Feeding
WDB	-Water Development Board

Glossary

Adivasi	-Indigenous peoples
Anchal	-Area structure
Char	-Land rising up on the river banks or in the middle of rivers
Khasland	-Government property-normally agricultural land-water bodies
Nirbahi	-Executive (as in officer, or committee)
Parishad	-Committee or council
Shalish	-Alternative Dispute Resolution
Samity	-People's association
Thana	-Police station
Union Parishad	-Upazila Parishad (Third tier of local government)
Naripokkhko	-A national NGO
Jotedar	-Powerful land grabbers
SANGAT	-South Asian Feminist Network (A feminist activist network)
Sammilito Samajik Andolon	-A social movements
Vested Property Restoration Movement	-A social movements
Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Alliance Council	-A social movements -A social movements

CHAPTER ONE

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF NIJERA KORI

1

a brief overview of nijera kori

1. A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF NIJERA KORI

1.1 Background

Nijera Kori, a well-known activist non government organisation (NGO) in Bangladesh, was created following the artificial famine of 1974 when many destitute rural women made their way to the cities in search of food and work. A group of urban women came in support of these migrating women to face the critical time with income from sale of processed food for which they helped them develop their limited local knowledge and capacity. The project gradually resulted in the nascence of “Nijera Kori” which, English means, “We do it ourselves”.

However, the organisation remained inactive during the following years until in 1980 fresh life was breathed into it by a group of development activists who joined Nijera Kori. This group comprised people who were then working in leading NGOs and felt that raising consciousness of the poor holds the key to resolving the core problems of poverty ridden rural society. These activists helped draw a new line of objective and action for Nijera Kori moving away from its initial programme of rehabilitating a handful famine-affected urban destitute to undertaking initiatives to creating a society free from oppression and deprivation through the establishment of the fundamental rights of the people. The organisation worked at the rural level, concentrating on rural social mobilisation rejecting the increasingly popular service-based approach of NGOs, which they felt would simply create dependency among the target population. It began addressing the situation that causes poverty and destitution of rural people, rather than making superficial efforts to ameliorate the suffering. To achieve these objectives, Nijera Kori worked towards making people conscious of their rights by assisting them to build up their collective strength which led to conscious discourse and programmatic actions to establish rights. As the goal changed, the target group of Nijera Kori also expanded from its original concentration of destitute women. Now Nijera Kori defines its target group broadly as those women and men who earn their living mainly through manual labour with emphasis on rural rather than urban areas.

The organisation now has a total of 232,283 group members. Of them, more than half are women. The total number of programme staff in Nijera Kori is 293 out of which 120 are female and 173 male. The programme staff directly functions in the field. Besides, 108 support staff works along with the programme staff. The core programme is called “*Ensuring Democracy, Accountability and Rights for the poorest*”.

The current year saw the inclusion of a new donor partner from September 2010, Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) to our existing Donors. The funds for MJF is specifically targeted for land related activities and is confined to two of Nijera Kori’s working areas, namely Char Jabbar and Ramgoti. The project is called “Ensuring Democracy, Accountability and Land Rights for the Marginalised”

1.2 Mission of Nijera Kori

- Development activities of Nijera Kori are directed to the establishment of rights of the poor.
- Women are an important and integral part of all production processes. In order to break the patriarchal system, Nijera Kori works to change the biased male perception towards women and encourages women to recognise and assert their own position in society.
- Nijera Kori feels that an accountable, democratic environment is absolutely essential for development. Nijera Kori imbibes democratic conduct through participation and accountability in planning, implementation, evaluation and overall management not only with the groups organised but throughout the organisation itself.
- Nijera Kori believes in an environment friendly sustainable development process.

1.3 Objectives of Nijera Kori

- To unite people, both women and men who have long been the victims of exploitation, social marginalisation, oppression and poverty.
- To enable people thus united to understand and develop awareness about their rights, causes of their problems and their responsibilities.
- To empower people to take up challenges within their own spheres to create better and more meaningful lives for themselves and their immediate community.

1.4 Programme participants of Nijera Kori

- Those dependant on physical labour as their main source of livelihood: wage labourers, sharecroppers, small & marginal farmers etc.
- Other vulnerable communities: indigenous communities, fisher folks, weavers, blacksmiths, barbers, cobblers, potters, small traders etc.

1.5 Management process of Nijera Kori (*organogram in annex - A*)

The core value of Nijera Kori's management structure and decision-making system is guided by the philosophy of 'participatory democracy'. The overall governance of the organisation rests with the 'General Body,' which elects the 'Governing Body' for two years. The 'Governing Body' meets regularly every three months while the 'General Body' holds its General Meeting annually. The 'Governing Body' appoints the Coordinator who is responsible for coordinating the overall programmes and management of Nijera Kori.

However, the main operational decision-making body of the organisation is the Central Staff Convention, which is held every alternate year and attended by all staff of Nijera Kori. Here they constitute a three-tier council for two years for overall management and coordination by electing their representatives (except the coordinator) from among the staff. These councils are **1)** Anchal Parishad (*Area Council*), **2)** Bibhagiya Parishad (*Divisional Council*) and **3)** Nirbahi Parishad (*Central Executive Council*).

The overall activities of Nijera Kori are planned and monitored through weekly sub-centre meeting, monthly anchal parishad meeting, bi-monthly divisional parishad meeting, quarterly nirbahi parishad meeting, annual divisional staff convention and finally at central

staff convention/council. On behalf of the above councils the Coordinator regularly consults the Governing Body.

For linking the grassroots, on the other hand, each area office has 3-4 sub-centres, which are made up of female and male field staff. They, through living collectively in a centre in the field, manage the activities of Nijera Kori along with the landless people. The groups themselves have their own structure for group activities.

Nijera Kori ensures that all staff and target group members have equal participation in the planning, monitoring and implementation of its activities. According to group structure, the groups, through annual group meetings, village, union, Upazila and ancholic committee meetings, annual group conventions and groups' representative meetings, evaluate their previous activities, discuss problems and remedial measures and formulate their next plans of action. Nijera Kori staff, by participating in those meetings, become part of the decisions taken in these meetings, which they later share in Nijera Kori's internal meetings/forums as per organisational structure. This process of synthesizing opinions from group level to central staff convention/council and its subsequent reflection in the formulation of a concrete plan shapes the participatory management system of Nijera Kori. (See Annex-B

1.6 Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting system of Nijera Kori

Nijera Kori has been practicing a comprehensive planning monitoring and evaluation (PME) and reporting system ensuring equal participation of staff and landless groups at all stages in the whole process (See Annex-C). The landless groups evaluate their activities and formulate plans through regular meetings. In these meetings leaders, representatives of landless groups/committees from other working areas actively participate, along with the field staff of Nijera Kori. In fact, these meetings constitute the basis of the PME and management system. The information and recommendations generated from these meetings of the landless groups are discussed at various other levels (i.e. village, union, area and Upazila committee meetings and conventions etc.) of the organisation. The opinions and proposals of the landless received through this process are then sent to the sub-centres of Nijera Kori through Nijera Kori field staff, which later are discussed and evaluated at various levels of the organisation. Guidelines for Nijera Kori activities are set, through this process, and Nijera Kori staff members formulate the plans for the organisation on the basis of that. The executive council, divisional council and area presidents directly participate in field level activities on a regular basis. In addition, the staff and the groups at times visit each others' working areas with a view to assess, evaluate, monitor and provide necessary counselling to their counterparts. The same process is followed when written reports are produced in each meeting based on which the annual report is made at the end of activity year.

1.7 Working areas and Nijera Kori (details in annex -D-A (table) and D-B (map))

From the very inception, the Nijera Kori activists started working in the areas where the poor constitute the majority of the population and who mainly depend on manual labour to earn a living.

Most of these working areas fall in close vicinity of the seacoasts and river basins. Besides, Nijera Kori also works in some specific areas where most of the inhabitants belong to the vulnerable communities such as weavers, blacksmiths,

Table -1: NK working areas

<i>Year</i>	2010	2011
Village	1,356	1,363
Union	170	171
Upazila	40	40
District	17	17
Division	4	4

}

tobacco and sugarcane farmers etc. and in the areas where fundamentalism, human rights abuse and violation against women are rampant. Nijera Kori provides enough logistical support to carry out its programmes at field level, coordinate all its activities including regular trainings. Overall activities in the working areas are managed and coordinated through 54 sub-centres, 16 areas, 4 divisional offices cum training centres located respectively in Tangail (*Gala*), Bogra (*Noongola*), Comilla (*Chandina*) and Khulna (*Maniktala*) (*table:1*). The Head Office of Nijera Kori is located in Dhaka.

1.8 Why is Nijera Kori different?

focus on social mobilisation

- Nijera Kori believes that poverty can be redeemed only by the inner strength and capacity of those in poverty because they alone have the knowledge of its dimension and experience to fight it.
- Nijera Kori's strategy is to provide capacity to the poor and marginalised groups in the society with largely intangible resources, which promote their self-confidence and build their organisational capacity so that they are able to claim their rights themselves directly, rather than through others acting on their behalf.
- Nijera Kori's priority is to promote collective empowerment, rather than the empowerment of the individual. However, we recognise the importance of changes at the level of the individual, beginning with the issue of individual consciousness.

democratic management structure

- Participatory democracy is the core value that shapes Nijera Kori's management structure and decision-making process. For example all the representatives at area, division and central level are elected by the staff for two years.
- Nijera Kori believes that democratic management is necessary to successfully establish the rights of the poor.
- Nijera Kori imbues democratic practices through participation and accountability in planning, implementation, and evaluation and overall management not only with the landless groups that Nijera Kori organises, but replicates and practises within the organisation itself.
- Our own structure and culture seeks, as far as possible, to replicate the principles of democracy, accountability, transparency and gender equity that are fostered through our attempts to organise the landless.

stand against development through micro credit

- What has set Nijera Kori apart from perhaps every other NGO in Bangladesh is that Nijera Kori eschews micro-credit services. At a time when Bangladesh has become famous for its innovations in the arena of micro-credit, Nijera Kori has a strong reservation against micro-credit and services delivery which it thinks is

counterproductive therefore eschew continued with its principle of 'we-don't-lend-credit'.

pro-people role of staff

- Nijera Kori expects a higher level of dedication, commitment and pro people skills from its staff that extend beyond what is generally required by the more professionalised NGOs in Bangladesh.
- In general, staff in large organisations expect and receive a higher remuneration, more comfortable working conditions and more benefits than Nijera Kori staff. However, Nijera Kori believes that this widens the social and economic distance between its staff and its constituency, thereby jeopardising the relationship on which their interactions are based.
- Nijera Kori staff are essentially social activists, who live among and interact closely with the poor whom they try to mobilise.
- The role of Nijera Kori staff is less of an information collector' (as is the case in many development organisations), and more like that of a 'facilitating agent, as a 'brother' or 'sister'. Their main purpose is to advise and support the collective effort of the poor by skill building that creates bonds of trust between them. This impacts favourably the organisations of the poor (landless for instance) by giving the groups within it a stronger sense of unity and a greater set of common goals and values.
- Nijera Kori is characterised by a high frequency of meetings, for both staff and landless groups. It is this frequency of face-to-face meetings, which the organisation regards as the most important way of promoting closer relationships, establishing trust and ensuring participatory decision-making and accountability.
- Nijera Kori is not a money collecting organisation; people's income is not shared or managed by it, instead the people manage their own income and savings

work with the most excluded groups

- Nijera Kori aims to reach the most poor and marginalised groups in the society. These groups include those dependent on physical labour as their main source of livelihood.
- Nijera Kori works with specifically vulnerable communities, such as indigenous communities, fisher-folk, farmers, weavers etc.
- Development organisations in general have failed to reach the 'hardcore poor' - people whose poverty is so immense that they are often excluded as targets for micro-credit activities, since they are not considered credit-worthy. Nijera Kori aims to reach those people - without land or any other resources - whose basic human rights and needs are largely ignored by the society.

development of autonomous landless organisation

- Nijera Kori emphasises on promoting autonomous nature and structure of the landless organisations so that the landless members gradually decrease their dependency on Nijera Kori and finally stand on their own feet.
- Nijera Kori follows a strategy through its inbuilt processes of encouraging participation and sharing both in physical and financial terms, among the group members in all it's

activities to inculcate a sense of belonging to the organisation vis-à-vis a feeling of ownership of work and responsibilities which ultimately lead them towards developing an independent autonomous organisation.

approach to gender equity

- Gender inequality remains central to Nijera Kori's understanding of poverty and social injustice. We recognise that patriarchy perpetuates the disadvantages of inequality, injustice and exclusion, which are intensified in relation to women and girls. In addition, they also suffer from gender discrimination and domestic violence within their household, restrictions on their physical movements and discrimination within labour markets, beyond the household in the larger society.
- However, Nijera Kori believes that female and male relations need not be inherently antagonistic and that men can become women's allies in the struggle against patriarchal oppression. It is with this in mind Nijera Kori attempts to sensitise men regarding gender and their roles and mindset in existing patriarchal systems. Nijera Kori also works towards including men to support and participate in women's struggles for dignity, respect and equality.

CHAPTER TWO

SECTION ONE: LANDLESS GROUPS AND ITS ACTIVITIES

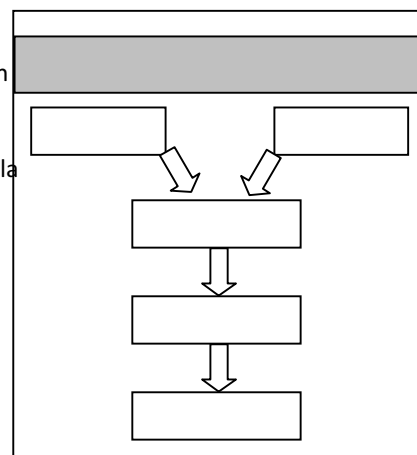
2.1

the landless group and its activities

Figure 1: Group structure

2. Landless groups and its activities (Details in exhibit 2 and 3)

Primary landless groups are formed with a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 30 members. The groups are separated by gender to ensure that women have a safe space to express their voice in the context of a predominantly patriarchal society that stresses exclusion of women from public spheres. At a later stage, when both women's and men's groups are more receptive and able to work together as equals, committees are formed integrating the sexes. Once groups are expanded to cover two-thirds of the targeted population of a particular village, union or thana, committees are formed in those areas (See Figure 1 and Annex-B). However, the landless can form additional co-ordination committees called 'area committee' as per need for running organisational activities in a particular area, even if the organised group members constitute less than two-thirds of the targeted population. The formation and renewal of the landless' committees at every level is done through annual conventions. In this process, the landless groups gradually get strengthened and achieve a reputable identity, which ultimately ensures their participation in the local power structures.



2.1 Formation of landless group and members (Detail in index table 2 and 3)

Analysis of achievement:

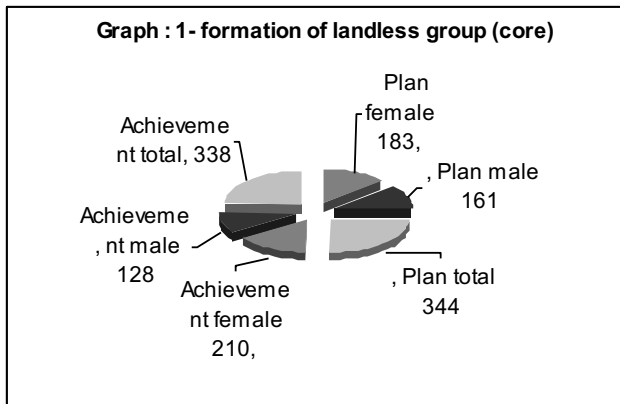
Nijera Kori believes that one of the most important features in awareness-building is organizing men and women who are deprived of their rights. Through the formation of new groups, the deprived masses are included in the organisational and awareness-building processes. In the current activity year, in its core activity, the rate of group formation was 98% as per plan. The rate of achievement was 115% for female groups and 80% for male groups. In a patriarchal society, a higher rate of female group formation is an obvious reflection of a move towards women's empowerment and of their collective strength to voice demands.

Compared to that of last year, the rate of group formation is 33% less this year. Noticeably, in the activity year, four new Adivasi groups were formed (*female group- 1, male groups- 3*). At present, there are 92 Adivasi groups in total. The marginal Adivasi masses who reside in the plains were organised and incorporated in movements for demanding rights. As adivasis (*indigenous peoples*) are marginalised by mainstream Bengalis, the mutual trust thus being forged is a commendable achievement.

Description	Landless Group			Landless Member		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Up to March 10 (Core)	5,303	3,981	9,284	105,262	87,439	192,701
Plan	183	161	344	3,660	3,220	6,880
Achievement	210	128	338	4,034	2,457	6,491
Total March 11 (Core)	5,513	4,109	9,622	109,296	89,896	199,192
MJF March 11	922	691	1,613	17,758	15,333	33,091
Total NK March 11	6,435	4,800	11,235	127,054	105,229	232,283

The current year saw the inclusion of a new donor partner from September 2010, Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) to our existing Donors. The funds for MJF is specifically targeted for land related activities and is confined to two of Nijera Kori's working areas, namely Char Jabbar and Ramgoti.

In the annexure, **table-2** assesses the percentage of new group formation in terms of the overall core-programme plan. Division-wise, the rate of new group formation was – Rajshahi 108%, Dhaka 72%, Khulna 90% and Chittagong 108%. The achievement of formation of new group shows that Dhaka division has formed the lowest number of groups. Additionally, it highlights that the rate of female group formation was 25% more than male group formation in Khulna and Chittagong divisions. The formation of male group was 7% more in Dhaka Division, as per plan.



The rate of total group formation was 99% as per plan. **Graph-1** analyses Nijera Kori's core programme achievement. It shows that the formation of female group was 13% more than the total core programme plan. On the other hand, the formation of male group was 20% less than that planned. However, within the core programme plan, the percentage of group formation was 99% and can be considered as a satisfactory achievement.

Table - 1 depicts separately Nijera Kori's programmes, MJF's project and total status till March 2011. Up to March 2011, the total number of groups formed was 11,235 (with 6,435 female groups and 4,800 male groups). Among these, the number of core groups was 9,622 (female 5,513 and male 4,109) and MJF activity related groups was 1,613, (female 922 and male 691).

Nijera Kori's awareness and group formation activities have incorporated both the economically disadvantaged men and women who are directly involved as members in Nijera Kori's landless organisation's activities, and those who are indirectly participating in this process. (According to the general policy of the landless groups, usually 1 female and 1 male from each family are group members).

However, other family members and people from a similar background who do not belong to the group also participate indirectly in the activities of the landless groups (like listening to the discussions in the group's meeting or people's songs, viewing cultural activities, helping the members in gathering information and, if necessary, also in disseminating and participating in the movements of landless groups etc).

Through these activities, the landless men, women and children are indirectly included in Nijera Kori's awareness building and group formation activities. Till March 2011, out of total 128,857 landless group families, a total of 631,398 males/females participated as auxiliary force. *(One family is formed of 4.39 members on average. Source, Statistics Pocket Book Bangladesh 2010).*

As a result of the formation of new groups, 7 villages and one union have come under the groups' activities. Besides, coverage of three additional villages is complete *(75% of people in a village need to be organised in order for a village to be "covered". In case of union or upazila 75% unions are required to be included in the activities of landless organisation).*

Reasons analysis

Over the past few years, the landless groups have made village based plans after considering financial limitations and other prevailing realities. Nijera Kori decides the final plan after analysing the plans presented by the groups. In the activity year, practical planning was given more importance both by the organisation and Nijera Kori. Plans were made after assessing financial limitations, problems and risks.

Box:- 1

"I have done mistakes by remaining alone. I want to join the landless group."

Maniruzzaman (age: 40), Father: Insan Ali, Village: Char Dhuli, Upazila: Dhanbari, Tangail. He is a share-cropper by profession.

The activities of the landless organisation have begun again in the Char Dhuli village from last year. The landless organisation works in the Char Dhuli village only with one male and two female members. Mobarak Hossain, Father- Hatem Ali, Village – Char Dhuli. Mobarak is a member of the No. 1 Char Dhuli landless group. Bablu Mian, a neighbour of the landless member Mobarak, borrowed 1,000/ taka from Mobarak in July 2010. Despite passage of two consecutive months, Bablu Mian, a relatively well-off person, began dilly-dallying in repaying the debt. The landless member Mobarak requested Bablu Mian to give him his money back for more than once. But, Bablu Mian intimidated him rather than paying the loan. At one point, Bablu Mian even beat up the landless Mobarak. Although Maniruzzaman witnessed it, he did not have the courage to resist or protest against this incident.

Later the landless group organised a salish in the evening on this incident. The landless group made it compulsory for Bablu to be present in the salish. Maniruzzaman came to the salish to see everything. As the landless members advocated on behalf of Mobarak against the wealthy supporters of Bablu, Maniruzzaman became very happy and astonished and said, "Oh, the landless members support each other so intensely! Even a brother does not do too much for his own brother. It is even a greater bond than the bond of blood."

Bablu Mian sought apologies from everyone after the judgment in the salish was delivered. Besides, he had to return the whole loan along with two hundred taka more as compensation. This additional amount of money covered Mobarak's medical expenses and one day salary. After the salish was over, Maniruzzaman said to Mobarak: "Brother! I have been mistaken. I could gather no courage in the morning when Bablu Mian beat you up. You landless provide support to each other as brothers. But, I am lonely. Today I understand that a lonely person has rarely any strength. This is why I wish to be a member of the landless group." Maniruzzaman, with the support from another landless member Mobarak, has formed the Char Dhuli no. 2 landless group. Maniruzzaman is now the President of the landless group

In the activity year, during the planning phase, the landless organisations emphasized the practice of landless organisations' policies and gave more priority to following the policy at group level than to the formation of new groups. As a result, the rate of group formation was less this year than that last year. The long term result of this change in strategy will be visible in future assessments.

It may be mentioned that from September 2010 in Char Jabbar and Romgati area, two year long projects entitled, "Ensuring Democracy, Accountability and Land Rights for the Marginalised," have started financed by Manusher Jonno Foundation. For this reason, Nijera Kori's activity areas have been divided into two sections – core activity and MJF project. In different indexes, statistical information is provided separately for core programme and MJF project.

Lessons learnt

Both Nijera Kori and landless groups feel that undertaking practical policies will bring about dynamism and sustainability of activities. Instead of extending activities in new villages and unions, it will yield better results if new groups are formed for coverage (*village, union and upazila*) in old activity areas. Besides, Nijera Kori and groups believe that rigorous efforts ought to be made to practice and follow organisational policies made by the landless groups themselves to ensure continuity. It is also necessary to encourage the formation of new groups at the own initiative of landless members. This strategy will achieve qualitative results in awareness building and group formation, and guarantee that the groups are more responsible in executing their responsibilities. It will also promote sustainability and surety.

2.2 Group, annual group's, representative and joint meetings (*Detail in index table 4,5*)

Analysis of achievement:

Discussion, evaluation and dialogue with landless groups form the main basis of conscientisation and group formation activities. The members participate in the discussions and evaluation processes; they also organise and conduct all the activities. In group meetings, the members select the topics and conduct the discussions. The members, after considering the prevailing problems in the area, decide on the course of actions. They select the trainer and, when necessary, they select representatives to participate in *salishes*. Above all, the members practice and prioritize group accountability in the meetings. As a result, members become more proficient at making logical decisions; gradually, the activities become more participatory, and the roles and responsibilities of each member increase.

Description	Group Meeting			R M	J M	AGM
	Male	Female	Total			
Plan (<i>core</i>)	100,161	133,543	233,704	663	594	9,499
Achievement	81,396	111,635	183,031	823	782	8,283
MJF (<i>plan</i>)	7,384	9,101	16,485	76	9	1,012
MJF Achievement	5,770	7,198	12,968	90	14	833
Total NK	107,545	142,644	250,189	913	806	9,216

RM=Representative Meeting, JM=Joint Meeting, AGM=Annual Group Meeting

By evaluating the statistics, certain trends become apparent. Index-4 shows that the number of group meetings within core programme activities

was 83% as per plan (84% among female groups and 81% among male groups) It may be mentioned that the number of group meetings this year was 1% less than that last year.

In the activity year, the percentage of meetings with staff members present was 82%. On the other hand, landless groups organised 58% of group meetings on their own initiative. Compared to last year, there were 5% more self-initiated meetings this year. On the other hand, on the basis of total group meetings, compared to last year, this year the landless groups organised 6% more group meetings on their own.

This shows that the landless groups have become more responsible and self-sufficient, which is a positive aspect. In addition, the rate of self-initiated meetings was 1% less for male groups, and 1% more for female groups. The higher rates of self-initiated meetings reflect growing awareness in terms of undertaking and executing responsibilities. The higher rate for women's groups underscores women's leadership and empowerment.

It may be mentioned that, on the basis of total planning, the rate of execution of group meetings was 82%. In addition, the landless groups organised representative and joint meetings through mutual contact, coordination and solidarity on matters of issue-based movements. Yearly group meetings were organised to increase leadership's accountability, transparency and quality. The members made policies after evaluating last year's achievements, weaknesses and strengths. In these meetings, they identified and evaluated the problems in the concerned areas, calculated the risks and then decided on the course of action. As a result, the deprived masses' ability to establish their demands has become stronger, which is noticeable from a review of the case-studies. Furthermore, the practices of participation, group decision-making, responsibility and accountability have disseminated within a wider population than a limited group circle. This is the qualitative result of conscientisation and group formation.

An analysis of *annex table- 4 and- 5* reveals that on the basis of core programme activity plan, the rate of yearly group meeting was 89%, representative meeting was 124% and joint meeting was 133%. It may be mentioned that, on the basis of Nijera Kori's total plan, the rate of materialisation of these meetings were – annual group meeting 85%, representative meeting 124% and joint meeting 138%.

In the activity year's annual group meeting, the ordinary members evaluated the qualities of the leaders, their ability to undertake responsibility and their dedication and pledge to the group. On the basis of evaluation by the ordinary members, changes were brought to the leadership in the core programme related groups. The total number of members was 1,096 (female 593 and male 503). 1,148 group leaders were changed- (*female 787 and male 661*). In place of these old leaders, new leaders were selected democratically from among the more capable new members.

However, the rate of change in leadership was less this year than that last year. The change of group leadership and the decreased rate of change in leadership highlight two significant points. First, the landless groups are gradually becoming more capable in terms of leadership, accountability and transparency. Second, there is no solo leadership in the group. In fact the evaluation and decisions of the ordinary members depict plurality of leadership. The ordinary members are gaining more awareness in accountability, transparency, responsibility and joint decision-making.

Reasons analysis

The number of group meetings and annual group meetings held was more or less satisfactory. However, the number of group meetings held was less than planned for two main reasons. The number of staff was less this year than that last year, although some new staff was recruited for a greater part of the year. Besides, at field-level, some landless members were compelled to leave their areas in search of livelihood.

On the other hand, as per plan, the rate of representative and joint meetings held was comparatively higher. More meetings were held in many areas to decide the strategies of issue-based movements. In addition, members who left in quest of livelihood returned to their areas. Under the circumstances, the landless groups organised representative meetings and joint meetings to make the group members aware of group activities, and to encourage participation and accountability. As a result, there were more joint and representative meetings than planned initially.

Usually, annual group meetings are held at the end of the year. Landless groups also hold their conferences at the same time. As a result, there is a significant increase in organisational activities. During this season, members are already occupied with boro rice cultivation. For these reasons, fewer annual meetings are held and attended. In future, the staff and members feel that these practical limitations should be evaluated carefully before planning and timing these meetings. Nijera Kori and landless groups also think that the annual plan should be reviewed at least twice in group conferences and committee meetings.

Lessons learnt

It is difficult to ensure sustainability of the members in awareness-building and group formation activities. Sometimes the number of members is more, and at other times, less, depending on the commitment of the members. Currently, in the context of relatively lower number of members, emphasis was given to organising meetings at the initiative of the groups themselves to maintain continuity of the activities. However, in the future, attention should be given towards follow-up of group-initiated subject-based meetings, discussions and experiences in group meetings. It is necessary to ensure and encourage the practice of accountability and keep it ongoing among the members/leaders through group meetings, representative meetings and yearly group meetings. In addition, to reduce the gap in awareness between the ordinary members and the leaders, besides the practice of accountability, strategic activities should be adopted.

2.3 Landless group workshops (*Detail in index table -5*)

The landless group organised day long workshops at the field-level to analyse the activities of the group, identify organisational strengths and weaknesses, decide future activities, and assess local issues and risks. Other one day workshops were also organised on specific subjects.

Analysis of achievement:

In the activity area, besides organisational workshops, both Nijera Kori and landless groups gave greater emphasis to subject-based workshops. These subject-based workshops contributed in making group discussions more informative. They enabled the members to become more capable of gathering and evaluating information, and analysing local problems and issues. As a result, in the activity areas, the members have become more dynamic in making qualitative plans on different issues.

In the activity year, a total of 200 workshops were organised. As per plan the rate of achievement was 100%.

It may be mentioned that among these workshops, 172 workshops fell under core programme plan. Table-3 provides information on core programme plan and MJF project activity separately. In total 5,044 landless members attended these workshops.

Description of workshops	Planning			Materialised		
	Core	MJF	Total	Core	MJF	Total
Follow-up of watch committee workshops	7	-	7	6	-	6
Fundamentalism and its impact	18	-	18	14	-	16
Gender	16	-	16	14	-	14
Right to reproductive health care	16	-	16	14	-	14
Development of leadership	16	9	25	15	11	26
Participatory-based planning	53	-	53	40	-	40
Adivasi and land rights	4	-	4	3	-	3
Globalisation and sustainable development	16	-	16	12	-	12
Joint production management	10	-	10	10	-	10
Food sovereignty	16	-	16	13	-	13
Right to information	-	-	-	13	-	13
Local development	-	-	-	17	-	17
Land and Women	-	9	9	0	7	7
Local issue and action required to be taken by landless group	-	9	9	0	9	9

As per plan, the rate of participation was 101%.

While organising workshops, two important features became noticeable to both Nijera Kori and landless groups. First, the participation of members who were compelled to reside outside their areas for livelihood purposes was guaranteed. Second, joint participation of both the ordinary members and the leaders were ensured. A remarkable feature of the discussions in the group meetings is that it reduces the gap in awareness between the members and the leaders, which has a positive impact on the execution of group activities. Besides, the ability of the absentee members to absorb subject-based information and their eagerness to participate in activities and movements show their sense of responsibility.

In addition, in the activity year, the landless groups demanded workshops on food security and the Right to Information Policy, which underscore the fact that the landless can decide for themselves on a pragmatic and logical basis. This shows qualitative change in their awareness. In the activity year, there were consistent improvements in terms of active participation of the leaders and the ability of members to organise workshops and conduct discussions. Progress was also noticeable in terms of strategic abilities of members of the quality of their discussions. In future planning, topics for subject-based workshops should be selected based on the realities of each area.

Reasons analysis

In the activity year, due to financial constraints, comparatively lower number of trainings was planned. In order to make up for the gap created by insufficient trainings, Nijera Kori and landless groups organised a number of workshops throughout the year. They selected and prioritized the topics on the basis of training modules in their workshops. Compared to last year, 36% more workshops were organised this year, and, at field-level, the workshops were more definite and consistent for the members. As a result, for the most part, awareness was achieved and continuity of group formations ensured, even though the number of trainings was less than that planned.

Lessons learnt

At different times of the year, when the members return to their areas of activity, subject-based work-shops need to be organised for them. Workshops should also be organised to reduce the gap in awareness between members and leaders, and emphasis should be given to the main issues affecting the area while organizing workshops. By identifying the activity area's organisational strengths weaknesses, risks and course of actions, sub-committee based participatory and qualitative polices ought to be undertaken.

2.4 Committee Formation, Meeting and Group Convention (*Detail in index table-6 and 7*)

Organisational committees are formed at the village, union and *upazila* levels. When 66% of the population in a village is organised, a village committee is formed with seven representatives from the village landless groups. Similarly, when 66% of the villages in an area are organised, a union committee is formed with thirteen representatives. The same is done at the *upazila* level, but the committee is comprised of twenty-one members. When it is not possible to form a committee at union or *upazila* level, an *anchal* (area) committee can be formed at the village sub-centre to support and coordinate activities, ensure accountability and conduct rights movements. An *anchal* committee is formed with 11 members. The organisation committee is elected for one year by a democratically run open vote during the annual group convention. In the event that the time span of an annual group convention is more than one year, the previous committee can carry on the responsibility on an ad hoc basis till a new committee is formed.

Analysis of achievement

The formation of committees of the landless in any particular area reflects the qualitative situation of organisational activities and the strong foundation of leadership of the landless in that area. It also highlights the capacity of the landless organisation to challenge as well as participate in local power structures, creating a more balanced relationship between the elites and the landless.

An analysis of *table-6* shows that a total number of 07 committees were formed consisting of 04 village committees and 03 regional committees in the working year. ***It should be noted that 01 of the 04 village committees was formed in the working area under the MJF Project.*** Again, a total number of 06 new committees were formed including 03 village committees and 03 regional committees under Nijera Kori's core programme areas.

There were a total of 353 committees of the landless organisations at the village level, 23

Description	V	U	Up	A
Plan (Committee Formation)	-	-	-	-
Achievement	3	-	--	1
Plan (Convention)	353	23	3	33
Achievement	335	22	3	35
Plan (Committee Meeting)	4,089	268	28	393
Achievement	3,871	254	28	384

(V=Village, U= Union, Up= Upazila, A= Area)

committees at the union level, 3 committees at the *upazila* level and 36 committees at the regional level.

The leadership of the landless organisations, acting on behalf of the landless committees, has been able to make a more successful bargain with local power structures at the village, union and *upazila* levels in asserting

the rights of the landless in areas where there are committees. The local communities, professional groups and even the local power elite are increasingly including the landless leaders on discussions of many local issues, which are evident from the movement-based case studies of the landless groups and the participation of the landless leaders in the *salishes* or local arbitrations. The landless committees also play the role of watch group in the working areas of the landless committees. As a result, information regarding any kind of irregularity, injustice, corruption and/or anomaly comes to the landless groups via common people. This is a definite indication of continuous progress in terms of the importance, accountability, mobilisation and establishment of conscientisation of the landless groups.

An analysis of the statistics in the annexure **table-7** reveals that the percentage of landless group committee meetings held meets expectations. The percentage of meetings organised was 95% at village level, 95% at union level, 100% at *upazila* level and 98% at the regional level, as per plan. These high rates highlight an improvement of the roles, activities and responsibilities of landless organisations. Collective leadership, exercise of collective decision-making process, accountability and responsibility are concrete positive factors of the gradually strengthening and dynamic process of landless group formations. Finally, an analysis of the issue-wise case studies shows the active role of the landless committees in establishing the rights of the deprived communities.

Generally the landless groups hold group conventions at end of the working year. Here, the members review and evaluate the progress of the programmes in accordance with the annual plan. In addition, they undertake the planning for the next working year. The democratic election process ensures the renewal of committees and election of new leadership. Finally, the group convention is an important method for both providing leadership of the groups and self-evaluation of the members.

Annexure **table-7** is analysed here to evaluate the successes and weaknesses as identified by the members themselves. The percentage group conventions held was 95% at village level, 96% at the Union level, 100% at *upazila* level and 106% at the regional level. It should be noted that the percentage of group conventions held under the auspices of planning for the core programme was 94% at village level, 95% at union level, 100% at *upazila* level and 108% at the regional level. Moreover, a comparative scenario of the division-wise achievements as revealed in the analysis of the annexure **table-7** is noteworthy. The highest rate of percentage of group conventions held at village level was 89% in Khulna division and the lowest was 87% in the Dhaka division. The highest percentage of conventions held was 100% in the Rajshahi, Khulna and Chittagong divisions while it was the lowest or 83% in the Dhaka division.

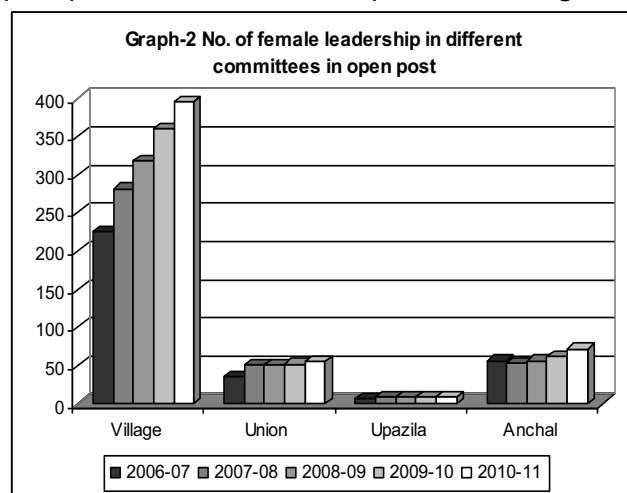
It should be noted that there was no landless committee at the Upazila level of the Khulna division. Finally, the highest rate of conventions organised at regional level is 150% in the Rajshahi division and 100% in three other divisions.

There is a slight variation in the division-wise achievement rate of group conventions held. However, it can be said that the over-all rate of group conventions meets expectations. Two salient and qualitative aspects of group conventions are the democratic exercise of the committees and their practice of accountability. A new mentality of the members to think and accept the programmes of the landless organisations as their own has developed. Therefore, the process of establishing ownership has become more effective and dynamic. Finally, the general members elect the leadership of the organisation in a democratic way by evaluating the leader's role, responsibilities, competency and pledges to the organisation, thereby intensifying the process of collective leadership. As a result, the acceptability of the landless organisation to the local people also strengthens.

A greater number of people from marginal and indigenous communities are now represented in the leadership positions of the landless organisations, which signifies a new and affirmative change in organisational structure. The fact that indigenous leaders are elected even when they contest with Bengali members is a testament of the positive participation, social recognition and empowerment of the most deprived of indigenous peoples. A total number of 19 indigenous leaders (*women- 08 and men- 11*) have been elected, contesting in both the positions of regional committee members and open posts. It should be noted that of 19 indigenous leaders, 05 (*women- 02 and men- 03*) were elected in the open posts. The collective and participatory leadership of both men and women is an important qualitative feature of social mobilisation activities. Participation of women in the leadership of the landless organisations is especially noteworthy. The trend of women's leadership in the open post is analysed in the **Graph 2**.

The victory of women candidates in open posts in the village committee elections signifies the establishment of female leadership in the landless organisations, as well as in society. The election of women leaders in the open posts at the union, *upazila* and regional committees speaks to the participation and recognition of women in leadership positions in the societal and local power structures and attests to their capability and competency.

However, an analysis of **Graph-2** reveals that the rate of electing women leaders in the open posts of different committees of the landless organisations in the last five years (*2006-07 to 2010-11*) was 64% percent, with a rising trend. This rate of electing women leaders is 75% in the village committees, 53% in the union committees, 50% in the *upazila* committees and 29% percent in the regional committees. It should be noted that only in the 2007-08 working year, female leadership in the regional committees declined by 5%.



However, the upward trend in female leadership continued in the next year. The rate of female leaders in the open posts of the village committees is comparatively higher than that of other committees, as the number of village committees outnumbers other committees. This is a clear and positive indication of women's growing participation in the decision-making process, and evidence of women's competency, responsibility and acceptability within the organisation. This upward trend of female leadership can and will contribute to women's empowerment, active participation in local power structures and the larger society.

Reasons analysis

The issues of guiding the landless groups in a consistent way and strengthening their basis of organisational principles were prioritised this working year. As a result, the landless organisations did not undertake any planning to form committees in the

working year. The landless organisations formed new committees at the village and regional levels as needed when the conditions for committee formations were fulfilled. Thus, new committees were formed at the village and regional levels although there was no plan to form committees in the working year. Three new regional committees were formed in the Rajshahi division even though there were no such plans. As a result, more regional conventions were organised in the Rajshahi division. Apart from that, several committees at the village level renewed their committees through representative meetings, despite the busy schedules of the members in different areas. Later, those committees organised a conference in April 2011. As a result, no statistics from the aforementioned convention could be added in the annual report of April 2010-March-11. As such the achievement rate in group conventions held is slightly lower.

BOX- 2: -Condition for organisational committee formation	
Village committee	<i>In a village 75% population need to be organised in order for a village to be covered; In a village, of the total number of groups, when 25 groups are promoted to the primary level, when 50 groups to the secondary level and when 25 groups to the third level, a village committee can be formed;</i>
Union committee	<i>In one union when the total number of villages is 33 in number, village committee will be formed. Besides, 33 villages must have strong landless groups; in other villages, landless organisational activities must prevail.</i>
Upazila committee	<i>In an upazila when 33 unions are covered, union committee will be formed; besides, in 33 unions, there should be strong landless organisations; in other unions or areas landless organisational activities should prevail;</i>

BOX- 3: "Group Savings is our Umbrella."- Nargis Begum.

Nargis Begum. Husband – Lal Mian. Village: Roypur, Union: West Mohammadpur, Upazila: Daudkandi, Comilla. Her family comprises of five members including two sons, one daughter and her parents. Her husband, Lal Mian, was a daily labourer who used to break bricks. In 2007 Lal Mian injured his hand while at work and became incapable of doing any menial work. Nargis Begum is the only income earner in her family. They have the lone abode of a thaw-hatched hut. The hut becomes impossible to live in if the thaw cannot be changed after every two years. As Nargis has to toil very hard to collect two meals a day for her children, it is not possible for her to change the thaw of her hut.

However, Nargis Begum has been a member of the Roypur no. 2 women's team since 1988. Total number of members in the Roypur no. 2 women's team is 18. On December 2010, Nargis Begum proposed to distribute the group savings to repair the thaw of her hut roof. Seven more members of the landless group, along with Nargis Begum, proposed to distribute the group savings money amongst themselves to meet up different needs and crisis. Roypur no.2 women's group decided to distribute the group savings money on an equal basis amongst all its members. On January 2011, Roypur no. 2 women's group, kept 5,000/ taka as the deposit money with themselves and the rest they equally distributed among themselves. Each of the members got 4,500/ taka. Nargis Begum repaired the thaw roof of her hut with her share of the savings. Now she says: 'The savings money is money of our own. We distribute it among ourselves in case of need. This year it was impossible for us to stay in the house during the monsoon. The group savings is as important as our home or abode. It is the umbrella which helps us in times of emergency.'

Lessons learnt

Last year it was observed that there was a qualitative deficiency in forming committees, both for members, as well as for groups. For this reason, last August 2010, in the bi-annual members' council, the conditions for group formation were reevaluated and new conditions adopted, with the consensus of all the members. According to the landless groups and members, the new conditions will make the committees more active and strengthen the empowerment process of landless members.

2.5 Group savings and bank account (*Detail in index table - 8, 9 and 17*)

Group savings is collected to conduct group organisational activities and joint economic activities. The rate of contribution is decided with the consensus of the group, but the group is encouraged to consider the financial ability of all its members. The groups take full responsibility for managing the accounts, but Nijera Kori staff assists with book keeping. No staff ever collects funds or operates the account.

Analysis of achievement:

The group members have adopted the strategy of drawing group savings and keeping the fund to themselves for the purpose of raising joint accounts. Generally the group members use their deposited savings in four ways. First, the landless groups use it to conduct their group activities, overall organisational activities of the area and litigations. Second, the members undertake and conduct joint economic activities with the group savings. Third, the members also use the money if a member is in danger or to provide education, medical treatment, road repairing and other relevant development and assistance activities. Fourth, in case of economic necessities during the farming season or any temporary financial crises, the members distribute the group savings equally amongst themselves.

An analysis of the annexure **table-7** shows that the landless groups deposited an amount of Taka 18,031,171 (*female- 10,213,358 and Male- 7,817,813*) as group savings in the working year. In comparison to the planning, the rate of achievement was 88%. ***It should be noted that a total amount of TK 1,748,666 was deposited by the landless groups in the MJF working areas (female- 955,526 and male 793,140).*** Apart from that, different groups decided to distribute the group savings fund among themselves on an equal basis; a total amount of Taka 10,509,530 was shared among the members (*female- 5,644,087 and male- 4,865,443*) in the working year to face temporary economic crisis. The rate of savings distribution amongst members was 14% higher in comparison to that in the previous year. It proves in a definite way that the members are becoming better at collectively facing any economic crisis through group savings, such as meeting demands for additional money in the farming season, managing stress of the unemployment period or any sort of economic or financial complexities. As a result, the necessity to take any sort of traditional credit (*mahajani rin*) or micro credit from any credit lending NGO is gradually declining. Finally the landless groups are being able to undertake joint economic activities with the money of the group savings without taking any sort of credit. This is a positive indicator of the landless members' economic self-reliance and financial empowerment.

An analysis of the annexure **table-17** shows that the landless groups spent a total amount of TK 1,522,663 from the group savings to conduct the overall activities of Nijera Kori, including workshops, re-discussion of the trainings, issue based movements, group conventions, cultural activities, observation of special days, conduction of litigations etc. It proves the financial partnership of the landless groups in the overall programme planning of Nijera Kori in a definite way. The groups spent TK. 1,107,004 in implementing the organisational activities last year (2009-10), which means the economic partnerships between the groups and Nijera Kori in implementing overall programmes increased by 38% in the working year. The landless groups also undertook a number of small but necessary development projects and welfare activities in the areas with their group savings. They spent a total amount of Taka 636,093 in different activities, like repairing of schools and roads, digging and cleaning canals and ponds, offering assistance for education and medical treatment, providing expenses for arranging marriages without dowry etc. Last year the expenditure for similar development and welfare activities was TK. 700,833.

This indicates that the expenditure and participation of the landless groups in conducting activities with group funds declined by 9%. Spending money from group savings or participation of the landless groups in implementing programmes is an important indicator of the participatory nature of the groups. An analysis of the total money spent from the group savings in the working year reveals that the landless groups spent 71% of the total amount of money in implementing organisational activities, and 29% of the total amount in development and welfare activities. This trend of participation of landless groups is an evidence of the members' growing sense of belonging and ownership of organisational activities. In addition, it shows that the landless groups are more responsible in implementing overall programmes. This active and reciprocal trend of participation in the conscientisation and mobilisation activities proves the collective ownership of the landless groups, Nijera Kori and other partner organisations. It should be noted that the landless groups spent around TK 843,373 (*TK 716,013 in organisational activities and TK 127,360 in development and welfare activities*) in the working year.

An analysis of the annexure **table-9** shows that the landless groups opened 139 more bank accounts in the working year (*women- 95 and men- 44*) for more accurate preservation of the groups savings money. Analysis of the opening of new bank accounts in the working year shows that the women's groups opened more bank accounts than the men's groups. This highlights that women's groups are more responsible than men's groups in implementing group activities in accordance with the group principles. It should be noted that the number of total bank accounts thus opened by the landless groups till March 2011 were 4,087 (*women- 2,575 and men- 1,298*).

Reasons analysis

The discrepancy between the income and expenditure of the poor are increasing day by day owing to the exorbitant price hikes of every day essentials and food items. As a result, the amount of everyday expenditure in the landless families has increased. This is why most of the landless groups reduced the amount of their savings in comparison to the previous years. As such, there was a difference between the amount of savings drawn and deposited, and the amount predicted in the plan.

On the other hand, the rate of distribution of additional money during the farming season in the Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions and the distribution of group savings during temporary economic crisis increased. The rate of distribution of the groups savings in other divisions (*Dhaka and Khulna*) decreased in comparison to the previous years. Apart from that, many members received the agricultural subsidy card and could reap the necessary benefits. The small farmers and share cropper members of the landless groups were able to buy seed, fertilizer and other necessary agricultural tools at a fair price in the working year as a result of government intervention. As such, the extra expenses in the farming season- and the amount of the savings to be distributed - decreased in comparison to the previous years.

The rate of opening bank accounts was 28% less in the working year compared to that last year. In some instances, the distance of the banks from the working areas was relatively greater. In other instances, the bank officials expressed their lack of interest to open accounts with joint signature for modest amounts of money. Moreover, the landless groups were bound to pay a higher amount of service charge than the rate of interest or profit obtained against the deposited amount of money this year. It is mainly because of these reasons that the rate of opening new bank account was 28% less in the working year.

Lessons learnt

Considering the present economic realities, it is necessary to reduce the amount of savings and re-fix it by taking consensus of the group. It is also crucial to discourage institutional credit or dependency on professional lender (*Mohajan*). At present, in general, for conducting organisational activities, the landless groups spend more than they save. It is necessary to reduce this added expenditure incurred by the landless groups. With the increase of service charge of commercial banks, the landless groups have become less inclined to open bank accounts. Under the circumstances, it is necessary to encourage them to open bank accounts to keep their savings in safe custody and use it properly. Besides, it is necessary to seek alternative measures for safe custody of savings after discussing the matter with the groups.

2.6 Joint economic activities (*Detail in index table - 13*)

Analysis of achievement

The main purpose of saving is to initiate and conduct joint economic activities so as to enable the development of a group mind-set for community living. To achieve this, landless groups normally take lease of forcibly occupied khas land-water bodies from the government for cultivation of crops, rearing of cattle, and farming of fish. They also establish small businesses jointly to conduct economic activities.

As a result of joint economic activities, the bond between the members in the group strengthens. The members become accustomed to taking joint decisions, learn to execute and manage activities in co-operation with each other and understand the concept of equal distribution. The group members themselves can identify their abilities and weaknesses; they can decide the course of action and by practicing their decisions at the field-level can gain practical experience.

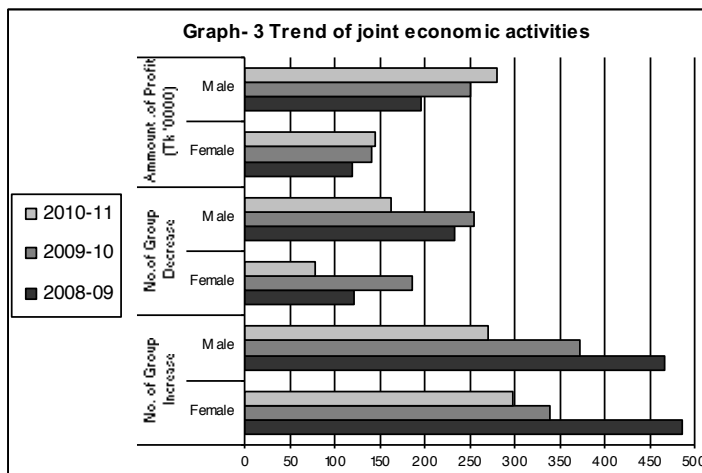
Through equal distribution, the members develop the essence of equal sharing and equal rights. This is a very positive practice. Besides, the members conduct economic activities and become economically self-sufficient, without incurring any debt. This is a noticeable achievement. Besides, due to joint economic activities job opportunities are also created. As a result poor women from female-headed households and the elderly women also get work.

In annexure **table- 13**, joint economic activities of the activity year are analysed. It appears that in the activity year, a total of 568 (*female- 298 and male- 270*) groups conducted joint economic activities lately. This was 20% less than last year's number of groups. On the other hand, from among the old groups involved in economic activities, (*April 2010-March 2011*), a total of 242 groups (*female-79 and male-163*) suspended their economic activities temporarily in the activity year.

In annexure **table- 13**, the number of apparently suspended groups is shown. It may be mentioned that compared to last year the rate of suspended groups was less this year. Last year (*April 2009-March 2010*), the number of suspended groups were 442 (*female- 187 and male- 225*). Compared to suspended groups last year, in the activity year, the rate of suspended group was 45% less (42% for female groups and 63% for male groups).

Analysis of **table- 13** also shows that, compared to last year, in the activity year, transaction of group savings increased by 9%. A total of 5,286 groups (*female- 2,572 and male 2,714*) earned TK 4,256,157 profit by conducting joint economic activities. Besides, due to joint economic activities, in the activity year, a total of 172 members (*female- 46 and male- 126*) were provided with jobs for nearly 6 months in the year. This was 1% more than the rise in job opportunity last year. Till March 2011, a total of 18,388 members (*female- 7048 and male- 11,340*) were provided with job opportunities for nearly six months of the year. This brought security of livelihood and food to members and improved their economic condition.

Analysis of **Graph- 3** shows joint economic activities from 2008-9 to 2011. Firstly, in the last three years, a downward trend is noticeable in landless group's joint economic activities.



But from 2008-9 to 2010-11, this downward trend has lessened. Secondly, compared to 2008-9 in 2009-10, the rate of temporarily suspended economic activities has increased. However, compared to 2009-10, in 2011, the rate of temporarily suspended group economic activities decreased by 45%. A comparative analysis of newly increased activity and temporarily suspended activity or decrease in groups shows that old

groups involved in economic activities from the past are more sustainable in their activities. Thirdly, in the last 3 year, the profit from joint economic activities shows an upward trend. This is a definite proof of increased job opportunities, improved economic condition and, above all, achievement of group economic self-sufficiency.

Reasons analysis

For undertaking joint economic activity, a group needs to have certain amount of monetary solvency. The group also needs to get lease of land and water-bodies at the right time. In the activity year, though few groups had decided to undertake joint economic activities, they could not execute their plan due to financial constraints and lack of opportunity to get lease of land and water-bodies. Normally, the landless groups conduct their joint economic activities by taking lease of land-water bodies on a yearly basis or by taking lease for a few years. In the activity year, the tenure of lease-deeds of some land and water-bodies expired. Before renewing the lease, the groups suspended their economic activities temporarily. On the other hand, in the activity year, some groups sold their cattle. These groups are in the process of buying new cattle. As a result, these groups also suspended their cattle rearing temporarily. For all these reasons, in the activity year, a total of 242 (*female- 79 and male- 163*) groups suspended their economic activities. It may be mentioned that **table- 13** shows a deduction of the number of temporarily suspended groups from the total number.

Lessons learnt

It is necessary to take timely action to re-new the lease of land and water bodies with the owners before the lease expires. By taking lessons from previous years' failure, this year, joint economic activities increased compared to last year. Hence, these lessons must be made more functional and imperative. It is also necessary to initiate joint economic activities not only on land and water-bodies occupied by the landless members but also with neighboring groups. This will strengthen the right of possession of the land by landless groups. To inspire safe custody of group savings, joint small businesses ought to be initiated as an alternative strategy.

2.7 Group consciousness level (*Detail in index table -16*)

Education for the landless groups is a continuous process. When half of the members of any group master the skills taught in one level, the entire group is elevated to the next level, whereby they can continue to gain tools to become self-reliant. **Box 4** discusses in detail.

Achievement analysis

Awareness-building and group formation are time-consuming and continuous processes. The process of awareness is dependent on local, national and global realities and changes. Awareness is a process which is always changing; sometimes awareness increases and some times it decreases. Awareness-building cannot be static and cannot be taken for granted – this is the actual reality. Analysis of **table- 16** shows that in the activity year, from the primary level to secondary level, a total of 228 land groups (*female- 123 and male- 105*) were upgraded. As per plan, the rate of achievement of groups was 90% – female groups 91% and male group 90%.

It may be mentioned that compared to last year, the rate of achievement increased by 4% this year. However, on the basis of promotion to secondary level, there was an increase of 16% in women's groups, but a decrease in men's group of 8%. Awareness-building among women has become more dynamic, which is a very encouraging factor. It may be mentioned that up to March 2010, on the basis of total groups in secondary level, the rate of both male and female's was 24%. On the other hand, the number of promotions of groups from secondary level to third level was 33 in total (*female-16 and male-17*). As per plan, the rate of achievement was 72% (*female- 70% and male- 74%*). Notably, numerical analysis shows that equal numbers of female-male groups have been promoted to the third level.

This is a very positive aspect of awareness-building of both male/female groups. However, the rate of promotion to third level decreased by 18% this year. Noticeably, up to March 2010, on the basis of total static groups, the rate of groups in the third level was 3%.

Reasons analysis

A group usually gets promoted to the next level when a majority of the members develop the same level of awareness. In most cases, however, a majority of the members reside outside their activity areas for a greater part of the year for livelihood purposes. For this reason, all the members cannot attend the group meetings regularly and are unable to participate in organisational activities. As a result, all the members are not in a position to attain the same level of awareness. It may be mentioned that the number of groups promoted to third level is lower than that promoted to secondary level. The conditions for promotion to third level are usually more theoretical than practical. With changes in national and global scenarios, it becomes necessary for the members to become more proficient at attaining and evaluating information. However, this is a continuous and time-consuming process. As mentioned earlier, for practical reasons, many members are involved in multiple occupations, and some of them are compelled to remain outside their activity areas for a greater part of the year. As such, due to mental anxiety, stress and uncertainty, the poor landless members are unable to attain the expected level of awareness. However, the landless members' faith and pledge in the groups, their participation, awareness, and strategic proficiency is gradually increasing.

Lessons learnt

It is necessary to uphold the continuous processes of awareness-building, execution of activities and improvement of capabilities. On the basis of past experience, in this activity year, subject-based workshops were prioritised in order to maintain the continuity of awareness-building process at field-levels. It is necessary to make awareness programs more effective for eligible groups that are identified according to criteria of consciousness level in the beginning of the activity year. In particular, when the absentee members return to their activity areas, joint meetings and issue-based workshops should be organised to make the trainings consistent and more dynamic.

Box 4: Level of Group Consciousness

Primary Level

Groups at this level concentrate on developing basic awareness, organizing members of similar class, learning to trust and sympathize with members of the same class. *The group gives special emphasis on cultivating a sense of unity amongst the members. It organises regular meetings, ensures regular deposits and withdrawal of savings and undertakes the responsibility of forming and renewing group committees.*

Secondary level

At this level the group is able to organise protests against any ongoing injustice. The group is also responsible for ensuring the continuation of the movement for protests if their initial efforts fail. The group members at this level learn from an evaluation of the various activities. The members raise awareness amongst the various professional groups in the society by holding discussions. The group also sees to the participation of its members throughout the village. *The group specifically takes the initiative to invest its savings in joint cooperative ventures and organise members of the same class to ensure group accountability and to develop a group culture.*

Third Level

At this level the group must be able to: distinguish exploitation and oppression and take necessary steps against them, organise movements by ensuring the support of the local people, take initiative for publicity at the national level, strengthen the organisational activities of the villages, ensure support of the neighboring villages, expand and enlarge support of the well-wishers, raise the cultural and awareness amongst people. *The group should specifically develop a clear conception about exploitation, organize for the group savings to be invested in joint ventures, raise cultural awareness amongst the masses and take responsibility for conducting local committees.*

Figure 2: Training structure

Basic 3 days
CHAPTER THREE
SECTION-A: TRAINING OF NIJERA KORI
 Female Male

3.A

Advanced (joint) 4 days
the landless group members training activities
 Higher selection 5 days

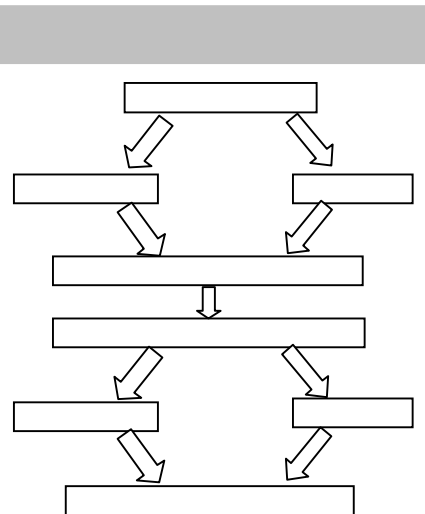
3. TRAINING ACTIVITIES (Details in annex- 10)

Female

Male

Core development trainings are held with 20-25 participants in each session. At the basic level, trainings are imparted to female and male members separately while at the advanced level, trainings are organised jointly. Again, at the higher selection level, they are organised separately and at its higher level, jointly (See Figure-2). This is the strategy that NK has been following so far to provide training to both female and male members. Given the prevailing socio-religious condition, trainings are organised separately in order to create a safe space, especially for women, so that they can interact openly with other fellow participants.

Afterwards, female and male members participate together at the advanced level to create an environment of reciprocal interaction, developing a greater understanding and overcoming gender bias. The same process is followed at the higher selection and training levels for the same reasons. A few other trainings are also undertaken based on specific demands of groups from the working areas, which are jointly attended by men and women. An example of this is a joint cultural training organised at the basic and advanced levels with 20 female and male cultural group members. Trainings on issues like "Leadership Development", "Joint Production Management", "Right and Access to Information", "Land Laws and Management Systems", "Citizens Rights and Constitutional Guarantees", "Globalisation and Sustainable Development", "Khasland Distribution policy and procedure" "Land and Women" and "Adivasi and Land Rights" are imparted to groups comprising 20-25 prominent female and male participants with pervious basic training.



3.1 Landless group training (Detail in annex - 10)

Analysis of achievement

Trained members conduct the discussions in group meetings. They encourage the members to participate in the discussions. For this reason, the members are able to understand the materials clearly and make in-depth analysis of discussed issues. This is a positive step towards reducing the gap in awareness among ordinary members and trained members. When necessary, music, acting/theatre and story-telling are employed to make the discussions easier and relatable. With experience gained from training, the members become more capable of analysing local issues, and of deciding subsequent course of actions.

Once the members gain awareness, they are more willing and better-equipped to shoulder responsibility. In group settings, discussions become in-depth, argumentative and analytical due to the presence of trained members. They ensure the practice of accountability in group discussions. Above all, in issue-based movements, the active initiative and participation of trained members reflect their advancement in awareness and strategic decision-making. These are positive aspects.

Analysis of annexure **table-10** shows that, in the activity year, 32 trainings were planned in total and 45 trainings were held. In these trainings, a total of 1,090 landless members (female 563 and male 527) participated. **It may be mentioned that in the activity year, one training entitled, “Khasland Management Policy and Method,” was only organised for**

Table – 5: (Training activities for group members 2010-2011)

Description of Training	Core		MJF		Total NK	
	P	A	P	A	P	A
	P	P	P	P	P	P
CORE TRAINING						
Basic	356	348	144	151	500	499
Advanced	68	67	32	32	100	99
Higher selection	9	8	16	15	25	23
OTHER TRAININGS						
Leadership development	9	9	16	6	25	25
Right and access to information	100	73	-	-	100	73
Citizen rights and constitutional guarantees	9	9	16	16	25	25
Land laws and management	100	103	25	42	125	145
Adibasi and land management	-	25	-	-	-	25
Land and women	-	110	25	41	25	151
Khasland distribution policy and procedure	-	-	25	25	-	25

P=Plan, A= Achievement, N= Number, P= participant

members of Manusher Jonno Foundation activity areas. It may also be mentioned that in these trainings, a total of 338 members (female-165 and male-173) participated in Manusher Jonno Foundation activity areas.

In joint trainings, the rate of participation by female was 55% and male 45%. Compared to last year, the participation of women in joint training increased by 18%; on the other hand, participation of male decreased. The increase in participation of women in subject-based joint trainings shows advancement in awareness processes, which reduces the existing gap between male and female members. It also enables women to feel empowered within the family and society, take strong stances and embrace leadership positions.

It may be mentioned that on the basis of man days, landless members spent a total 3,440 man days (female 1,754 and male 1,648) to participate in various trainings. For traveling to and attending the trainings, the members spent a total 90 person days. The members attend these trainings by abstaining from their daily livelihood activity, which shows their commitment towards the organisation and their interest in advancing the group’s causes.

Analysis of reasons

In this activity year, more trainings were conducted than planned. In various activity areas, in context of issue-based movements, group members demanded more subject-based trainings. Nijera Kori prioritized the needs of the members and organised some issue-based trainings in cooperation with ALRD. As a result, more trainings were organised than planned by Nijera Kori.

Notably, the number of female groups was more than male groups this year, in contrast to previous years. Previously, the difference in male and female participation had been identified as a problem and special attention given by both Nijera Kori and the groups to increasing women's participation. Hence, there was a significant increase in women's participation this year.

Lessons learnt

When planning the trainings, the requirements of the landless organisation should be given more consideration. In case of financial constraints in organising trainings, like-minded organisations ought to be approached for co-operation. Besides, to ensure the continuity of field-level trainings, workshops should be organised on subject-based trainings. Members who were trained a long time ago should be retrained to make their observations and knowledge more relevant in the present context. Both Nijera Kori and the group hold this view.

3.2 Follow up of training activities. (Details in annex - 11)

The group members receive an opportunity to discuss issue-based concepts or ideas in context of their field realities, making the discussions more real and relatable. Members are able to apply their theoretical skills to practice. Follow-up discussions on trainings are an essential feature of all trainings. The follow-up training takes place at the field level in the following process: first, by ensuring exchange of views and experiences gained by the trainees in group meetings, activating analytical discussion and ensuring every one's participation; secondly, by ensuring regular discussion on the training with the trainees at the field level; and thirdly, by forming training forums with trainees having equal level of awareness and holding regular discussion meetings every month.

Box-5:

I am a laborer now

Lalbi Begum. Age: 33. Village: Kachuahat. Union: Saghata. Upazila: Saghata. District: Gaibandha.

Lalbi Begum's family comprises of only five members. She has studied merely up to class V. Her husband is a day laborer by profession. She works in a road renovation and repairing project of CARE. There she does the job of earth digging and filling. She is a member of the Kachuahat landless women group no. 3.

Lalbi Begum was selected for participating in the basic training of 2011 on January 2011, on the basis of the proposals and decisions from all the group members. But, Lalbi did not get leave from her office to join the training. So, her participation in the training became uncertain. The leaders of the landless group discussed the matter with Lalbi's husband and her colleagues in the earth digging and land filling group. Later she got the leave on condition that her husband would work for her for four days. Other colleagues of Lalbi took the responsibility of looking after her children and doing other house hold chores.

After the training was over, Lalbi shared her experiences in the first group meeting and said, 'I used to do the work of earth filling and digging. I used to consider myself as a badli (not permanent worker, a worker who has not been recognized as a laborer and whom anyone can replace any day) laborer. But, the training made me understand that we build up everything with our labor and sweat. We are not badli workers but workers. We offer our labour by dint of which the rich people make their huge mass of wealth...they purchase their cars and luxurious apartments. But we never get the due recognition and price of our labour. The exploiting elites suck our due wage, wealth, labour and sweat. My life itself is a proof of it. The authority did not provide me even four days' leave to attend the training. Lipi's father (my husband) has dug the earth instead of me during the training. The elite people always deprive us and never pay the true worth of our labour. This is their way to become rich. They deprive us and get rich. Earlier I had the notion that they are wealthy since their birth and we are poor. But, I came to learn from the discussion in training that this concept is not true. We should be able to know these good thoughts more and more and inform it to other villagers. If we can be united, then we would be able to establish all our rights.'

Analysis of achievement

Due to follow-up activities in trainings, the trained members gain more experience by comparing their knowledge with reality. They discuss local issues by applying the theoretical knowledge gained during the training. As a result, there is a noticeable increase in the level of awareness among the members. Besides, all the members analyse issues and decide on strategies based on their experience on the ground. This makes the activities of the trained members more dynamic. Analysis of annex *table-11* shows that in the activity year, 53 trainings had follow-up sessions, as per plan. Rate of achievement was 100%. As per plan, the rate of participation was 99%. Besides, 489 forum meetings were held. The rate of achievement was 97%. At present the number of forums is 42.

Analysis of reasons

In the activity year, due to financial constraints, the rate of trainings was lower than that demanded. In order to make up for this shortage, and to ensure the continuity of training activities, follow-up sessions of field-level trainings were prioritized. As such, it was possible to attain the same level of achievement as planned. Achievement of forum meetings was also more than expected.

Lessons learnt

It is necessary to give more emphasis to follow-up activities among subject-based trained members. Follow-up activities should also be planned for members who received trainings a while back. This will allow these members to update their knowledge of national and global scenarios. In addition, it will reduce the gap in awareness and analysis between the newly trained members and the members who had been trained previously.

3.3 Training and activities for qualitative enhancement of staff

Nijera Kori, from its inception, has given tremendous importance to improving the quality of its staff and consequently has followed a certain strategy over the years. Nijera Kori has made particular efforts on the capacity development of its staff and has always used the motto of “self-development”. Special efforts are made to **1)** arrange special “schooling” sessions in the weekly sub-centre, monthly regional, bi-monthly divisional meetings and quarterly executive meetings; **2)** ensure continuous collection of new information and tools and sharing these materials with the staff at the sub-centre level; **3)** organising various cultural trainings and workshops; **4)** enabling the staff to participate as observers in all training sessions in order to gain further experience; and **5)** reviewing the lessons and specific initiative at the annual staff convention of Nijera Kori.

Analysis of achievement

Consistent discussion topics are determined in the beginning of the year to make the weekly and monthly schoolings more effective in terms of staff capacity development. The divisional and central representatives participate at every step to conduct each of the schoolings on a dedicated basis. Owing to the culture of debate and analytical discussions of these schoolings, the employees are able to enhance their knowledge as well as their analytical skills.

One, training was held with the newly-appointed staff at the basic level in the last working year. Four separate divisional cell meetings were held separately in four divisions in order to develop the skills of the cell members in conducting trainings. In addition, one organisational and one training cell meeting were held at the central level. A strategy of participatory workshops was adopted in terms of conducting cell meetings.

As a result, the organisational and training cell members' skills and collective initiatives improved. A total number of 17 issue-oriented workshops were held along with divisional and central staff in the working year. Those workshops were mainly: participatory planning process- 1, Gender- 8 and Reproductive Health Right- 8. As a result, the capacity of the employees to analyse subject-oriented knowledge increased.

One workshop was organised to determine the programme conduction and coordination strategies of four monitoring committees formed experimentally in the working year. It should be mentioned that the employees of the central, divisional and concerned areas as well as the members of the monitoring committee jointly participated in the workshop. Apart from that, the central cultural team organised four meetings to enhance the strategic capacity of the staff and employees. Participatory strategy was followed in terms of conducting workshop. Besides, the central cultural team observed the cultural programmes held in Dhaka on special days like the Independence Day, Victory Day, International Mother's Language Day etc. to learn about new forms of cultural activities and gain relevant experience. Finally Nijera Kori developed relationships with other cultural groups in terms of conducting cultural activities or programmes. Around 04 divisional staff convention and one central staff council was organised to enhance monitoring and strategic capacity; as a result, the staff's analytical capacity in the arena of overall programme review and appraisal has increased. Moreover, undertaking participatory planning and capacity building has become more dynamic.

One Training of Trainers (TOT) was held with the members of the training cell in the reporting working year. The TOT emphasized the presentation of discussion topics in an easy and comprehensive way and other issues were discussed in terms of conducting trainings. Besides, the process of enhancing experiences and skills was made more dynamic through the use of practical strategies like ice breaking, role play, story telling techniques etc. As a result, the trainings are now being conducted in a comprehensible way.

Analysis of reasons

Despite necessity, the staff capacity development training could not be held because of financial limitations. Only one training was held with the new employees. One TOT of the training cell was organised for conducting issue-wise workshops. Capacity enhancing workshops on two subjects were held to fill the gaps of the training. Moreover, the strategy of topic wise schooling has been emphasised in the weekly sub-centre and monthly meetings to fill the deficits of the staff capacity development training and workshops. Apart from that, meetings of the organisational and training cells as well as of cultural groups have been prioritized to ensure that staff capacity development at field level and the follow-up process is more effective. Finally, the divisional and staff convention have been organised to keep up the collective endeavors of programme analysis, to determine the responsibilities and to undertake plans.

Learning points

The strategy of studying multiple books and articles by different writers rather than studying only one book or article should be adopted, so that the readers do not consider the information of one book-one writer as the ultimate truth. The employees of Nijera Kori believe that the schooling and self-development process would be more effective if the materials learnt are relevant to the backdrop of the present situation. Topics should be chosen to reflect the major issues of the working areas in order to ensure the effectiveness of subject-wise workshops. Moreover, the strategy to ensure the participation of Nijera Kori staff in the trainings of fellow-spirited organisations might be undertaken.

CHAPTER THREE

SECTION-B: CULTURAL GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

3.B

the landless cultural group formation and its activities

3.4 Landless cultural group and its formation (Detail annex table-12)

Nijera Kori believes that cultural activities are an integral part of social mobilisation. The purpose of cultural activity is to develop human qualities, increase social consciousness by enabling people to depict social injustice and bring about a change in the attitudes of people by overcoming superstition, dependency and ignorance. For this reason, weekly discussions are held. The duration of each session is 2/3 hours every day. During this process, cultural groups of 13-20 members each are formed from amongst those deemed more culturally aware than others. The cultural group performs issue-based dramas, songs etc in various work areas and plays an auxiliary role in motivating people.

Analysis of achievement

In the activity year, in every activity area (*sub-center*), the landless groups identified their main problems and issues. The cultural groups, after discussion with the landless organisations, conduct organisational activities and create public opinion for issue-based movements through cultural activities. As a result, in the activity year, there were more issue-based cultural activities than those for special days, which is a positive indication of the continuity of joint organisational and cultural activities. In the movements organised by the landless organisation, cultural activities like people's song and dramas are playing an important role in creating public opinion, good will and in disseminating information. This is a positive factor in building awareness among the ordinary masses.

Analysis of *annex table-12* shows that the rate of achievement in this activity year was more than that planned. A new cultural group was organised in Rajshahi division's Raygonj area. As per plan, the activities of cultural groups were as follows: cultural group's meetings 97%, cultural discussions 79%, staging of people's drama 92%, drama festival 88% and people's song function 95%. Besides, in the activity year, on the theme, "Women's Right Empowerment," 13 folk songs were composed. Above all, the children of landless members from

Table 6 (Cultural Activities)		
Description	P	A
Formation of cultural group	-	1
Meetings of cultural group	759	733
Cultural discussion	87	63
Drama performance	621	572
Padajatra/Drama festival	8	7
People's song session	497	476
Cultural function by children	44	43
<i>(P=Plan, A=Achievement)</i>		

various areas participated in 43 cultural functions. The participation of landless member's children in cultural activities adds a new dimension to the cause of landless group. It shows the growing consciousness among children towards the ideals of landless group. This is also a very positive indicator of awareness building and organisational activity. In the activity year, 3 new female members were included in the cultural group. In addition, 358 new female members participated (*Rajshahi-70, Dhaka-16, Khulna-52 and Chittagong-220*) in people's open theatre, people's song, etc. The participation of women in cultural activities in spite of social and religious obstacles is a definite sign of women's increasing ability to challenge the prevalent patriarchal ideas of society.

It should be noted that in the activity year, to make the cultural movement more powerful, a basic cultural training was organised with cultural group's members from Khulna and Rajshahi. In addition, a workshop was organised with the members of cultural group for composing 7 dramas.

Additionally, the landless cultural team commemorated nationally and internationally recognized days like the International Mother Language Day on 21st February, International Women's Day on 8th March, Independence Day on 26th March, International Labor Day on 1st May, Rokeya Day on 9th December, Intellectual Martyrs Day on 14th December and Victory Day on 16th December.

In addition, the landless organisations observed some other days that were significant to their own movements in which a number of their leaders were killed and martyred, such as Kanchmati Day on 14th April, anti shrimp movement leader Karunamoyee Day on 7th November (*which is also widely acclaimed in national and international circles*) and Martyr Jainal Day on 3rd December. The landless organisations undertook a number of programmes in different areas on these days. The programmes included hoisting the national flag and a black flag as a sign of protest and mourning, offering flower wreaths, and organizing poster exhibitions, morning assemblies, meetings, discussions and cultural programmes. Observing and commemorating these as yet nationally unrecognised martyrs encourage men and women from all walks of life to become aware of the issues and roles of subaltern people.

Analysis of reasons

There were no plans for forming new cultural groups. However, due to the active initiative of landless members, one new group was formed in Rajshahi division's Raigonj area. On the basis of demand, on an experimental basis, folk song functions were organised. Besides, the children of landless members participated in 43 cultural activities organised by the members.

BOX: -6- "By taking money you can not ask for accountability."

In the activity year, landless groups have given much importance to elections since elections will start in the union parishads. In the coming year, elections will be held in various areas.

The landless group arranged two day-long drama sessions on 9 – 10 March, 2011 in Madhupur activity area. The subject matters of these dramas were election, role of elected representative in post-election period, and rights of the people.

Hafizuddin 45–50 years old, from Arankhola union, came to watch a drama named "Name for how long". By profession, he sells firewood that he collects from Madhupur jungle in the village mart. On the road side he heard people's song sung by the landless members. Instead of going home, he joined the group of audience. After the show, when the audience was leaving, Hafizuddin came towards the stage. He spoke with the actor of the drama, landless member, Abdul Kasem. Hafizuddin forgot the name of the drama, so he came to enquire about it. After he heard the name of the drama, Hafizuddin said, "This drama reminds me of an incidence that occurred 7 years back. Would you listen to me? I do not remember the year. Most probably it was in 2003. During the last union parishad election, candidates won by giving money to the voters. I also took taka from the members of number 3 ward. But with one 100 taka how long can you survive? The member was elected in the election. We are neighbors. So, I decided to see the member in the hope of getting a VGF card. This would bring some respite. How much can you earn by selling fire-wood? But the member refused pointblank. He said, "During election you have taken 100 taka from me. Did I not spend money to buy votes and win the election? Who would pay that money? Now you have to pay taka 1000 to get the card." Hafizuddin said, "Your drama reminded me of that incident. In the coming election, I will not vote for the candidates who offer money to buy votes. By taking money you cannot ask for accountability. By viewing your drama I became convinced that instead of asking we have to demand unitedly. As hunger cannot be satiated without food, likewise rights cannot be ensured without demand. They forget everything after the election. They forget accountability. We have to demand accountability. We have to demand our rights. Please show this drama to a wider audience. Let them learn from this drama as I have learnt that good people do not buy votes with money. They do not cheat poor people. I will not vote for that type of person this time.

BOX: 7-**Drama Festival**

In Madhupur activity area, under Dhaka division's Dhanbari region, the landless group organised a 2 day-long drama festival from 9 – 10 March. For co-ordination and management of the festival the landless group organised a representative meeting and on the basis of consensus formed a 9 member celebration committee.

Selection of subject: *The drama festival celebration committee discussed various issues prevalent in the areas with landless groups. On the basis of this discussion, the landless organisation selected 4 issues. These issues were as follows – instability-corruption, patriarchy and women's right, communalism and peace, and local government (union parishad) election and role of common people.*

Inauguration and activities: *On 9th March, 2011, the drama festival was inaugurated at 5-o'clock in the evening near the thana adjacent to Modhupur upazila sadar bus stand with people's songs. Landless leader Abdul Barek in his ceremonial inaugural speech said, "This drama festival is a part of landless organisation's movement. We want to project our demands through people's songs and dramas. We fight for our rights, we organise movements to demand our rights, this movement is on and it will continue". After the ceremonial inauguration 4 people's dramas were staged on 9 - 10 March. Each day 2 shows were held. It may be mentioned here that in the landless drama festival a group from TIB (Transparency International Bangladesh) also participated. On each day of the festival, 1 people's songs were sung, discussions were held and people's dramas were staged. The landless group for the first time organised drama session in upazila sadar. Every day it was attended by a multitude of people with different views and professions. Among them were government, non-government officers, businessman, workers, school and college students etc.*

People's mind-set: *From the audience different views were expressed. The opinion of the upazila's general citizens can be summarized as follows: "From a distance we thought the landless organisation is always involved in feud and conflicts. But from this drama session we have changed our attitude. Landless group works for righteous cause. They fight not to squabble but to establish people's right. We held a wrong notion all these days. We support your demands. In your movement we will be at your side."*

Lessons learnt

It is necessary to plan a chain of cultural activities in every sub-center by analysing the main issues and problems in the beginning of the year. It is also necessary to make the organisational and cultural activities complementary to each other and to give more emphasis on conducting these activities jointly. Besides, the children of landless members should be given more encouragement to participate in these activities.

CHAPTER THREE
SECTION-C: MAJOR EMPOWERMENT SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

3.C

The landless cultural groups and activities

4. MAJOR EMPOWERMENT SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

4.1 Legal aid activities (Details in annex - 15 and 19)

As the movements of the landless organisations for establishing basic rights have become stronger, the voices and struggles of the disadvantaged people have gained more recognition from the state and society. Their increasing success has threatened the local vested groups who systematically try to harass the landless groups by conspiring against them, filing false lawsuits and using the police to persecute them. In such a context, legal recourse is one of the most potent means for the landless people to defend their rights, and legal aid is extremely necessary for those affected people. When there are a high number of cases, it becomes too difficult for landless groups to support the economically disadvantaged people in fighting the legal battle. They then turn to Nijera Kori for assistance, which finances the case if it determines that the case is important in establishing the rights of the landless groups.

Analysis of achievement

An analysis of the annexure **table-15** shows that a total number of 57 new cases were filed in the last working year. The number of new cases filed has declined by 53% in comparison to the last year. The number of new cases filed is comparatively higher in the Chittagong division. On the other hand, around 89 on-going cases were resolved in the working year, indicating a 37% higher rate compared to last year. It should be noted that the verdict of around 82 out of 89 cases were in favour of the landless organisations. Only seven decisions were against the landless organisations, and they are fighting appeal cases in the higher courts against 03 of those 07 court verdicts. The landless members, in addition, are taking preparations to file appeal cases against the other 04 court decisions. The total number of cases filed till March 2011 was 769. Of them, Nijera Kori provided legal aid in conducting 268 cases. The rest 501 cases were conducted by the landless

Characteristics of cases	New cases	Settled cases			
		T	I	Ag	A
Total	57	89	82	7	4
Criminal	25	35	30	5	3
Groups of the plaintiffs	10	15	11	4	1
Groups of the accused	15	20	19	1	1
Civil	10	22	22	--	--
Groups of the plaintiffs	3	8	8	--	--
Groups of the accused	7	14	14	--	--
Violence against Women	22	32	30	2	1
Groups of the plaintiffs	21	28	27	1	1
Groups of the accused	1	4	3	1	-

T= Total, I = in favor, Ag= Against and A= Appeal cases

organisations on their own. An analysis of **table-15** shows that the powerful, self-seeking groups have filed more number of cases against the landless members than the number of cases filed by the landless groups against the elites (particularly in terms of criminal cases). The rate of filing new criminal cases by the power elite group was 50% higher than the total number of cases filed by the landless group. On the other hand, a total number of 35 criminal cases were resolved in the working year. Of them, decisions of 30 cases were in favour of the landless organisations.

It should be noted that the court dissolved 11 out of 20 cases as filed by the elite and self-seeking groups for not having sufficient grounds. Not only was the number of cases filed against the landless members by the power elite group higher, but the number of cases dissolved in courts not having sufficient grounds was also higher. Both these aspects prove that the local power elite file comparatively higher number of false criminal cases against the general members to harass them.

The power elite group, in addition, filed civil cases at a 43% higher rate than the landless

BOX-8: Characteristics of the cases
<i>The cases have been categorised in three broad groups - such as criminal, civil and women persecution cases.</i>
Criminal cases total- 348
<i>Abduction-15, Terrorism-40, physical violence-77, counterfeit documents-9, theft/dacoity-22, finance misappropriation 05 extortion-24, threat of murder/intimidation/harrassment-14, deceit-11, looting of paddy-40, violence relating to occupation of khasland-91.</i>
Cases relating to Violence Against Women total- 215
<i>Physical persecution-47, abortion due to persecution-2, demand for fathering the child-9, rape-20, child rape-13, rape and murder-6, murder of women-19, women trafficking-3, dowry-43, divorce-17, demand for maintance-24, polygommy-10, child marriage-2.</i>
Civil cases total- 206
<i>Khasland-115, Boya's claim-8, DCR-5, Khas water body-20, shrimp gher-13, own land-45.</i>

groups (*civil cases mostly relate to cases concerning the ownership of land and water resources*). Numerical analysis reveals that a higher number of civil cases have been filed by the power elite, which clearly proves their ugly attempts of illegally occupying *khasland* and water bodies. Another important aspect in terms of civil cases is that not a single verdict in any civil case was in favour of the power elite groups in the last year. The elite group did appeal to the higher courts in case of defeats. Verdicts in the civil cases against the power elite groups underscore that the landless organisations have been

able to resist the attempts of the power elite group to illegally grab the *khasland* and water bodies. This is a crucial indication of the landless members' ability to get access to and establish their rights over the *khasland* and water bodies.

Finally, of 22 cases relating to repression against women, 21 were filed by the landless groups. This legal measure undertaken by the landless group proves their active contribution in terms of combating repression against women. Meanwhile, verdicts in all the cases relating to repression against women except two were in favour of the women. On the other hand, around 75% of the cases filed by the power elite group against the landless members accusing them of repressing women were proved false last year. Thanks to the efforts of the landless groups, the landless members were proven innocent, the real culprits brought before the courts, and the victims ensured of justice.

Analysis of reasons:

Generally a higher number of cases were filed concerning *khasland* and water bodies and the movements against commercial shrimp cultivation than cases on other issues. There is increasing awareness on these issues not only among the landless members, but also among the general public in the working areas. Meanwhile, a number of cases filed by the power elite groups got cancelled in the courts because of lack of strong basis of the case. As a result, the power elite groups reduced their tactic of filing false cases against the landless members, at least temporarily. As a result, the number of newly filed cases declined in the working year in comparison to last year. The landless organisations decided to undertake legal strategies on

the issue of repression of women. As a result, the number of cases filed by the landless organisation on the issue of women's repression was comparatively higher this year. The landless leaders, well-wishing lawyers and Nijera Kori monitored the entire issue collectively. Apart from that, steps were taken on behalf of the government to resolve the cases speedily to reduce the number of on-going cases. As a result, the number of resolved cases increased in the working year in comparison to the previous year.

The process of appeal is going on in four cases against the landless organisations. The appeal cases will be filed in April 2011. This is why a fewer number of appeal cases have been shown in the statistical report.

Lessons Learnt

There should be a more effective and continuous way of monitoring cases by the landless groups, Nijera Kori and well-wishing lawyers. Steps should be taken so that a number of lawyers can conduct the hearing on a collective basis on the day of the hearing, so that court verdicts can be brought in favour of the landless people. New strategies should be undertaken to reduce additional responsibilities and financial obligations on landless groups for fighting legal cases. In addition, strategies to reduce additional economic pressure upon individual members should also be adopted since the members are compelled to abandon their income-oriented activities for a significant number of days to maintain connections with the lawyers and be present in courts for their hearings.

BOX: 9 –

Legal Battle of the Landless People- Accusation is proved false

Arshad Ali Gazi. Age: 52. Village: Hoglar Chak. Union: Goroikhali. Upazila: Paikgacha, Khulna.

Arshad Ali is the member of Hoglar Chak landless group no. 1. He is also the conveyer of the Hoglar Char "Saline Water Prevention Committee." He has been leading the anti commercial shrimp movement in the area for last nine years. The shrimp cultivators intimidated, threatened and assaulted Arshad Ali a number of times. Apart from it, a total number of 14 cases were filed against Arshad Ali by the shrimp cultivators to harass him. But Arshad Ali is yet to give up the fight.

On the year of 2008, the shrimp cultivators paid 7,000/ taka as bribe to some Mahmuda Khatun of the area and she repaid it by filing a law suit against Arshad Ali on false accusations of repression against women at the Paikgacha Assistant Magistrate Court. Number of the case was CR 370/2008. The court instantly issued summon against Arshad Ali. He, however, took bail to avoid the police harassment. A prolonged inquiry was made into the incident as instructed by the court. The court also fixed date for more than once for the hearing of the charge. But, court did not submit its probe report within the fixed date. On October 6 of 2010, the charge hearing of the case took place in the assistant magistrate court. The Justice reviewed the probe report and heard the statement of the plaintiff Mahmuda Khatun. But, the accusations were proved to be false upon the hearing. As a result, the court annulled the case against Arshad Ali (CR 370/2008) by identifying it as baseless ON October 6 of 2010. The landless member, so long accused upon false allegations, thus got totally free from the charge. Thus, 12 out of 14 false cases filed by the shrimp cultivators against the landless member Arshad Ali were annulled.

4.2 Educational activities

Due to lack of awareness and absence of public schools, children in the remote and poor areas start working from a very early age. The landless groups have long been fighting against this injustice and demanding the right to education of children from poor and disadvantaged background. They have been working relentlessly to ensure education for such children.

Analysis of achievement

Analysis of **table-8** shows that the landless organisations conduct their education programme through a total number of 30 primary schools, 4 junior high schools and 1 high school. It should be noted that this education programme is totally conducted by the endeavors and management of the landless organisations. The number of students increased to 3,768 (*Girls students- 1,922 and Boys students- 1,846*) this year.

Table-8: Education activities				
Description	Number of schools and students			
	Number	Girls	Boys	Total
Primary	30	12,368	13,771	26,139
Junior high schools	4	1,703	1,699	3,402
High schools	1	846	909	1,755
Total	35	14,917	16,379	31,296
Total No. of students with stipend		5,285	7,710	12,995

It should be noted that the rate of increase in the number of female students in terms of enrollment was 51%. The number of female students in the junior high schools was also a little higher than the number of male students. Particularly, the rising trend of female students in the secondary schools

in the remotely isolated and coastal areas shows the positive impact of consciousness-raising on the necessity of and right to women's education within the landless organisation.

It should be mentioned again that the total number of students till March 2011 was 31,296 (*Girls students- 14,917 and Boys students- 16,379*). An analysis of **table-8** shows that a total number of 266 students (*Girls students- 127 and Boys students- 139*) were admitted in the primary schools in general education schools rather than in madrasas in the working year, which is 9% higher than in the previous year.

On the other hand, a total number of 188 students (*Girls students- 94 and Boys students- 94*) were forced to drop-out from schools in the working year. However, the rate of school drop-out has declined by 57% in comparison to the last working year. Meanwhile, a total number of 3,419 new students received government grants for education (*girl students - 1,774 and boy students- 1,645*) in the working year. This rate is 119% higher than the previous year's.

Box-10:

Actual position of the Educational Institution

Out of 30 schools set up by the landless organisation, 18 have been registered, 6 schools have received from DD's Office (Deputy Director) temporary sanction, 3 schools have received government sanction for teaching; of the 4 junior schools, registration of 2 schools is complete. It should be noted that two of those schools were included in the M.P.O. (Monthly Payment Order) and two have yet to be established. This year the rest two schools have also been included in the M.P.O. (Monthly Payment Order). The registration for 2 junior schools process is ongoing for another school. Finally, 1 high school set up by the landless organisation.

The landless groups spent a total amount of 37,250 taka from their group savings to purchase books and notebooks and fill the forms of the students. Of this amount, around 15,350 taka was spent as educational supporting costs of people other than the group members.

Finally it can be said that the landless organisations are monitoring the educational activities or programmes on their own on a regular basis. As a result, the attendance rate of the students meets expectations. Apart from that, the relationship amongst the students and teachers, and the quality level of education are gradually developing. Around 85% students in the Primary School Certificate exams and 90% students in the Junior School Certificate exams were successfully promoted in the schools conducted by the landless organisations in the working year. This highlights an improvement in the quality of education among students conducted by the landless.

Assemblies in every school as well as a number of events like sports, discussion meetings and cultural functions took place on National Days. The landless organisations also discussed the necessity of education with the guardians. If a student stopped coming to school or if his/her absence rate suddenly increased, the teachers and landless members visited his/her house, collected information and took necessary steps. As a result, there was a noticeable qualitative change in the education programme carried out by the landless organisations.

Analysis of reasons:

Some students were obliged to work outside the areas to earn a livelihood and as a result they dropped-out of schools. Meanwhile, the administrative procedures of government registration of two schools have advanced. However, the registration has not been completed as a number of government conditions are yet to be fulfilled.

4.3 Livestock vaccination activities

Due to the inefficiency of government officials engaged in the livestock sector, the ordinary people in remote char areas are deprived of any benefits provided by the government. Nevertheless, the group members have started vaccination and treatment of their livestock on their own initiatives in two remote activity areas in upazila sadar, Paikgacha and Charjabbar. Additionally, to encourage the group members to rear livestock by indigenous methods, a pilot training course was offered in Nongola. In this training, the Nijera Kori staff worked in liaison with upazila sadar, and collected and administered medicine and vaccinations.

Analysis of **table 9** reveals that around 32,786 chickens and ducks were vaccinated in the working year which is 17% higher than the previous year. Apart from that, treatments were provided to around 2,045 livestock which is 10% higher than the last year.

Description	Achievement
Vaccination	32,786
Treatment	2,045

Around 9,686 families benefited from this programme in the working year. As a result, the total number of beneficiary families increased by five percent in comparison to the previous working year. It should be noted that the landless organisations have begun taking responsibilities of communicating with the Upazila livestock authorities to collect vaccinations on their own. This is a positive indicator of achieving self-reliance in conducting programmes.

4.4 Watch committee and Its activities

Nijera Kori believes that the marginal communities are being deprived of constitutional and human rights. "Lack of Information" is one of the major causes behind this deprivation. This is why Nijera Kori considers crucial to build an effective monitoring system at the grass-root level. Nijera Kori thinks that a monitoring system would help in establishing transparency, accountability and partnership in society. As a result, both Nijera Kori and landless organisations have taken joint initiatives to build watch committees. Each watch committee is centered around a Union and comprises six sub-committees: 1) Education 2) Health 3) Accessibility to Natural Resources (land, agricultural and water) 4) Local Development and Good Governance 5) Fundamentalism and 6) Gender. Each sub committee is formed with five members. The concerned landless committee performs the responsibilities of coordinating the activities of the watch committee. This is why a designated general member of the landless union committee plays the role of conveyor of the sub-committees. S/he presents the activities, issues and plans in the meeting of the concerned landless committee, and takes necessary decisions. The decisions are then implemented under the leadership of the Union Committee. It should be noted that the other members of the watch sub-committees are nominated by all the landless members of the area. At present, one watch committee acts in each of the four regions in four divisions. Finally, the unions under the jurisdiction of the watch committee's area are shown in Box 11.

SL	Box-11: Watch committees
01	Paiska Union- Dhaka Division, Tangail district, Dhanbari Upazila- Madhupur region.
02	Sahas Union- Khulna Division, Khulna District, Dumuria Upazila- Paikgacha area,
03	Char Jubelee Union- Chittagong Division, Noakhali District, Subarna Char Upazila- Char Jabbar region,
04	Saghata Union- Rajshahi division, Gaibandha District, Saghata Upazila- Gaibandha area.

Activities

Six follow-up workshops were arranged along with the members of the six sub-committees. The sub-committees regularly monitor and conduct the required activities for information collection on the relevant topics. Later they determine their course of action on the basis of information available in the monthly meetings. Besides, the sub-committees also guide the programmes undertaken by the leaders of the landless union committee. Important results of the monitoring committees are analyzed below.

Analysis of achievement

Local governance

- a) Social Safety Net Programme identified irregularities in distribution of 582 cards. Later, the concerned authorities were obliged to issue and distribute the cards in the names of 582 landless members by probing into irregularities and collective demands.
- b) Around 2,720 marginal farmers obtained the agricultural subsidy card through proper monitoring of the distribution of agricultural subsidy cards.
- c) The sub-committees communicated with the LGED Department to ensure safe drinking water in the char (shoal land) regions. As a result, the government installed five new tube wells in the char areas for safe drinking water.
- d) The sub-committees, in addition, identified irregularities though regular monitoring of two bridge installation work. As a result, the LGED formed an inquiry into the work. Later on, the sub-committees compelled the construction firm to construct the bridge according to the original design of the project.

Accessibility to natural resources (*land, agricultural and water*)

- a)** The landless members built three seed stores to ensure the preservation and use of indigenous seeds. Members of these stores number around 254. Seven types of seeds are being preserved in the stores.
- b)** Ten families understood the possession title of the *khasland* as settled.

Education

- a)** A total number of 131 madrasa students rejected madrasa schooling and were admitted to primary schools,
- b)** The Education Committee directed a total number of adult literacy courses of two months' length (women- 04 and men-04). Around 121 landless members (women- 68 and men-53) attended the adult literacy courses. Now those members are able to write and read because of the successful conducting of the course.
- c)** Members of the sub-committees communicated with the LGED Department to fill up the low level school field. Later the government allotted four tons of wheat to fill up the fields of four schools. Committee members completed the development work of filling up the field and leveling it high in four school fields.
- d)** Sub-committees identified irregularities in granting scholarships and biscuits in school diet for the students in seven schools. The sub-committee members exerted pressure upon the school management committees collectively to stop those irregularities.
- e)** The committees identified the incidents of bribery for the position of maids in two schools. Later the committees could ensure appointment of proper persons by exerting pressure upon the school committee.

Fundamentalism

- a)** The sub-committees complained to a mosque committee for the political role of its Imam. The committee, in addition, demanded for removal of the Imam. Finally the mosque committee was forced to release the Imam from his duty.
- b)** The committees have successfully stopped activities of 05 Talim kendros (informal Islamic Teaching centres) as conducted in different areas.
- c)** They successfully stopped 6 rich men from granting financial assistance to the mosques.
- d)** They reduced the amount of yearly paddy contribution by the landless members to 05 mosques by 20 percent.

Health

- a)** The committees successfully prevented 71 women from using Norplant as a contraceptive method,
- b)** Around 51 landless families installed and used health friendly latrines,
- c)** 43 expecting mothers were admitted to hospitals during their child births along with regular check-ups in the pre-delivery phase.
- d)** Presence of doctors three days a week in three satellite clinics was ensured by handing over memorandum to the civil surgeon.
- e)** Regular arsenic test of around 472 tube wells was ensured. Of the total number of tube wells, use of total 90 arsenic contaminated tube wells was stopped.
- f)** Vacancy in the position of one doctor in the Saghata Upazila Health Complex was filled by handing over memorandum to the civil surgeon.

Gender

- a) A total number of 80 child marriages were prevented by exerting collective pressure.
- b) Giving and taking of dowry were stopped in 11 marriages by exerting collective pressure.
- c) Approximately 15 percent landless members were made careful in terms of ensuring health, medical treatment and nutrition of women.

4.5 RTI Act and steps of the landless organisation

Nijera Kori mainly leads the activities relating to conscientisation of rural poor men and women, empowerment and mobilization. This is why Nijera Kori has tagged the issue of RTI Act and its implementation with all of its activities and given it due importance. Nijera Kori considers that the common people must be made aware about this Act and that they should be mobilized to obtain information to ensure the effectiveness of the Act. Meanwhile, a number of advocacy programmes are needed to change the attitude of the government and non-government agencies to ensure the law. The landless members face complexities in obtaining information relating to *khas land* and water bodies. Even if they can have access to the information, it is not full and complete in accordance to the demands in most cases. There is a need to undertake initiatives to obtain information by exerting collective pressure.

Activities

Nijera Kori organised day-long schooling programme on the RTI Act in its monthly meetings in every anchal (region) in the working year to ensure the effectiveness of the law. The subject of RTI Act was included in each of the staff and group meetings. As a result the scope and extent of discussions relating to the RTI Act and its use increased. Apart from the training on "Rights and Access to Information Training," around 13 workshops were held in total on the RTI Act and its use in different working areas. As a result, the RTI Act could be used in collecting information in many cases which furthered the movement.

Analysis of achievement

- a) Members of the landless organisations filed a total number of 80 applications to obtain information in the working year. Of those applications, around 22 were filed by female and 68 filed by the male landless members.
- b) The landless members obtained information in context of 26 applications in the year.
- c) The administrative processes of obtaining information with regards to 54 applications are on going.

d) It should be mentioned that certain qualitative results of using the RTI Act has been analysed under the RTI case study section.

BOX-12 Type of information

Topics of the Application were mostly- 09 on health issues, 21 on social safety programmes, 18 on the Union Parishad and Municipality Development Corporation programmes, 25 on water bodies and marshlands, 01 on the post office activities, 01 on the list of real freedom fighters and the war criminals, 02 on the Fishermen Association formed by the local power elite, 01 on the information relating to the Vested Property and 01 on the Registration costs for marriage.

It should be noted that the concerned information officials did not accept four applications filed

by the landless members. But they provided information as required by the landless members. For example, Paikgacha Upazila - 02 (*subject: Vested Property*), Ramgati Upazila - 01 (*Khasland*) and Saghata Upazila - 01 (*School construction*).

Analysis of reasons:

The information officers, in order to avoid accountability, provided information without accepting the application in a number of cases. This is contradictory to the RTI Act. Undertaking the strategies to exert collective pressure upon the information officers to accept the applications is necessary to ensure their responsibility and accountability.

4.6 Special Initiatives for the adult literacy activities

An Adult Education programme is being operated in the Royganj area of Rajshahi division in cooperation with Friends' In Village Development (FIVDB) in the working year. The adult literacy programme of Raiganj area is being conducted through 05 centers (*female- 02, male- 03*) in three villages (*Sonai, Khudra Basuria and Telijana*).

Preparations and management for the programme

Villages were identified for carrying out programmes through village-wise survey at the primary level. The landless members of the three identified villages held meetings and selected and prepared the list of students. Also the spot for operation of the literacy centers were determined. Apart from that, the landless organisations deposited 6,200 taka from group savings to meet expenses like purchasing mats, kerosin oil etc. to conduct the centers. Finally a management committee comprising of five members was created for each of the centers to conduct the adult literacy programme.

The landless groups, in addition, formed a facilitator for each of the FIVDB centers. FIVDB offered a five days long training to all the facilitators. Apart from that, FIVDB provided necessary education materials like books, exercise books, pencils etc. to the students.

Method of adult literacy training

The course is titled, "Learning, Creation and Implementation." There are three classes per week for 6 months. The students need to complete 02 educational material books each week. It should be noted that out of 45 books in the course, the students read 25 books in the class. The students take the rest of the 20 books to their homes, read them out to their children and discuss them. The adult literacy course is reviewed after three months. Those who are admitted during the course evaluations take part in the next phase of the course. Those who are weak have to learn from the former course and recover their weaknesses before they can take part in the second phase. The course evaluation arranges a five days' training course for the facilitators for conducting the next three months' adult literacy training course.

Result

The adult literacy training has been conducted since February 2011. Total number of adult literacy centers is 05 (*female-02, male-03*). As a result a total number of 100 (*female-40, male-60*) landless members received the opportunity to get educated. Besides, it can be expected that adult literacy programme would encourage the other members of the family.

4.7 Follow-up activities- Information Centre

To strengthen advocacy activities, an information centre is currently collecting and disseminating data in Khulna. As a result, more information is being collected and published on industrial shrimp farming, illegal occupation of khasland and illegal use of water bodies, and other human rights violations.

CHAPTER THREE

SECTION-D: NETWORKING AND ACTION FOR ADVOCACY

3. D

the network and advocacy activities

5. Networking and action for advocacy

Nijera Kori is an activist organisation working from the grassroots level. Nijera Kori aims at enhancing the collective ability of the masses so that they can establish their rights by organising continuous grassroots movements to realise their demands. Such mass actions help foster public support, which lends strength to local-level joint initiatives and creates pressure on policy makers at national and international levels. Thus, mobilisation of the masses and coalition-building between the landless and different professional groups remain central to the core objectives of Nijera Kori. Nijera Kori, on the basis of the demands and the issues raised by the landless group, adopts and conducts advocacy activities at local, national and international levels with the participation of landless organisations.

5.1 local Level

- **Collective movements:** In the activity year, the landless organisations organised 947 movements. The topics addressed were: women's persecution - 394, resisting fundamental activities - 22, establishing rights to local resources - 230 and fighting against local corruption and irregularities - 301 (*Details in annex- 22*).
- **Networking with local activist groups:** The landless organisations were successful in succeeding in their demands on 848 issues. Though the movements were organised by the landless groups, they received active support from professionals, political and cultural workers, women's organisations, other development organisations, local clubs, rickshaw-bus-truck driver's samity (*association*) and school students. This is a positive achievement in developing public relations and networks at local levels (*details in case studies*).
- **Dialogue with local decision-makers and activists:** In this activity year, on local issues and problems, the landless organisations held 7,753 meetings with local civic bodies and local government administration in different districts. These opinion-sharing meetings were held 2,338 times at the initiative of the government administration and 5,415 times at the initiative of the landless groups. These meetings are positive steps towards solving local issues, collecting reliable information, ensuring accountability and establishing rights (*Details in annex- 23*).
- **Ensuring justice through power bargaining:** In this activity year, the landless organisations have participated in 1,086 *salishes*. Of those, 614 *salishes* were organised at the initiative of local representatives and powerful elites, and 2,972 (*female 824 and male 2,148*) landless organisations' leaders were invited as judges. 89 of these invitations were extended by U.P Chairmen, 237 by U.P. members, 42 by local teachers, 134 by local powerful persons and 112 by political personalities.

On the other hand, in *salishes* organised by the landless organisations, 1,057 people (*female 272 and male 785*) performed the role of judges, and 18,576 people (*female 6,630 and male 11,946*) were present as observers. Participating in and organizing *salishes* are crucial steps towards ensuring justice (*Detail in annex 19*).

- ***Local and national news papers reports:*** In the activity year, 2,422 news reports were published in different local-national newspapers on the demands and movements of the landless on various issues. Among them, 312 were for establishment of rights on *khasland*, 33 for dislodgement of illegal grabbers, 168 for resisting industrial shrimp cultivation, 12 for establishing land rights of the *adivashi*, and 1,897 against violation of human rights such as fatwa, hilla marriage, rape, murder of women, and dowry.

A total number of 117 reports were published on protests and movements with information provided by the landless people. Besides, in the activity areas of Nijera Kori, reporters published 329 reports independently on various issues.

Around 15 newspapers published the above-mentioned reports, namely Daily Sangbad, Daily Prothom Alo, Banglabazar Patrika, Janokhantho, Daily Somokal, Jugnator, Manabzamin, Kaler Khantho, Amer Desh, Ameder shomoy, Daily Ittefaq, Bhorer Kagoj, The Daily Star, New Age, and The Daily Independent. In addition, 16 local newspapers also published stories. More news was published this year in local newspaper than in previous years. These news reports have underscored the demands of the landless at the national level and helped in disseminating information and generating public opinion.

5.2 National and International Level

Issue-1: *Policy advocacy on micro-credit*

Action 1.1: *Discussion of the landless people with policy making circles on micro-credit:*

A seminar entitled, "Listening to the Experiences of the Micro-credit Recipients," was held at the Local Government Engineering Department (*LGED*) Auditorium on June 21 of 2010 by joint initiative of Nijera Kori, and Golden Institute, a USA-based research organisation. The innovative aspect of this seminar was the presentation of five data collectors from Jayrampur-Anwar village of Pairaband Union, Rangpur on the plight and woes of the rural micro-credit recipients. National level researchers, micro-credit lending organisations, teachers, Micro Credit Regulatory Authority (*MRA*), Director of Bangladesh Bank, Chairman of Janata Bank, representatives from Credit and Development Forum (*CDF*), the Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh (*FNB*) Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (*PKSF*), Department For International Development (*DFID*) and Centre for Policy Dialogue (*CPD*) also participated in the discussion.

Results/Feedback from participants

The discussions during the seminar revealed a discrepancy between the changes in the condition of micro-credit lending organisations and the changes in the lives of the micro-credit recipients. While the condition of the micro-credit institutions strengthen as time goes on, the credit recipients increasingly find themselves in vulnerable positions, entangled in new risks. The most important aspect of the round table discussion was that it was the first reciprocal and accountable discussion between credit recipients and micro-credit lending institutions.

Action 1.2: *Participating in policy-making meeting and presenting positions of landless members:*

The Finance Ministry of the People's Republic of Bangladesh decided to create a policy on the rate of interest of micro-credit. For this reason, a two-day long workshop was organised on 11-12th August, 2009 with the assistance of Micro-credit Regularity Authority (MRA) and the Institute of Micro-finance (InM). The MRA gathered information on the rate of interest from 400 micro-credit organisations.

A draft proposal was made jointly by Micro-credit Regularity Authority (MRA), Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) and Institute of Microfinance (InM). For discussion on this draft proposal, a workshop was organised on 20th July. Meanwhile, the research conducted on micro-credit in Jayrampur Anwar village created quite an uproar at the national and international levels. For this reason, the MRA invited 5 landless group members who were beneficiaries of micro-credit to this workshop. However, the micro-credit lending organisations objected to the participation of Nijera Kori's landless members in the workshop, and refused to sit for a discussion with them. Under the circumstances, the MRA asked the NGO representatives: "The landless members are not as educated or conscious like you. Why are you so afraid to sit with them for a discussion?"

Afterwards, on the basis of discussion, five members from various activity areas of Nijera Kori participated instead of members from other micro-credit organisations. Two of the five members from Nijera Kori were from the fact-finding group. On August 4, 2010, the five landless members presented arguments based on their experiences, along with three definite proposals, articulating their demands.

Results

Five members from the landless groups of Nijera Kori participated and articulated three definite proposals:

- a)* to review and analyse the micro-credit management policy on the basis of discussion with local recipients before finalizing it;
- b)* to start the instalments of credit only after production begins, i.e., the harvest;
- c)* to make the behaviour of the staff of the micro-credit organisations more humanitarian.

Action-1.3 *Sharing experience on micro credit at international seminar*

Coordinator of Nijera Kori participated in a seminar on "Emancipation or Dependency: Micro-credits in South Asia," jointly organised by Swedish South Asia Studies Network (SASNET), the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University (UPE) and the Swallows India Bangladesh. She participated in discussions on Shrimp Aquaculture at Stockholm with SSNC.

Results

- d)* Activities and experiences of Nijera Kori were presented at the international arena.
- e)* Reciprocal discussion was held with the Swallows and SSNC.

Issue-2: Advocacy activities against export-oriented industrial shrimp aquaculture cultivation:

Action-2.1: Landless members as additional party with the government of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh government declared Noakhali district as the 'Shrimp Zone (*Chingri Mohal*)' in 2003. Consequentially, a vested group emerged who prepared certain forged documents that conferred the title of 10 acres of land to each of the 231 shrimp cultivators. The Noakhali district administration, however, refused to allocate the lands to the false title owners based on the written petition filed by Nijera Kori and its fellow-spirited organisations. The 231 shrimp cultivators appealed to the higher court to obtain these lands. The Deputy Commissioner of Noakhali, under such circumstances, sought support from the landless groups and requested Nijera Kori along with the landless groups to be the government's additional party.

Results

The government selected two landless members as additional party to the writ petition case, which is still running in the court. This case crystallizes the fact that the landless people have evolved into powerful social actors to the extent that even the government now consider them pertinent change makers.

Action-2.2: Participation in international conference

As representative of the Polder 22 Network, the coordinator of Nijera Kori participated in the 5th Ocean Conference at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. The conference, "Ensuring Survival, Preserving Life, and Improving Governance," was organised by the Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts and Islands, UNESCO and the Government of France. She facilitated a number of public opinion-building and advocacy activities on the issue of commercial shrimp farming and its harmful impacts on public life. During the conference, new relationships were formed and coordination between different actors increased. These are positive steps towards building a future movement representing public demands and anti-commercial shrimp cultivation alliances in different countries of the world. Nijera Kori coordinator also visited Netherlands and held discussions with NGOs, retailers, activists and campaigners.

Result

International networks and relationships have strengthened. This will help foster public demands against industrial shrimp in different countries of the world.

Action-2.3: ASIA workshop on Planning

The workshop on planning of Polder 22 Network was held in Trang, Thailand in December 2010. Nijera Kori participated in that workshop. Around 12 representatives from six countries of Asia, Europe and America participated in the workshop.

Result

- a) Problem and objective tree was developed;
- b) LFA along with plan of action was also developed.

Action- 2.4: Sharing meeting with international representatives

A sharing meeting was held between representatives from the Polder 22 Network and representatives from ShAD, i.e. those promoting shrimp cultivation through certification process.

Result

Critical Outsiders/Conscientious Objectors i.e. Polder 22 Network have reiterated their concerns to ShAD and asked once again for further clarification. They were able to state and prove the improbability of a perfect certification system.

Action- 2.5: *Developing opinions and concerted efforts*

- a) BBC Channel-4 has prepared and exhibited a documentary film, “DISPATCHES, FISH UNWRAPPED,” on the woes of commercial shrimp farming in Bangladesh. Channel-4 has made it independently in the working year.
- b) ALJAZEERA TV made and exhibited another independent documentary film entitled “SMALL FRY, BIG CATCH, A FILM BY LIANAIN FILMS” on commercial shrimp farming in Bangladesh.
- c) Local landless members presented their situation and demands in the context of commercial shrimp farming in the aforementioned two documentaries. In addition, coordinator of Nijera Kori gave her interview in both the documentaries.

Result

Information relating to the negative impacts of commercial shrimp aqua culture has been disseminated at the national and international levels. Different organisations have adopted a number of programmes on the issue of commercial shrimp aqua culture on their own initiatives. It is furthering the movement of the landless people against commercial shrimp aqua culture as well as strengthening the process of realizing their demands. Collective programme movement against commercial shrimp aqua culture has intensified at the national and international levels.

Issue-3: *Forced eviction of local community by army and security forces*

Background information

The proposed Army Housing Scheme in Rupganj includes designated flood flow zone, water bodies and rural homesteads, where no construction or earth-filling is allowed by the Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan. Of the total area of 24 *moujas*, 65 percent is designated as flood flow zone, 12 percent as water bodies and 13 percent as rural settlements. Four army camps have been newly set up in different villages of Rupganj for implementation of the project. The army forced the local people to sell land for only TK 1.5 millions per 33 decimals of land (*bigha*) when the current market price was TK 4 millions for the same amount of land, according to the villagers. There was violence on October 23rd of 2010 centering the purchase of land from the locals by the army personnel for their housing project.

Action-3.1

A joint fact-finding team was formed with the participation of Action Aid, Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), Bangladesh Legal Aids Services Trust (BLASTI), Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) and Nijera Kori on issues of forcible eviction of local farmer from own land, grabbing of land and water bodies and assaults and arrests. The fact finding team visited the concerned areas several times.

Result

- a) The team has asked for an appointment with the Army Chief of Staff;
- b) It has organised press conference at the national level;
- c) It has taken preparation for legal action if required.

Issue-4: Vested Property - Building public opinion against the black law

Action -4.1: District level seminar

A district level seminar titled, "Restoration of the Vested Property Act 2001- Necessary Amendments and Expectation of the Common People" was held on May 28 of 2010 in Khulna. The Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), Nijera Kori, Movement Resisting the Vested Property Act and the Collective Social Movement organised this seminar. Journalists, lawyers, teachers, development activists, politicians and affected community people participated in the discussion.

One of the most pertinent demands raised in the discussion was that the government consider certain issues before approving the "Restoration of the Vested Property (Amendment) Act 2001." These issues include: to finalise the definition of the term "vested property," to publish the list of the vested properties in accordance with the Census Report of 23rd March 1974 as gazette notification, to release the properties outside of this list by state declaration, to build/establish tribunals at district level, to make the successors in the estates or properties co-heir as per the ownership of 1965, to give priority to the members of the same family and to return the vested property to the co-heirs.

Action-4.2: Round table discussion at national level

A platform of several organisations called 'Fighting against Black Law (Vested Property Act)' and eminent individuals organised a round-table discussion entitled, 'Concerns and Expectations of the Civil Society on the Restoration of Vested Property (Amendment) Act raised in the Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad' on 31st December. The organisations participating in the discussion included Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), Arpito Sampatti Protirodh Andolan, Nijera Kori, and Sammilita Samajik Andolan. The six major demands raised in the discussion were as follows:

- 1) All the properties illegally termed and declared as 'Vested Property' after March 23rd of 1974 should be proclaimed as released, in accordance to the important precedents of the Bangladesh Supreme Court.
- 2) A list of all vested properties covered in the Census till March 23rd of 1974 should be published as a gazette on an immediate basis. Illegally obtained properties that are

declared as vested as well as the properties or estates shown as 'vested' under the 1/1 *khas* schedule (*1 no government land register*) of government should be proclaimed as not included in the 'list of the vested properties.'

- 3) The interests of the members of the same family or the co-heir or successor of the co-heir (*irrespective of men or women*) of the core owner or the person established as the claimant of the vested property should be preserved in the law, in accordance with the Restoration of Vested Property Act 2000.
- 4) There should be provisions for the transfer of properties through accurate hearing. In addition, the properties that cannot be transferred immediately must be resolved by special tribunals. There should be a provision in the law stipulating the timeframe for resolving litigation in special tribunals at district level, and an opportunity for hearing of appeals in the high court. The timeframe can never extend more than 180 days.
- 5) To prevent the misuse of the words 'if anybody is citizen of Bangladesh on a consistent basis,' the term 'consistent' should be excluded and replaced with the words 'if anybody is a citizen of Bangladesh.'
- 6) The symbolic words for 'price' should replace the word 'sale' in section 27 of the 2001 Act. Again the *mouza* based symbolic price of land should be determined for the period 1965-69. This symbolic price should be applicable for sale only to the co-heir and members of the same family.

Result:

The participants unanimously agreed to raise six major demands and convey them to the Prime Minister via memorandum.

Action-4.3: Roundtable Discussion

A roundtable discussion titled, "Vested Property Restoration (*Amended*) Act: Need to Permanent Abolition of Historical Rights," was held on February 26 of 2011. ALRD, Ain O Salish Kendro, Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikko Parisad (*Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Alliance Council*), Vested Property Restoration Movement, United Social Movement, HDRC and Nijera Kori collectively organised the roundtable discussion.

Summary of the Discussion:

Many people lauded the Vested Property Restoration Act after it was enacted in the Parliament. The civil society, however, has consistently pointed out that there are numerous inefficiencies and inadequacies in the Act, and that it upholds the interests of powerful interest groups.

Result

A seven points' proposal was adopted in the National Convention on October 18 of 2010 to establish a transparent and accountable democratic administration, state and social system, free of all forms of discrimination, discrepancies and exploitation. Demands were raised to issue and approve the amended law in the National Parliament on the basis of the aforementioned seven points' proposal sent to the Prime Minister.

Issue-5: Water Commercialization- Right to Water of the Mass People

Description of the Issue

“Water Rights Forum” commenced its activities along with several fellow-spirited organisations, namely ALRD, Nijera Kori, BNPS, CCDB, BELA, Nagorik Uddug and INCIDIN Bangladesh. It should be noted that ALRD has performed the responsibility of the Secretariat of the Water Rights Forum.

Efforts were made to issue a draft water law during the caretaker regime in 2008. The present democratically elected government has again taken steps to present the “Draft Water Development Law” in the Parliament with the support of the Asian Development Bank (ADB). It should be noted that the strategy to privatize water has been adopted through the National Water Policy-1999. The strategy to privatize water has been added to the Draft Water Development Law. As a result, scope or opportunities to commercialize water through the licensing process under the auspices of Public-Private Partnership in terms of both the National Water Development Policy and Water Law has been preserved. Therefore, the people’s universal right to water has been curtailed and violated, and opportunities created for the Multi-National Corporations (MNCs) to exert their control on the water resources. Water has essentially been deemed a commercial good or commodity in the Draft Water Law. In particular, the goal to earn revenue income through distribution and marketisation of water as well as its use has been emphasized. Water has not been considered a common resource of the people, an ingredient of food security and a fundamental right in the constitution of the Draft Law.

Action-5.1: Round table discussion at national level

Water Development Forum organised a roundtable discussion on “Draft Water Law, National Water Policy and People’s Right to Water” on March 14 of 2011 to build public opinion on the issue of establishing people’s right in the Draft Water Development Law. Three MPs of the National Parliament participated in the round table discussion. They were respectively: Rashed Khan Menon- President, Parliamentary Standing Committee (*Education*), Hassanul Haque Inu- President, Parliamentary Standing Committee (*Post and Telecommunications*) and M.A.Mannan- Member, Parliamentary Standing Committee (*Finance*). Moreover, a number of university teachers, professionals, development activists and representatives from local communities actively participated in it.

Result

The concerned quarters made a number of concrete demands on the basis of collective discussion:

First, the right to water should be acknowledged as a fundamental right guaranteed in the Constitution, and the view of water as a commercial commodity must be rejected;

Second, water resources should be subjected to the jurisdiction of state management by canceling the licensing system or the MNC-controlled water management system;

Third, water used in the agricultural sector should be considered a “prioritized sector” and a sufficient legal structure and people-oriented management system must be put in place on the issue of water supply;

Fourth, supplementary water law should be issued in public interest in relevance to the Agricultural Policy, Fisheries Policy, Livestock Policy, Trade Policy and Climate Policy and adjoining plans.

Fifth, The Water Act should again be reviewed and issued on the basis of opinions from people of all walks of life.

Issue-6: Combating Fundamentalism, fatwa (religious sanction) and other social evils

Action- 6.1: Public Interest Litigations: Establishing constitutional and human rights-

On August 25 of 2009, a number of organisations including Ain O Salish Kendro, (ASK) Bangladesh Legal Aids Services Trust (BLAST), BRAC (*Human Rights and Legal Aid programme*), Naripakhkho and Nijera Kori collectively filed a writ petition in the High Court. The High Court, on the basis of that petition, declared its verdict on May 24 of 2010 stating that **a)** declaration of any extra-judicial penalty in the name of fatwa or religious sanction is illegal, **b)** those dispensing such extra-judicial penalty would be punished under the prevailing law of the land including the Penal Code and **c)** any cleric or socially powerful person who declares fatwa would be deemed as ‘criminal’ or ‘wrongdoer’.

Issue-7: Women, Law and Development

Action- 7.1

“Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)” has been working as a regional network of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (UN) since 1997 and actively leading the programmes on women’s rights issue since 1997. Nijera Kori is an active member of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) Council. APWLD Regional Council meeting was held on 27-28th February 2011. Khushi Kabir, coordinator of Nijera Kori, took part in the council meetings on behalf of Nijera Kori. She presented issues like women’s human rights and safety in Bangladesh.

Result

Active participation of Nijera Kori has increased among fellow-spirited and issue-based regional and international networks. Opportunities have been created for better coordination, coalition-building and undertaking of joint programmes.

Issue-8: Peace- Women across the Globe, Peace- Women across Bangladesh.

Action- 8.1

The Swiss Embassy and Dhaka University, in concerted efforts, undertook a 10 days’ long programme in honor of 1000 women including 16 Bangladeshi women who were nominated for the Noble Peace Award 2005. Notably, four landless members of Nijera Kori were among the 1,000 female nominees for the award. Nijera Kori actively participated in the implementation of that programme.

A workshop styled “Security and Women” was held in Dhaka University on 21st March 2011. After the core workshop was concluded, three workshops on three separate themes were conducted. The themes were: **1.** Economic and Social Security, **2.** Security of the Person and **3.** Legal Framework of Security.

A total number of six landless female members participated; two landless female members participated in each of the three theme-based workshops. Pertinent aspects of these workshops were later presented in the concluding session. Thus, it was possible to understand the overall scenario of Bangladesh on “Security and Women” on the basis of discussions during the theme-based workshops.

Result

National level researchers, teachers, human rights and development activists, representatives of the professional circles, donor agencies and students had an opportunity to hear the demands of the landless people and learn from their grassroots experiences on a national platform. This discussion can serve as a positive example of an effort to reduce the gap between praxis and academia. The participating landless members and Nijera Kori staff believe that this experience would help forge an alliance between different professionals and the people waging movements at the local level.

Issue-9: Networking at regional level

Action-9.1

South Asian Feminist Network (SANGAT) organised its 15th month-long training on "SANGAT Capacity Building Course on Gender, Sustainable Livelihoods, Human Rights and Peace". Nijera Kori played the role of overall coordination and management in organising the SANGAT training and hosted the event along with the Meeto Memorial Award.

Result

- a)* One employee of Nijera Kori participated in the training.
- b)* Skills of the Nijera Kori staff in organising international events have improved.

Issue- 10: Expansion of international network

Action-10.1

The coordinator of Nijera Kori participated in the general meeting of South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR) held in Nepal.

Result

The coordinator was elected as a Bureau member in the general council election of SAHR. This will give Nijera Kori an opportunity to raise the issues of landless and marginalised communities at a regional level.

Issue-11: Opinion Sharing of the International and National Parliamentarians

Action- 11.1: visit of Nijera Kori’s working areas

The Honourable Ambassador of Germany in Bangladesh and two MPs of the German Parliament visited Royganj on April 9 of 2010. The MP of the relevant seat was also present during the visit. Issues such as sensitisation of the landless people regarding rights to khas land and movements to implement their demands were discussed during the visit. The landless organisations demanded distribution of the government *khas* and marsh lands among the real landless people. The local Member of Parliament (*MP*) expressed his support of the demands of the landless people.

Feedback from the German MPs

The German MPs, while reflecting upon their experiences, said: "It is very important to remain united, have consciousness regarding the rights and movements of the landless people. Your strength and movement have encouraged us."

6. Research, documentation, experience sharing and publication

Although research is not the main activity of Nijera Kori, it frequently undertakes research to review its strategies for addressing relevant economic and social issues. In order to make an impact, Nijera Kori and the landless people need to be fully armed with information, not mere impressions.

6.1 Research

1. Nijera Kori, along with several other organisations including Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (*BELA*) and Association for Land Reform and Development (*ALRD*) reviewed Draft Shrimp Policy 2010 and placed comments.
2. Nijera Kori, along with INCIDIN Bangladesh, Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (*CCDB*), Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (*BELA*) and Association for Land Reform and Development (*ALRD*), reviewed another recent policy on Water Bodies Policy (*Jol Mohal Nitimala*) 2009.

6.2 Documentation experience sharing

1. With the financial support of Goldin Institute, Nijera Kori published a research report titled "Improving Micro Credit by Listening to Recipients." The study report was disseminated broadly at the national level.
2. Nijera Kori prepared and showed a documentary film "Listening to Micro Credit Recipients" on the roundtable discussions at the national level.

6.3 Publication

1. Nijera Kori conducted a research programme in cooperation with Human Development Research Center (*HDRC*) on *madrassa* education in Bangladesh. The research study titled "Political and Economical Beginning, Development and Impact of *madrassa* education in Bangladesh" was published in English in the working year.

CHAPTER FOUR PLANNING, MONITORING, EVALUATION AND ADMINISTRATION

4. *accountability and implementation of activities*

7. Planning, monitoring and evaluation process

Nijera Kori plans, monitors and makes assessments using three means. **Firstly**, Nijera Kori organises yearly group meetings amongst the landless groups, representative meetings, workshops, committee meetings, experience exchange tours and group conventions. Activities are monitored and achievements are analysed. **Secondly**, weekly staff meeting, monthly divisional and quarterly Nirbahi Parishad (*Executive Council*) meetings, staff-representative meetings, field tours by staff-representatives, experience gathering tours, staff conventions and councils, ensure the participation of all persons. **Thirdly**, activities are analyzed in the General and Executive Council meetings. This ensures accountability and transparency of Nijera Kori's activities vis-à-vis all its stakeholders.

Besides, the Governing and general body participate, analyse, review and give necessary directions. In addition, field visits are made by representatives of partner organisations and, when asked, Nijera Kori conducts evaluations of the partner organisations.

7.1 Participation and role of landless organisation in planning, monitoring and evaluation

- a) In total 9,216 groups (*female 5,328 and male 3,888*) participated in the annual group meeting through analysing and evaluating the group activities and developing activity policy for the next year based on last year's experience.
- b) At village, union, upazila and area levels, 385 group conventions were organised to discuss and evaluate the activities. The related committees shared their experiences to formulate a joint policy for the area.
- c) In various activity areas the group members actively participated and decided on organisational activities, evaluated policies, scrutinised group's strengths-and weakness, and identified and evaluated the issues and the risk factors. A course of action was then determined through 913 representative meetings, 806 joint group meetings and 201 group workshops. As a result new issues were included for planning and activities worked out with the full participation of the members.

7.2 Participation and role of staff in planning monitoring evaluation process

- a) Group annual planning and village based planning strategy was adopted after elaborate discussions on group planning in sub-centres which formed the basis of draft planning. In area meetings the staff evaluates the entire activities, identify strength and weaknesses, discusses issues, isolates risk factors and decides on the next course of action. Afterwards, elected staff representatives meet at regular intervals. In these regularly held meetings the representatives analyse, evaluate and decide the actions, reviews plan, adds to or subtract from the list of actions to respond to the needs of the people, thus making the annual plan more rational, realistic and effective.

- b) Staff conventions were held in all four divisions. All the staff in the divisions participated together in evaluating the activities. In the convention the staff went through the same exercises but in a larger forum. They analysed the strengths and weakness, developed strategies for combating risks and identified actions to be adopted. A divisional plan was adopted after reviewing all areas plans. Later on, in the bi-annual central staff council, Nijera Kori's reviewed the goal, objective, whole policy, principle, strategy and formulation of recommendation. On the basis of these Nijera Kori's annual plan was adopted after scrutinising and evaluating the four divisional plans and combining them into one master plan.
- c) In the activity year two organisational and training cell meetings were held at the central level and four training cell meeting were held at the divisional level. In addition two central cultural team meetings were held. As a result, organisational and training activities were evaluated, strengths and weaknesses were analysed and necessary action items for adoption were considered.

7.3 Analysis of activities and participation of governing body and partners organisations in evaluation process

a) Participation of the executive council and other organisations in the programme review and appraisal process

Nijera Kori general body and executive body are playing their respective duties on a regular and active basis in the process of programme review and appraisal. A general annual meeting was held on 05 November 2001 in the working year. The annual progress report 2009-10, annual activity planning 2010-11 and the proposed budget were approved on basis of the discussion in the meeting. Besides, regular meetings of the executive body have been held regularly on quarterly basis. Programme progress and financial reports are approved in context of the discussion and reviews in the quarterly meetings as based on the activity plans and budgets earlier approved in the general meetings. Apart from it, the proposed quarterly budget has been approved. Besides, the executive body members have visited different working areas of Nijera Kori. They, in addition, provided the guide lines in directing programmes on basis of the experiences of these visits. Nijera Kori staffs consider it as very important and helpful in operation of the programmes.

b) Participation of the partners' organisation in the programme review-appraisal process

A two days' long partners' meeting was held on 4-5 March 2011 in the working year. Representatives from Christian Aid, EED, Inter Pares, The Swallows-India-Bangladesh and Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF). Apart from it, a total number of 21 staff (*female-09 and male-12*) from the anchal (*areas*), divisional and central level took part in the partners' meeting. Programme progress reports, future work planning and proposed budget were presented in the partners' meeting from part of Nijera Kori. The responsibilities were also determined in the meetings in through in-depth discussion, programme progress review etc. and in participation of all. Representatives of Inter Pares visited the Saghata working area of Nijera Kori. Later they sent reports on their experiences of visiting the working area. Nijera Kori staffs consider the participation and guidelines of the partner organisations to be very important in directing the programmes.

8. Administration and financial account (*Annex-F, Receipts and payments statement*)

8.1 Staff strength

- a)** A total number of 28 employees (female- 08 and men- 20) joined the organisation in the working year. On the other hand, a total number of 67 employees (female - 17 and men- 50) have taken release from the organisation (female - 17 and men- 50). Total number of staff working in Nijera Kori has been 401 since March 2011 (female - 131 and men- 270). It should be mentioned that around 180 employees have (female - 11 and men- 97) are performing their duties as service staff.
- b)** It should be noted that of the total employees, 342 are performing their duties under the auspices of the core programme (female - 119 and men- 223).
- c)** On the other hand, a total number of 59 employees (female - 12 and men-47) are performing their duties under the programme as supervised by the project of Manusher Jonno Foundation.

8.2 Financial statistics

- a)** Nijera Kori has taken a total amount of financial assistance amounting about TK 69,323,892.33 from different partner organisations in the working year. The total amount of the money spent in the working year is TK 78,576,221.00.
- b)** Nijera Kori (April 2010- March 2011) accepted a financial assistance amounting to TK 64,951,675.79 from a number of organisations like Christian Aid, EED, ICCO, Inter Pares and The Swallows India-Bangladesh etc. to operate its core programme. The amount of the total money spent in the working year is TK 71,210,649.00.
- c)** It should be noted that Nijera Kori accepted a total amount of TK 8,226,501.00 for operating its project activities from September 2010 to March 2011. The total amount of money spent in the working year is TK 78,576,221.00.

CHAPTER FIVE
KEY RESULTS AND IMPACTS

5.

Key results and impact of the activities

9. Results and impacts

Impact analysis of the programmes

Visible changes are contingent upon time and are usually brought about by organisational and issue-based movements. These changes– which include, but are not limited to, partnership, recognition, empowerment, women’s empowerment and economic changes– are crucial indicators of the consistent achievements in capacity-building of the landless organisation. They highlight the gradual progress in the lives and livelihoods of the landless as well as the organisation’s success in terms of its aims and objectives. The consistent trends of the last five years are evaluated below in details:

Conscientisation and raising the demands for rights

The vibrant endeavours of the landless organisations in asserting the rights of the deprived communities indicate a positive step towards collective conscientisation. The landless organisation consistently raises demands for collective rights, underscoring the members’ shared identity, life philosophy and achievements. The fight for collective rights has given the landless a feeling of acknowledgement and enabled them to envision themselves as citizens. As citizens, the landless are organising themselves to analyze local issues and deciding on the next course of collective action to take the movement forward; as such, they have been more effective in securing constitutional rights than other non-organised forces in society. The leadership of the landless organisation has helped to create positive change in society by challenging existing irregularities, injustices and corruption, and by safeguarding the rights of the deprived people. Owing to the landless movement, transparency and accountability are being established in the family, government administration, and society. In addition, as a result of the efforts of the landless, poor communities now have more access to government services and resources and can make lawful demands of their rights. These improvements are discussed in details in the “Empowerment and Economic Development” section.

Table-10 analyzes the landless organisation’s increasing inclination for issue-based

Table-10: Landless group movement					
Description	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Violence against women	343	524	450	371	369
Raised by male group	95	133	154	114	130
Natural resource	234	284	124	183	185
Corruption	397	565	478	435	240

movements over the last five years. From 2006-07 to 2007-08, there were upward trends in building movements, but there was a

downward trend in 2009-10.

The caretaker government was in charge of the country for the most part during 2008-09 to 2009-10. The caretaker government, during this time, enacted emergency law and imposed restrictions on meetings, demonstrations and processions of the citizens. As a result, the landless organisation changed its strategy from mobilizing in a planned and consistent way on a large scale to building instant resistances and demonstrations on smaller scales. This led to an increase in the quantity of movements, but also had a negative impact on the consistency and qualitative value of the movement. The landless organisation commenced its initiatives to build consistent issue-based movements again in the 2010-11 working year. The number of movements on all issues other than corruption was more or less the same in 2010-11 as in 2009-10, which shows consistency and relevance in mobilising for the most part.

On the other hand, a qualitative analysis of the movements of the landless organisations in 2010-11 in comparison to 2009-10 reveals an enhanced role of male groups on issues of resisting oppression to women. This is an important qualitative improvement in terms of women's status, security and rights within the organisation as well as in terms of development of joint leadership of men and women. In addition, there has been a higher number of movements for establishing rights to natural resources (*khasland and water bodies*), which has led to immediate success in increased accessibility of the landless organisation to *khasland* water bodies. Meanwhile, the intensity of corruption has decreased comparatively, causing a decline in the number of movements on the issue of corruption. Finally it can be said that the qualitative level and effectiveness of the landless organisation have increased in the 2010-11 working year, which is evident from an analysis of economic competency and the empowerment of landless men and women.

Female and male collective partnership and empowerment

The level of self-confidence among the rights-deprived and landless men and women has strengthened because of their unity. The landless organisations are now undertaking programmes on their own, and playing an active role in implementing them. In addition, both male and female members are increasingly being recognized by different institutions, the government and the larger society. In addition, the marginalized and insecure indigenous communities have become involved in the process of empowerment and ownership. The process of empowerment and ownership of the landless organisation has been analyzed from two angles: the ability of the landless to demand accountability, and the capacity to achieve that accountability.

Table-11: Female and male collective participation

Description	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Leadership in open post in landless committee					
Female members	324	394	433	481	531
Landless members as judges in <i>salish</i>					
Total members	3,564	4,653	4,217	3,788	4,029
Female members	1,192	1,220	1,105	956	1,096
Institutional Committee (<i>School, Market and Sluice gate</i>)					
Total members	800	602	629	717	786
Female members	75	83	120	148	180
Dialogue between landless members, government official					
Initiated by group	4,310	4,365	4,688	4,984	5,415
Initiated by Government	2,183	1,841	1,834	2,094	2338

Important statistical information relating to the ownership, acknowledgement and empowerment of male and female landless members in different areas in the last five years is presented in **table-11**. Both male and female members of the landless committees contest in open posts of the village, union, *upazila* and regional committees. Leadership is selected from among nominated candidates through votes cast by general members. **Table -11** reveals that an increasing number of women are winning elections in open posts by contesting with male members each year. This highlights concrete positive progress in terms of acceptability, recognition, partnership in decision-making, development of women leadership, and women's empowerment. The increasing presence of women in leadership positions in different committees of the landless organisation challenges the familial, social, and religious values of a patriarchal society, and creates space for women to actively participate in hitherto male-dominated spheres. Significantly, 19 (*female-08, male-11*) indigenous members were elected in different committees and open posts in the 2010-11 working year, which underscore the recognition of the indigenous people within the landless movement and their inclusion in the empowerment process. In addition, it indicates a higher level of participation and recognition of the indigenous people in mainstream development processes. The leadership of the landless organisation has helped in augmenting the ownership of women and indigenous people, and enabled the most deprived populations in society to demand accountability, and take part in the decision-making and empowerment processes. These processes have enhanced the ability of the landless to participate in *salishes*, take ownership of different institutional committees and effectively bargain with the government. These improvements, in turn, can form the fundamental basis of empowerment and change in the larger society.

The prevailing *salish (alternative dispute resolution)*, a system controlled by the local power elite, is dictated by nepotism and money. As such, under this system, it is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain justice for the poor, marginal and oppressed people, especially women. At present, the landless members are taking part in *salish* by challenging the powerful elite. Generally, the landless members participate in *salish* in two ways. First, the members take part as observers to monitor the *salish* on a collective basis to ensure justice. They raise protests in case of lack of transparency and accountability, nepotism, undue influence of power or money and the consequential probability of any injustice. Second, the landless male and female members participate in the *salish* as judges along with the local elite. This is a definitely proof of inclusion of the landless members in the local power structure. The resulting power structure is more balanced in terms of making bargains, and ensuring transparency and accountability of the local elite-controlled *salish* system.

More and more victims are coming to the landless organisation for *salish* for a fair and impartial verdict, and selecting landless members as judges in the *salish*. As a result, the rate of cases filed in small or petty incidents has reduced, resulting in a decrease in additional expenditure for obtaining justice for the tortured and affected people. In many instances, this has helped to keep the financial condition of the poor intact. Analysis of information in **table-11** reveals that the total participation of landless members as judges in *salishes* has increased in 2007-08, compared to 2006-07. The number of women participating as judges has also increased.

However, both total participation of landless members and landless female members as judges have declined in 2008-09 and 2009-10, compared to 2008-09. For the most part, the declaration of emergency rule by the army-backed caretaker government, the activities of army members, curfews etc. have reduced the participation ratio of the landless members. However, the participation of the landless members in 2010-11 has increased again in comparison to 2009-10.

Both upward and downward trends are noticeable in terms of participation of landless members in *salishes* as judges over the last five years. But, as mentioned earlier, their participation shows their inclusion in the local power structure. The landless organisation has also single-handedly stopped some *salishes* for corruption, nepotism or misutilization of money or power, and then reorganised them to be fairer. This is a positive indication in terms of recognition and empowerment of the landless organisation as an alternative to the existing power structure.

At present, political parties in some way or the other influence and control local power structures. As a result, the priorities of the local structure echo the interests of higher powers. The local elite endeavour to maintain their interests and retain their power by exerting control over different committees, like management committees in schools, markets, sluice gates and other institutions. Amid these adverse conditions, the landless organisations mobilize to challenge the irregularities and corruption of these institutions. The landless organisations demand the accountability of local leaders, by presenting information of irregularities and corruption. On the other hand, the landless members also contest against the power elite in elections of management committees in schools, markets, sluice gates etc. on the basis of collective decision. The landless members get elected to these management committees on the basis of acceptability, alternative leadership and popularity. Analysis of **table-11** reveals that there is an upwards trend in the election of landless members in schools, markets and sluice gate management committees in the last five years (2006-07 to 2010-11). Notably, female members, not just males ones, have been elected at a higher rate. This higher rate of election and participation in different committees concretely shows the inclusion and ownership of the landless members in local power structures. When a landless member is elected, s/he represents the opinions, statements and demands of thousands of landless members at the committee. If the concerned committee does not accept and analyze these demands and undertake necessary measures, then the landless members of the area mobilize on a collective basis. As such, elected landless members are not empowered individually, but collectively as landless organisations. In addition, when an elected landless member ensures that s/he is held accountable to the public, s/he also obliges other members of the committee to be accountable. This strengthens the foundation of transparency and democratic power relations.

Finally, public representatives and government administrators are supposed to listen to the problems of the common people of the area and take necessary steps to solve them. In reality, however, these officials are not receptive at all to the problems, statements, opinions or demands of the deprived communities. As such, the rights-deprived masses are compelled to live in inhuman and unjust conditions year after year.

The landless organisations have taken- and continue to take - steps to bring change to such living conditions. In recent times, dialogues have been held to solve these problems between the concerned parties, and stakeholders have even taken joint steps to resolve them. The landless organisations have also discussed the problems/issues with different professional groups (see the detailed annex table-23). Meanwhile, the public representatives and the government administration have also initiated discussion with the landless organisations on different problems and issues in context of strong demands raised by the landless members. These reciprocal discussions among the landless, people's representatives and government officials to determine responsibilities and undertake steps to resolve problems are positive progresses in establishing their accountability to the people.

Analysis of the **table-11** reveals that the rate at which landless groups has organised meetings and discussions with government officials has increased. On the other hand, the rate at which government officials and administrators initiate and hold discussions with landless organisations has decreased during 2007-08 and 2008-09, in comparison to 2006-07, but has increased again during 2009-10 and 2010-1.

Government officials have paid field visits to investigate a number of problems, and taken pro-active measures to solve them by talking to people. They have also made enquiries into incidents of anomalies and corruption. All these positive changes emphasize the furthering of development, strengthening of democratic exercise, accountability, and partnership, and empowerment of the landless within the administration, state and society.

Collective economic capabilities-quality development of the lives and livelihoods of the members

For the landless people, drawing and collecting group savings on a collective basis is a major basis of attaining economic capability. The members can resolve any sort of financial crisis in a self-reliant way by using group savings. As a result, their dependence upon institutional credit or loans from traditional money lenders is declining day by day, which is a positive step towards collectively achieving over-all economic self-sustainability.

Table-12: Collective economic capabilities

Description	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Saving collection and distribution					
Saving collection	16,276,231	18,782,073	17,903,176	19,587,067	18,031,171
Saving distribution	5,333,169	8,580,355	13,315,393	3,928,607	10,509,530
Female	2,287,133	4,129,949	7,221,067	1,420,278	5,644,087
Profit from joint economic activities					
Total	8,014,050	4,320,925	3,151,642	3,928,607	4,289,607
Women	2,727,165	1,584,464	1,193,853	1,420,278	1,473,684
Access and recover to natural resources (land and water)					
land Registration	2,218.02	27.78	164.11	37.35	15.6
Land possession	1827.8	1,046.76	647.24	104.21	345.86
Open water bodies	1,482.47	70.4	56.77	222.23	129.07
Recover land from Shrimp	420	1,136	72.81	1,866.05	984
Access to safety-net programme					
Total recipients	28,564	33,773	27,762	12,574	12,470
Recover misappropriated money, Save money and Increased wages					
Misappropriated money	118,347	66,800	15,249,428	1,583,519	1,110,850
Money save from different source	-	-	-	-	1,298,200
Increased wages	480,000	280,200	1,032,000	119,700	11,764,250

Analysis of the **table-12** shows that there have been slight increases or decreases in the amount of savings drawn by the landless organisations over the last five years (2006-07 to

2011-12). Sometimes, the landless members stop drawing their savings temporarily in consideration of financial crisis and/or problems. Sometimes they re-determine and decrease the amount of savings. This has resulted in the increase and decrease in group savings over the last five years. On the other hand, there is an upwards trend among the landless members to equally distribute the savings money within themselves to resolve temporary financial crisis, which again concretely shows the landless group members' progress in terms of attaining financial capability. Apart from that, the landless members have undertaken joint economic activities with their group savings. As such, they have had better opportunities to gain practical skills and experiences through exercise of collective spirit, solidarity, life philosophy and management. Joint economic activities have also ensured better opportunities for landless women to get involved in financial activities outside their domestic chores. With direct access to financial activities and additional income, female members can participate more freely and actively in the familial decision-making process. The landless members, thus, have been able to further strengthen their economic safety through joint economic activities. They have created job opportunities for themselves. Through equal distribution of profits, the members have been able to ensure their own economic solvency, develop the quality of their lives etc.

Analysis of the Table 12 shows that the amount of profit from joint economic activities during 2007-08 and 2008-09 was less than that in other years. The army-backed caretaker government evicted large numbers of landless members from the *khasland* and the areas adjoining the embankments (*beri bandh*), resulting in comparatively lower levels of profit. The profit levels have increased again in the 2009-10 working year, ensuring food security, livelihoods opportunities, higher income etc.

According to government laws, landless farmers and fishermen are entitled to the agricultural *khasland* and water bodies. In reality, however, most of these *khaslands* and water bodies are in illegal possession of powerful local elite groups. The landless organisation, under such circumstances, have mobilized movements against the powerful vested interest groups to challenge the latter's corruption, forceful and unlawful possession of resources and so on. It should be noted that the process of establishing rights over the government resources by the landless people takes place in several phases. For example, *khasland* registration, establishment of possession of the landless people in the *khasland*, and declaring the government water bodies to be open for all after evicting the illegal grabbers so that the fishermen and other poor communities can be ensured of their right to catch fish freely.

Analysis of the **table-12** reveals that the rate of *khasland* registration decreased in the year 2007-08 in comparison to the working year 2006-07. Although the rate of registration increased again comparatively in 2008-09, it declined again for the next two years. However, despite the reductions in registration of *khasland*, the process of establishment of permanent and legal ownership of title over the *khasland* by landless members is an important positive aspect. It should be noted that the process of *khasland* registration is entirely dependent on government decisions.

On the other hand, **table-12** shows that in terms of establishing title records of the landless people in the *khasland*, the rate of establishing title records decreased in the years from 2006-07 to 2009-10. But the rate of establishing title records in the *khasland* has increased again in the years from 2009-10 to 2010-11.

These ups and downs in establishing ownership title in the *khasland* by the landless people reflect the small successes of continuous movements. For obvious reasons, the fight for establishment of rights is more successful in some years than others; it would be logical to analyze these changes in numbers as the result or tendency of the movement to establish rights over *khaslands*.

Finally, the powerful and outsider shrimp cultivators have been carrying out export-oriented commercial shrimp aqua culture by forcefully grabbing land, rivers, ponds and canals of the local farmers over a prolonged period. As a result, the lives and livelihoods, safety and food security of the local communities are now at stake. The landless organisations have been making consistent demands for a long time, leading a movement to stop commercial shrimp aqua culture and resume agricultural farming. It is because of this movement that, each year, some farmers return to agriculture by leaving shrimp aquaculture as profession.

Analysis of the **table-12** reveals that over the last five years, the landless organisations have been most successful in recovering the highest quantity of lands and water bodies from illegal shrimp farming in the year 2009-10, and least successful in 2008-09. The amount of recovered arable land and marshlands from illegal shrimp farming in the present working year is not too low, but rather, expected. Besides, rivers, ponds and canals are being released from the illegal possession of the shrimp cultivators. Despite both upward and downward trends in recovering arable lands and water bodies from illegal shrimp farmers, the achievements of the landless signify the members' increased food security. In addition, the landless members can now catch fish openly from the water bodies and rivers and thus can ensure sufficient nutrition for their families. It also gives them an opportunity to earn some extra income. All these are evidence of their enhanced economic capacities and better life and livelihood conditions.

The poor communities are absolutely deprived of government facilities, opportunities and benefits. For instance, they are deprived of social security programmes (*safety net*), free medical treatment, opportunities for education etc. and the poor landless men and women are compelled to purchase these services by spending additional money. Therefore, their conditions do not improve, and their poverty worsens with each passing day. Misappropriation of project funds, wage exploitation etc. only add to their hardcore poverty.

Analysis of the **table-12** shows that the rate of inclusion of landless members in safety net programmes has decreased over the last five years. However, it should be noted that the amount of misappropriated money recovered over the last five years, except the year 2007-08, is satisfactory. It should be noted that additional expenditure of the landless members has decreased because of benefits and entitlements like free medical service, an end in bribery to obtain safety net card, free education and education materials and recovery of misappropriated money from different projects. As a result of the reduction in additional expenditure, the quality of lives and livelihoods of the landless members have improved. It should be noted that collection of related financial statistics only began from this working year, which is why the information from previous years could not be presented.

Finally, an analysis of **table-12** reveals the success of the movement for wage increase in last five years; it shows that increased wage has contributed to their lives in a significant way. For instance, price-hikes of everyday essentials decrease the food purchasing capacity of the landless, but increased salary plays a positive role in ensuring the necessary food purchasing capacity of the poor masses. Increased access of the landless to government sector services underscores significant positive progress in terms of citizens' demands for constitutional rights.

Key results and impacts

The activities of Nijera Kori have made concrete and tangible impacts on the lives of landless group members. The results of Nijera Kori's activities are presented under 4 (**four**) outputs based on precise indicators.

Outcome 1 Rights of the organised landless is established in the working areas through strengthened organisational and mobilisation capacities of Nijera Kori in social and economic spheres
Indicator 1.1 Economic base of landless group members strengthened through greater accumulation of collective capital and increased revenue from collective investments; 1.2 Increased success of the landless in collective bargaining for living wages; 1.3 Increased success of members to access collective resources to mitigate economic and family crises; 1.4 Cumulative increase in the amount of land recovered for landless and marginal farmers; 1.5 Increased leadership of landless group members in conflict mediation; 1.6 Increased number of children of landless group members attend schools; 1.7 Increased voice of the organised landless against religious fundamentalism, corruption, violation of rights (including that of women and indigenous people) and injustice

Achievements:

- 1.1.1 Accrual of collective assets through group savings:** The group members saved a total of TK 18,031,171 during the reporting year, which significantly added to the amount of group savings. The cumulative savings of the group members, at present, stands at TK67, 397,284. By taking the responsibility of their savings, the group members have become self-reliant and overcome their dependency on moneylenders. They also fund educational and social welfare activities, deal with unforeseen crisis and pay for legal aid from the group savings (*details in annex - table 8*).
- 1.1.2 Participation of the groups in joint economic activities:** A total of 572 groups (*female 299 and male 273*) have undertaken joint economic activities. The participation of female groups in joint economic activity is significantly higher than last year, which is an indication of increased economic empowerment of female group members. During the reporting year, the landless groups invested a total of 6,964,466 taka from group savings. At present, 5,290 groups (*female 2,573 and male 2,717*) manage joint economic activities as well as investment activities from their group savings. These activities empower the landless members to be economically self-sufficient without making them dependent on loans – either from banks or from traditional money lenders at exorbitant rates. In addition, these activities serve as a catalyst in cementing their community spirit and belief in the effectiveness of joint actions (*details in annex - 13*).
- 1.1.3 Increased livelihood security of the group members:** The group members have made a profit of TK 4,289,607 from their joint economic activities, which is 9% more than that last year. This profit is particularly useful for the poor and landless members and has significantly contributed to increasing their livelihood security. In the activity year, with group consensus, funds were distributed in equal amounts among all members in order

to counter financial crisis. The use of group saving in mitigating temporary financial crisis is a definite step towards economic empowerment. Besides, the landless groups also conduct various activities such as yearly group conventions, workshops, trainings, organising movements and filing law-suits (*details in annex - 13*).

1.1.4 More employment opportunity for the group members: The joint economic activities of the group members created employment for 18,396 persons this year. Out of this total number 7,052 were female and 11,344 were male. 18,310 members were employed the previous year, which shows a gradual increase in employment (*details in annex table- 13*)

1.1.5 Increased success for the group members in ensuring higher wage rates: During the year, a total of 21 wage related movements were organised by the landless groups, which contributed to a daily wage increase of average TK 8 to TK 36 of 1,715 labourers (*female 645 and male 1020*), especially amongst weavers and other agricultural, earth-cutting day labourers. The number of movements demanding wage increase has been higher this year than last year, and has changed the lives and livelihood conditions for 1,190 people compared to 525 people last year (*table-11 in annex cases studies no.-5*).

1.3.1 More self-initiative by the group members in solving their financial problems: The group members decided to distribute TK 10,509,530 from their savings equally amongst themselves to use for agricultural farming. The rate of distribution is 14% higher than that last year. Thus through the collective initiatives of savings and wise investments, the group members were able to improve their own economic condition and go further than just using the savings in case of need (*details in annex- Table 8*).

1.3.2 Increased group solidarity and collective initiatives in reducing their familial problems: The group members spent a total of TK 636,093 to pay for health care, education, wedding expenses (which does not include dowry) and for other family needs. This is 10% lower than last year. They also spent an additional TK 1,522,663 for various organisational activities and movements, legal actions to ensure rights and solving their family problems. This spending is 38% higher than the previous year. This is a very significant positive indication towards attaining self-reliance and taking greater initiatives to solve problems. If a member is in trouble, the other members actively extend their support, which indicates their cooperative mentality and capability to confront adverse situations (*details in annex - Table 17*).

1.4.1 Success in evicting illegal occupants: The group members have been able to recover an area of 995.37 acres of land belonging to the poor and marginalised farmers from illegal occupants. Out of these, 984 acres of land was recovered from illegal shrimp

farms. This significant success of the landless movements is an indication of landless people's organisational strength and increased empowered status to protect themselves against illegal power holder, elites and jotedar (*powerful land grabbers*). Such success also helps ensure land rights of marginalised people (*details in annex - Table 21*).

1.4.2 Success in recovering land from commercial shrimp farming: The group members were able to recover an area of 9 acres of agricultural land and 975 acres of water body belonging to poor and marginalised farmers from illegal commercial shrimp farming (*details in annex - Table 21*).

1.5.1 Strong participation of the landless in the village salishes (alternative dispute resolution): In total 2,972 (824 female and 2,148 male) group members participated as judges in 1,086 village *salishes*. The participation in *salishes* as judge increased by 7% from last year. It is also noteworthy that in roughly half of these *salishes*, group members took their seats as judges alongside elected representatives of local governments, professionals and local elites (*details in annex - Table 19*).

1.5.2 Improved quality of judgment due to role played by the landless group members in village salishes: Due to the firm position of the landless group members, 40 cases of *salishes* involving criminal offences were cancelled, and 23 of these cases were taken to the formal court. It is to be noted that in the present year, 58% of total stopped *salishes* were taken to court. The village *salishes* which are usually controlled and commandeered by the local influential people are increasingly recognising the role and accepting the leadership of the landless member (*details in annex - Table 19*).

1.6.1 Increase in the number of students in school: There are 31,296 students (*14,917 girls and 16,379 boys*) in the schools run by the group members, an increase of 3,768 students (*1,922 girls and 1,846 boys*). Enrolment of students, both girls and boys, is 34% higher than that last year. This is mostly as a result of increased awareness amongst the group members.

1.7.1 Increase in continuity and quality of issue-based Movements: The group members organised 947 movements to establish their rights. In 848 cases, they were able to secure their demands. Number of successful movements was higher this year than in previous year. The landless groups have raised a range of issues within society, including adivasi land rights, violence against women and corruption. Participation in these movements is not only limited to group members; non-group members also participate in most of these movements. These movements have reduced exclusion, and increased access to rights for deprived communities in Bangladesh (*details in annex - Table 22*).

Outcome 2:

Greater equity between women and men at family and community levels for landless group members.

Indicator

- 2.1 Increased access of Nijera Kori female members to organisational leadership;
- 2.2 Increased access to justice for women survivors of violence;
- 2.3 Increased access of women to savings, khasland and economic resources;
- 2.4 The stereotypical image of women at community space is challenged by increased participation of women in salish, bazaar committees, school committees and local bodies;
- 2.5 Increased men's participation on women issues;
- 2.6 Increased instances when the landless group members are approached by other social actors regarding violence against women.

Achievements:

- 2.1.1 More women in organisational leadership positions:** 531 women representatives, a 10% increase from last year, were elected as leaders in the various committees at the village, union, *upazila* and area levels. This is a clear reflection of increased women's leadership capabilities and greater acceptance of women's leadership and empowerment in society. It also shows that men are more willing to accept women as equal counterparts, which will gradually lead to increased gender sensitive collective leadership.
- 2.2.1 Recognition and participation of Landless women members at national level seminar:** A workshop on "Security and Women" was held in Dhaka University on 21st March 2011. A total of six landless female members participated; two landless female members participated in each of the three theme-based workshops. The participating landless members and Nijera Kori staff consider that this experience would help forge an alliance between different professional groups and the people waging movements at local levels.
- 2.2.2 Increased movements organised by male landless group members against violence against women:** In the activity year, landless groups organised 394 successful movements or protests against violence against women, a 14% increase from last year. This indicates a positive change of attitude amongst the male group members. Some of these movements were organised outside the working areas of Nijera Kori, showing a strong linkage between the groups and the overall community (*details in annex- table 22*).
- 2.2.3 More active role of the landless peoples in demanding justice and fair treatment:** The landless group members played an active role in 538 *salishes* on issues related to violence against women. Out of total, 523 *salishes* ensured justice. The group members halted 15 *salishes* because the sentences did not serve justice towards the women. Such strong and definite action taken by the landless groups is a step towards ensuring justice on issues of violence against women (*details in annex- table 19*).
- 2.2.4 Legal action for fair justice of the violence against women:** 15 *salishes* were stopped as a result of the active role of the group members when adjudication of the involved criminal cases did not fall within the scope of *salishes*. Out of these 15 cases, 11 cases were filed in formal court. The rate of legal action taken by the landless groups increased by 36% from last year. The remaining cases are in the process of being filed in court. This indicates a greater ability of landless members to ensure justice for marginalised women (*details in annex - table 19*).

- 2.3.1 Women members are gaining stronger position in group savings:** During the activity year, the female members collected a total of TK 10,213,358 as savings. During the reporting period, female members distributed TK 5,644,087 among themselves to mitigate needs. This shows the ability of the female members to overcome immediate crisis through self sustainability. The collection and management of savings by the women members will further strengthen their management capabilities and help them attain economic empowerment (*details in annex - table 8*).
- 2.3.2 Increased participation of women groups in joint economic activities:** During the activity year, 299 female groups undertook joint economic activities with their group savings. At present, 2,573 female groups are running joint economic activities with their group savings and have reaped a total profit of TK 1,473,684, a 4% increase from last year. This is very positive indication of economic empowerment of female members. It also helps to increase their participation in the family decision-making process (*details in annex- table 13*).
- 2.3.3 Increased economic empowerment and job opportunities:** The joint economic activities run by the female groups have created job opportunities for 7,052 female members. In the reporting period, employment opportunity increased from last year. This gradual but consistent increase of employment opportunities has led to a more secured economic position of female group members (*details in annex- 13*).
- 2.3.4 Increased access of women members to the registration of khasland:** In the activity year, 9 female headed families received registration of 6.30 acres of *khasland* in their name, ensuring access of female-headed households to government *khaslands*. This also increases women's ability to demand living and livelihood opportunities as constitutional rights (*details in annex-table 20*).
- 2.3.5 Establishment of female group member's possession over khasland:** 34 female group members successfully established their hold on 8.23 acre of *khasland* during the activity year (*details in annex -table 20*).
- 2.4.1 Increased and more prominent role of the women group members in salishes:** 1,086 female group members, out of 4,029 group members, acted as judges in *salishes*. Female participation increased by 13% this year. Women participated as judge in issues beyond those concerning women's rights, which indicates strong leadership of female members in society (*details in annex - table 19*).
- 2.4.2 More active role of the women group members as observers in salishes:** 6,630 female members played the role of observers in various *salishes* and contributed to ensuring justice to the victims. In total 18,576 members participated as observers, out of which 6,630 (36%) were female. Their stronger role is forcing the judges to be accountable to the communities and marginalised groups (*details in annex- table 19*).
- 2.4.3 Increased participation of female in various informal and formal committees:** 229 female members, as opposed to 208 last year, were elected as representatives in various formal and informal institutional committees. During the reporting period, female leadership increased by 9% from the previous year. The number of elected members was as follows: 100 women in the School Managing Committees, 63 in the Bazaar Committees, 15 in the Union Parishad Project Management Committee, 17 in the Sluice

Gate Management Committee and 34 in Issue-based Movement Committees (*details in annex - table 18*).

2.5.1 More active role of male group members to stop abuse and violence against women: Landless groups mobilized in 394 cases on issues of violence against women. 145 of these movements (37%) were raised and organised by the male groups. This is a 4% increase from last year. Moreover, there was active participation of men in all the movements regarding the issue of violence against women, which helped strengthen gender sensitive relationship between male and female group members within the groups as well as in society (*detail in annex- table 22*).

2.1.2 Strengthened collaboration and solidarity with professional and local associations on issues relating to violence against women: During the activity year, there was an important increase in collaborative initiatives among the local professional organisations on the issue of violence against women. These associations included local Public Representative, Press Clubs, Teachers Associations, and School Management Committees. Rickshaw pullers, Women's Associations, and Combined Cultural Alliance. Such collaboration is important for creating an effective movement for establishing the rights of women (*details in annex - case studies*).

2.1.3 Strengthened collaboration with the public representatives and human rights organisations on issues relating to violence against women: To ensure proper investigation and fair trial of cases related to violence against women, there was greater collaboration with public representatives and human rights organisations, particularly with local UP Chairmen and Ward Members. There were joint initiatives with human rights organisations including Ain-O-Salish Kendra, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Service Trust (BLAST), BRAC- (Human Rights and Legal Services), Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), Transparency International, Bangladesh (TIB), Bangladesh National Women's Lawyers Association (BNWLA), Naripakhkho, Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), Action Aid, BNPS, CCDB, BELA, Nagorik Uddug and INCIDIN. HDRC, Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikko Parisad, Movement Resisting the Vested Property Act and the Collective Social Movement as well as smaller local NGO's activist groups.

Outcome 3:

Locally elected representatives and government officials have been made more accountable and pro-poor in their actions, as a result of pressure from landless group members

Indicator

- 3.1 Increased actions against irregularities and corruption in government schemes at the local level;
- 3.2 Increased allotment and possession of khasland and water bodies to the landless;
- 3.3 Increased eviction of illegal land grabbers;
- 3.4 Increased access of vulnerable and deprived women and men to various social and economic safety net measures of the local government;
- 3.5 Ensure fairness in court verdicts on land and other human rights related cases involving the landless;
- 3.6 Number of meetings between representatives of landless group and local government to discuss issues and concerns of the poor.

Achievements:

- 3.1.1 Monitoring and observation by watch committees:** During the activity year, there were separate pilot watch committees on Education, Health, Natural Resources (land agricultural and water), Local Development and Good Governance, Fundamentalism and Gender. The committee members collected relevant information and shared them with other landless groups and professionals at the local level. In addition, cultural activists created and performed drama on themes aimed at developing people's awareness. This showcases the power of information in mobilizing people to demand transparency and accountability for themselves. The significant achievements in the five sectors are discussed in details in 4.4 (under Watch Committee and its activities)
- 3.1.2 Continued movement by the landless peoples in stopping corruption and irregularities at the local level:** In the activity year, the landless peoples' organisations held a total of 301 movements against corruption. Members and non members of the local community participated in these movements under the leadership of landless groups (details in annex- table 22).
- 3.1.3 Investigation against irregularities/corruption and administrative actions taken against the corrupt government officials:** As a result of the movements of the landless people, the government carried out 9 investigations (relating to the 100 Days Employment Programme, construction of school building, Safety-net programme, violence against women, Support programme on expected mother, water bodies, child marriage, educational stipend, earth work in development projects and security of fisherman). Out of these 9 investigations, the government has taken disciplinary actions in 7 cases as of March 2011. This has helped people get better access to regular government services without any hassles (details in annex case studies).
- 3.2.1 More landless people registering Khaslands:** 38 families were allotted 15.60 acres of khasland. This is 65% less than last year in terms of the numbers of families. Khasland distribution suspended some of the Nijera Kori's working areas. Despite the decreasing trend, this is an overall achievement in securing shelter and livelihoods for the poor and the disadvantaged (details in annex- table 20).

- 3.2.2 Increased inclusion of the landless in the allotment process of Khaslands:** Following relentless protests and movements of the landless peoples, the name of 101 landless families was included in the registration of *khaslands* distribution and a considerable number of well-off families were taken off the list. Out of these 101 families, 29 were female headed households. This has reduced the attempts of the local elite to usurp *khaslands* and established greater accountability and transparency in the distribution of *khaslands*.
- 3.2.3 Increased access to water bodies for local communities:** As a result of landless movements, 1,266 families now have access to 41.77 acres of water body. This is a big step towards ensuring access of local communities to common property. It will contribute to livelihood security of the local communities specially the fisherman communities. (details in annex case studies and table-20).
- 3.3.1 Decrease in the illegal occupation of marginalised families' own land:** With the help of landless groups and organised movements, 99 marginal families were able to recover 11.37 acres of their own land which was forcefully taken from them. Such actions will contribute to gradually reducing illegal occupation of land of marginalised families. (details in annex- table 21).
- 3.4.1 Recovery of misappropriated funds:** During the activity year, landless people successfully organised the recovery of TK 1,110,850 in misappropriated funds from government and non-government development projects, wages and crop pillage. The success of landless groups indicates improved ability of the landless to reduce corruption and irregularities. This achievement also contributes to improved livelihood conditions for the landless (details in annex - cases studies).
- 3.4.2 Increased livelihood condition through save of the money:** During the reporting period, the landless members saved TK 1,298,200 due to free access to government services through collective movements. These movements for free access also increased transparency and accountability of the service provider.
- 3.4.3 Gradual inclusion of landless peoples in government safety net programmes:** An additional 38,289 families (female 24,680, male 13,609) were included in the activity year in various government safety net programmes. 3,342 families (female-2, 305, male-1,037) received their cards after organised protests, and 3,550 persons were deleted from the list of such programmes. This is a clear indication of growing empowerment of the landless and the marginalised (details in annex - table14).
- 3.4.4 Access to government agricultural subsidy programme:** During the activity year, 2,104 new landless marginal farmers were included in the agricultural subsidy list. The landless organisations monitored the process of card distribution of the programme, which helped to reduce the production cost of marginal farmers and ensured their food security (details in annex- table14).

3.1.3 Strengthened position of the landless in ensuring justice in the court of law: Fair verdict was given in favour of the landless organisations in 82 cases of the total 89 cases settled. Furthermore, landless groups filed 34 cases in the activity year, mostly related to violence against women and land-water rights. The landless organisations took the responsibility of conducting 501 of the total 769 cases they were involved in. The cases required a total amount of TK 258,446, which was financed from the group savings. This demonstrates that the landless groups are becoming increasingly self-reliant (*details in annex- table 15 & 17*).

3.1.4 Dialogue and advocacy for ensuring transparency and accountability: 7,753 dialogues were organised between the representatives of the landless organisations, government officials and local peer groups to solve various local problems, which was 8% more than the last year. 2,338 such dialogues – 10% more than the last year – were held at the initiative of the government. The remaining 5,415 meetings were convened at the initiative of the landless organisations, which is also 8% higher than that previous year. The dialogues were immensely beneficial in ensuring the collective efforts and coordination of all parties involved, and promoting accountability and rights of the poor and the landless (*details in annex- table 23*).

<p>Outcome 4: A demonstrably high profile agenda of pro-poor policy reform leading to a policy debate for reform through the work of landless group members and Nijera Kori</p>
<p>Indicator</p> <p>4.1 Public opinion developed on land reform issues at local and national level;</p> <p>4.2 Networks established at national and international level against industrial shrimp aqua-culture;</p> <p>4.3 Strengthening a policy forum on access to water resource and its sustainable use;</p> <p>4.4 Increased knowledge base for pro-poor policy review and reform;</p> <p>4.5 Number of Issue based media interactions held at local and national levels.</p>

Achievements:

- 4.1.1 Integrating public opinion at local level on land reform:** Throughout the year, various activities were undertaken to build public opinion on issues of commercial use of agricultural land, the rights of the fishermen to water-bodies, and the rescission of an abandoned property law.
- 4.1.2 People raised their voice in national media on land and water:** The landless groups organised 8 press conferences on *Khasland*, water bodies, land rights of Adivasi and industrial shrimp cultivation. There were also several newspaper reports (*details in annex - cases studies*).
- 4.1.3 Dialogue with elected public representative:** The landless people organised dialogue with public representatives such as union, *upazila* parishad and elected Member of Parliaments on the negative impact of the export-oriented shrimp industry, focusing primarily on how the practice was violating people’s rights at local levels. As a result, public representatives provided active support to the landless groups’ movements and their demands in many instances (*details in annex - cases studies*).
- 4.1.4 Forced eviction of local community by army and security forces:** A joint fact-finding team was formed with the participation of Action Aid, Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), Ain O *Salish* Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), Bangladesh Legal Aids Services Trust (BLASTI), Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB), Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) and Nijera Kori on issues of forcible eviction of local farmers from own land, illegal occupation of land and water bodies and assaults and arrests in the proposed Army Housing Project in Rupganj. The fact finding team visited the concerned areas several times. It asked for an appointment with the Army Chief of Staff, organised press conference at the national level and took legal preparations when required.
- 4.2.1 Experience sharing meeting with government and other activist groups:** Landless group members participated in 97 dialogues on Industrial shrimp issues with government officials and other activists. 27 of such dialogues were organised by local government officials. These dialogues have enabled the local communities to foster public support against shrimp cultivation as well as given the landless a forum to voice their opinions (*Details in annex- 23*).

- 4.2.2 Landless members as additional party with the government of Bangladesh:** Bangladesh government declared Noakhali district as the ‘Shrimp Zone (Chingri Mohal)’ in 2003. The Noakhali district administration refused to allocate the lands to the 231 cultivators based on the petition of NK and its fellow-spirited organisations. When the cultivators appealed to the higher court, the Deputy Commissioner of Noakhali sought support from the landless groups and selected two landless members to be the government’s additional party in writ petition case, which proves that the governments consider them pertinent actors and change makers.
- 4.2.3 Strengthening the regional network of ASIA (Polder 22):** The Planning workshop of Network Polder 22 was held in Trang, Thailand in December 2010. Nijera Kori participated in that workshop. Around 12 representatives from six countries of Asia, Europe and America participated in the workshop; problem and objective tree along with LFA were developed.
- 4.2.4 Experience sharing meeting with international representatives:** A sharing meeting was held between representatives from the Polder 22 Network and representatives from ShAD, i.e. those promoting shrimp cultivation through certification process. Polder 22 Network reiterated their concerns to ShAD and asked once again for further clarification. Polder 22 Network was able to state and prove the improbability of a perfect certification system.
- 4.2.5 Raising voice against industrial Shrimp aquaculture at international level:** As representatives of the Polder 22 Network, the coordinator of Nijera Kori participated in the 5th Ocean Conference at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. She also visited Netherlands and held discussions with NGOs, Retailers, Activists and Campaigners. As a result of these conferences, international networks and relationships have strengthened. This will help foster public demands against industrial shrimp in different countries of the world.
- 4.3.1 Landless group participate in advocacy activities to establish rights of water:** The landless group held 26 dialogues with *upazila* and districts government officials and sought to resolve their problems. Out of these dialogues, the Government initiated 4 dialogues with the landless groups which helped the latter to successfully establish their rights to open water bodies.
- 4.3.2 Strengthening network on water:** During this year “Water Rights Forum” formed along with several fellow-spirited organisations. Nijera Kori is one of the active members.
- 4.3.3 Mobilisation of public opinion for formulation pro poor law:** Water Rights Forum organised a roundtable discussion on “Draft Water Law, National Water Policy and People’s Right to Water” on March 14 of 2011. The concerned persons and quarters made five concrete demands regarding access to water on the basis of collective discussion. Three MPs of the National Parliament participated in the round table discussion.

4.4.1 Building public opinion against the black law- Vested Property: A district level seminar was held on May 28 of 2010 in Khulna. During the discussion, it was decided that the government be asked to finalise the definition of the term "vested property," to publish the list of the vested properties in accordance with the Census Report of 23rd March 1974 as gazette notification, to release the properties outside of this list by state declaration, to establish tribunals at district level, to make the successors in the estates or properties co-heir as per the ownership of 1965, to give priority to the members of the same family and to return the vested property to the co-heirs.

4.4.2 Strengthening public opinion: A roundtable discussion titled, "Vested Property Restoration (*Amended*) Act: Need to Permanent Abolition of Historical Rights," was held on February 26 of 2011. Demands were raised to issue the amended law and approve it in the National Parliament on the basis of the seven points' proposal sent to the Prime Minister.

4.4.3 Disseminating demand to highest policy maker: A platform of several organisations called 'Fighting against Black Law (Vested Property Act)' and eminent individuals organised a round table discussion on 31st December. The participants unanimously agreed to raise major demands and convey them to the Prime Minister via memorandum.

Discussion of the landless people with policy making circles on micro-credit: A seminar was held on June 21 of 2010. During the seminar, the plight and woes of the rural micro-credit recipients was presented by five data collectors from Jayrampur-Anwar village of Pairaband Union, Rangpur. It became apparent that while the condition of the micro-credit institutions strengthen with each day, the credit recipients often find themselves in vulnerable positions, entangled in new risks. The round table discussion was the first reciprocal and accountable discussion between credit recipients and micro-credit lending institutions.

4.4.4 Participating in policy-making meeting and presenting positions of landless members: A two-day long workshop was organised on 11-12th August, 2009 with the assistance of Micro-credit Regularity Authority (MRA) and the Institute of Micro-finance (InM). Five members from various activity areas of Nijera Kori participated and presented three definite proposals: a) to review and analyse the micro-credit management policy on the basis of discussion with local recipients before finalizing it; b) to start the instalments of credit only after production begins, i.e., the harvest; c) to make the behaviour of the staff of the micro-credit organisations more humanitarian.

4.4.5 Public Interest Litigations: On August 25 of 2009, a number of organisations collectively filed a writ petition in the High Court. The High Court, on the basis of that petition, declared its verdict on May 24 of 2010 stating that **a)** declaration of any extra-judicial penalty in the name of fatwa or religious sanction is illegal, **b)** those dispensing such extra-judicial penalty would be punished under the prevailing law of the land including the Penal Code and **c)** any cleric or socially powerful person who declares fatwa would be deemed as 'criminal' or 'wrongdoer'. The case is currently in the Supreme Court Appellate Division.

- 4.1.1 Increased independent action against Industrial Shrimp Aquaculture:** BBC Channel-4 and Aljazeera TV made two separate independent documentaries on the woes of industrial shrimp farming in Bangladesh. As result, information relating to negative impacts of industrial shrimp aquaculture has been disseminated at national and international levels
- 4.1.2 Sharing experience on micro credit at international level:** Coordinator of Nijera Kori participated in a seminar on "Emancipation or Dependency: Micro-credits in South Asia." Activities and experiences of Nijera Kori and the self-reliant empowerment process could be presented at the international arena.
- 4.1.3 Impact of landless groups' demands and protests at local level:** In the activity year, 2,422 news reports were published in different local-national news papers on the demands and movements of landless relating to various issues, including violence against women, illegal land grabbing, and the rights of the Adivasi. Additionally, Nijera Kori reporters published 329 reports on their own initiative on various issues.
- 4.1.4 Increased dissemination through publication:** A book, "Political and Economical Beginning, Development and Impact of Madrasha education in Bangladesh" was published at the joint initiative of ALRD and Nijera Kori.
- 4.1.5 Documentation experience sharing:** Nijera Kori prepared and showed a documentary film on "Listening to Micro Credit Recipients" on the basis of roundtable discussions at the national level.
- 4.1.6 Opinion Sharing of the International and National Parliamentarians:** The Honourable Ambassador of Germany in Bangladesh and two MPs of the German Parliament visited Royganj on April 9 of 2010. The MP of the relevant seat was also present during the visit. Issues such as sensitisation of the landless people regarding rights to *khasland* and movements to implement their demands were discussed and the local Member of Parliament (MP) expressed his support of the demands of the landless people.

ANNEX

PEOPLES ACTION CASE STUDIES

case studies

A-People's action case study

A-People's action case study

The landless organisations undertook various protests and movements in the activity areas to proclaim their rights and most importantly to resist the illegal settlement of lands. Nijera Kori is supporting the landless organisations in this struggle focused on establishing the rights of the landless people over khas lands. Furthermore, a number of movements were also held to protest against the illegal tricks during the measurement of lands by the corrupt officials.

Case Studies-1

Land and water rights of landless

Case summary

The government of Bangladesh has declared that some land and water bodies should be open to the public and be used for the common good. The intention is that people who do not own private land can cultivate crops, raise livestock, fish, and get water for drinking and cleaning. Unfortunately, due to greed and corruption, many rich and influential people have claimed the public land and water bodies as their own, and have forcefully excluded the public from even entering the areas. The following case studies demonstrate how landless groups have united to reclaim several common lands and water bodies for public use.

CASE STUDY 1.1

Nobody knew about the landless group's movement to establish right on that piece of khas land.

Area

Village- Khudra Basuria, municipality- Raigang, upazila- Raiganig, District- Sirajgang.

Government land records, in reality it is fake

Raiganj upazila is comprised of numerous lakes, rivers and canals. The upazila also has a big swathe of land and water bodies that was abandoned by the major land owners. In Raigang municipality Kudra Basuria is a mouja (a definite area of land according to government land record). Many water bodies and swathes of land in this mouja are recorded in the government khas record books. But the local people did not have any information regarding these specific water bodies and land because the administrative offices were controlled by very influential people. When ordinary people enquired about the records they were provided with incorrect information. This allowed the local influential jotdars in kahoots with the administration to illegally grab these water bodies.

Gathering information: landless movement to establish right on khasland

Haider Ali came from Khudra Basuria mouja. He was a well-to-do farmer. He was not a member of landless group, but in 2008 he became an active participant in the movement to open sonaidangha khas water body. Later on, he got involved with the landless activities and supported their movements. This year there was a survey of land, and Haider Ali went to collect the records of his own land.

He found that the disputed two acres of land had a note on the side of the record that said it could not be leased. Haider Ali gave this information to the landless leaders, who in turn, called a joint meeting on 8 May 2010. In the meeting, they reviewed the photocopy of the record (parcha) and discovered that for the last 23 years the local influential jotdar, Abdur Rashid, has been occupying the land illegally. As per group decision, the landless leaders went to Abdur Rashid on May 10 and requested to see the papers of ownership of the land. But he refused to show them any papers. The landless leaders thus demanded the two acres of land become khas land (land of public use).

Threats- assault, false case: Protest by landless group

The landless were convinced Abdur Rashid was an illegal grabber of public land. Abdur Rashid started threatening the landless. He declared that if the landless group made any further attempts to raise the question of ownership than he would file a lawsuit against them. Under the circumstances, the landless called a representative meeting in the evening to plan their strategy. In the meantime, Abdur Rashid filed two false cases against landless members. The police then started to harass the members, going from house to house arresting them. In response, the landless organisation

Box-13:-

Deception of women in inheritance law

Area

Village- Batargram, union- Shalamari, upazila- Roumari, District- Kurigram.

Description

Nurami has four children, 2 daughters (Salema and Akhlima) and 2 sons (Montu and Sufian). Nurami lost her husband 10 years back. All her children are married. She does not have anybody to look after her. Her sons live separately and they neither feed her nor look after her. Nurami's husband had given her 15 decimal lands by registering it in her name. This small property was her only source of income, but her sons were trying to grab this property from her. Out of distrust towards her sons, and according to the advice of landless members, she gave the land to her two daughters and registered the property in their names in order to protect this land. Nurami's two sons still forcibly grabbed the land. Neighbours attempted to settle the matter, but her two disobedient sons refused any settlement. "We are sons, we will get the land. Our sisters are married. Now they belong to other families. Why should they take our property?" They also started giving threats to their sisters. In this situation, Nurami narrated the problem to the landless Batargram committee. The village committee discussed the problem with her two sons. Under the pressure of the landless members, Nurami's two sons agreed to attend the shalish organised by landless group on 7 January. Nurami and her two daughters were also present in the shalish. The landless leaders explained to the two sons the ownership of registered land by citing inheritance law. They also explained to the sons that they were illegally occupying the property that they had forcefully grabbed and divided among themselves. The landless leaders told them that the land would be divided again as per law. In response, the sons begged for forgiveness and assured the landless that the property would be returned to the two sisters. The landless leaders asked the children who would feed and give shelter to Nurami. None of them stepped forward. The leaders then said, "Since no one is willing to take responsibility of Nurami, she will continue to live on the land until her death, with the exception of the part already bequeathed to the daughters. The remainder of the land will only be divided after her death. The only other option is for the sons to take responsibility for feeding their mother." Under pressure from the landless group, the sons agreed to feed their mother. They were required to give TK. 1,500 each month to their mother. The landless leaders wrote all the decisions of the shalish on TK. 50 stamped paper and took signatures from Nurami and her four children. The landless leaders also signed on the stamped paper.

Result

Nurami's daughters have got their inherited property. Nurami is being looked after. This has enhanced the prestige of the landless groups in the village.

marched towards the UNO office on 18 May, 2010 and submitted a memorandum with signatures of five hundred people. After submission of the memorandum, they held a sit-in-strike in front of the UNO office. After three hours of the sit-in-strike, the UNO and assistant commissioner (land) sat for discussion with the landless leaders. The UNO was compelled to assure the members that the police harassment would be stopped. In addition, the assistant commissioner (land) ensured the landless leaders that he would gather necessary information and take action accordingly.

In the meantime, paddy cultivation season started and Abdur Rashid forcibly attempted to cultivate the land. The administration intentionally delayed recovering the land to allow him to cultivate it. This also allowed Abdur Rashid time to file a civil suit in the judge court claiming ownership. The landless group made an appeal in the judge court and contested the suit. On 14 February 2011 the landless group, through its lawyer, submitted the government's record of the contested land to the court, which listed it as khas land. That same day the judge examined the record and rejected Abdur Rashid's case for ownership of the land. The landless members were correct; Abdur Rashid was not the rightful occupier of the land.

Role of landless organisation in recovering khas land

To decide their next course of action, the landless members organised a representative meeting on 21st May, and unanimously decided to dislodge Abdur Rashid from the khas land. On 23rd May, 2010 Abdur Rashid arrived at the land with an armed band and demanded to cultivate it. Instantly all the members from surrounding areas resisted the forcible cultivation. The news spread quickly among all the landless organisations leaders and members, and small group marchers were organised in the surrounding area. Abdur Rashid and his armed goons started to attack the landless members, but the three hundred men and women organised by the landless were too strong and the armed goons retreated. Abdur Rashid then informed the thana and came back to the land with the police force. Suddenly the police force attempted to disperse the landless members by striking them with batons. The landless members thus put their female members on the front line to stop the baton charge. The police asked some of the landless leaders to report in the thana and they left, as requested, with the police. Abdur Rashid also escaped with the police. The remaining landless members hoisted a red flag to declare their ownership of the khas land. They also cultivated the crops on the land and constructed homesteads for eleven of their members. They guarded the area round the clock to protect themselves from further attacks.

Result

The illegal occupier was forced from the khas land, which is now enjoyed by landless members and the public at large. Eleven homeless landless members made their homes on the land. In addition, a total of 80 members collectively cultivate part of the khas land. The success of the landless group inspired other landless groups to become aware about khas land and work for ensuring their right to khas land.

Khas pond belongs to people. This is the demand of the landless

Area

Village- Uttarpar Para, union- Khamarpara, upazila- Khansama, District- Dinajpur.

Khas water body, illegal lease

In the area under Barendra, khas ponds were made from big water bodies to solve the water shortage. These khas ponds were supposed to be open for the use of the common people, but they had been illegally leased for the past five years. In 2005, a number of influential people from Khansama upazila sadar had taken lease of “hatpukur” for cultivation of fish by influencing the administration. This powerful coterie hired local terrorists to guard the water body. As a result, the local people could not use the water body for agriculture, fishing and other household chores.

Landless organisation to open the khas pond

Several times the landless organisation made an appeal to the administration to cancel the lease of khas “hatpukur”. But the administration remained silent. The landless organisation thus decided to organise a movement. They organised workshops in many villages discussed the legal aspects of the khas ponds. To gain people’s support they also organised people’s drama, discussion meetings and processions in various villages. As a result, local people gave genuine support and the movement gathered momentum. The landless group started collecting signatures for their cause.

On April 2010, nearly two thousand men and women submitted a signed petition that was delivered, with a memorandum, to the UNO demanding cancellation of the lease. In response, the UNO visited the area in person to get first hand information. He agreed with the landless and cancelled the illegal lease. The previous lease holders, however, released fish spawn in the pond in order to forcibly grab the water body on 1st June 2010.

Resistance by people, khas water body “hatpukur” becomes open

Under the leadership of landless group, nearly a thousand men and women made a concerted effort to resist the grabbers. When the grabbers attempted to take possession of “hatpukur”, hundreds of them surrounded the pond. Villagers from adjoining villages also proceeded towards Uttarpar para village. As a result, resistance was reinforced from both inside and outside. Hence the illegal grabbers were encircled by the resistance groups. The grabbers were unable to provide any explanation to the questions asked by the people. Under pressure, they gave up their hold over the water body. They released the “hatpukur” water body for the use of the common people.

Result

“Hatpukur” water body, comprising 3.10 acres of land, is now open to all people and is being jointly cultivated by the landless.

Counterfeit document to grab adivasi land, legal battle by adivasi-Bengali landless organisation

Area

Village- Dulahpur, Union- Durgapur, Upazila- Mithapukur, District - Rangpur.

Background

Before partition in 1947, the adivasi people came from India's Nagpur to various areas of Rangpur District. A large section of adivasi people live in this district's Mithapukur upazila. Among these adivasi people, a sect named "toppa" settled in Durgapur Union's Dulahpur village and started their own settlement called "Jotripara". Nearly 75 families lived in the settlement. These adivasi people had a right to the land as tenants of Zamindar. They depended on their ancestral profession and cultivated land for their livelihood. During the 1971 liberation war, the adivasi people continued to live in their own settlement.

Security, life and livelihood

After the liberation war, it became uncertain whether the adivasi could continue to survive through cultivation. Some of them became share-croppers and some of them mortgaged their land for instant money. For instance, after liberation in 1972, Somra Toppa mortgaged four acres of her land for TK 4,000 to Abdul Bari of an adjoining village, despite the fact that a portion of the land was used as an adivasi graveyard. Abdul Bari started cultivating Somra's agricultural land. Initially he did not cultivate on the graveyard, but started to in 1976. Due to financial crises, Somra was not able to get back her land and save the graveyard from cultivation.

Challenge for ownership of land, legal steps

In order to protect the graveyard, all the adivasi families pooled their money to provide the TK 4,000 necessary for repaying the mortgage. In response Abdul Bari spread false information in the village that Somra Toppa gave him the land for TK 40,000, not TK 4,000. With counterfeit document and records, Abdul Bari claimed the ownership of the land and filed a case in judge court in 1976. The case number is 113/1976.

Due to financial constraint the advasi could not commission a good lawyer. On the other hand, Abdul Bari appointed an experienced lawyer to fight the case. He also spent money on bribes and creating false documents to illegally turn the case in his favour. Hence, the court gave a verdict in his favour.

In 1987, Somra Toppa was able to appeal to the High Court (Case number is 9337/87). In the appeal case, the verdict was given in Somra Toppa's favour, but she and the advasi community did not have enough power to enforce the judgment. Abdul Bari employed terrorists to intimidate the adivasi from rightfully reclaiming Somra Toppa's land.

Dulahpur village, new emergence of landless group with adivasi- Bangalee

In 2009, the adivasi sought the co-operation of a landless group from the adjoining village to resolve these land problems. The landless group decided to extend their activities to Dulahpur village and assist the adivasi. The group began in 2010, and in a very short time the Dulahpur landless organisation got public support and acceptance and was able to exert influence easily. This happened most likely because the landless groups in adjoining villages were very strong and mentored the new group.

Role of adivasi-Bangalee landless group in establishing right to land

Throughout April of 2010 the newly formed landless group and the more established groups in the area discussed the issue of forcible grabbing of adivasi land. Meetings were held in villages and processions and people's dramas were organised to generate people's support. They also collected people's signatures. On 15 April 2010, nearly five hundred adivasi- Bangalee members organised a protest procession and barricaded the office of the upazila chairman of Mithapukur. In the meeting the leaders of landless groups demanded dislodgement of the illegal occupant from adivasi land. In the face of the demands of the adivasi, the upazila chairman gave assurance that the adivasi's legal claim to land would be upheld and their security ensured. In the meeting the landless group leader submitted the signatures of about 600 women and men in support of their cause along with a memorandum. They also gave copies of the signatures and memorandum to UNO and Police super in Mithapukur.

Dislodgement of illegal occupant – adivasi-Bangalee women and men

On 9 May, 2010, adivasi-Bangalee held a meeting to plan the strategy to dislodge the illegal occupant. They decided on a continuous movement to achieve this goal. They also decided to exchange opinions with local processional groups. In addition, they planned to cultivate 4 acres of Somra Toppa's land after dislodging the occupant. As per their decision from a meeting on April 12, they started hanging hand written posters, organised gathering, meetings, processions and people's dramas in bazars.

In the meantime, the leaders of the adivasi-Bangalee landless groups exchanged opinions with local union parishad chairman and members. On 16 May a discussion meeting was organised that was comprised of a local professional group, reporters, teachers, lawyers, a Mithapukur business community representative, cultural members and women leaders. Everyone at the meeting expressed displeasure with the illegal occupation and pledged their support for the cause.

On 20 April a human chain was formed in Mithapukur Sadar. Nearly a thousand women and men were present, including representatives of professional groups. After the hour long human chain, in a brief meeting, the landless group declared that the illegal occupants should be evicted from the land. About a thousand adivasi-Bangalee landless members had a protest procession and sowed paddy saplings in Somra Toppa's land. They also hung a red flag in the field, to declare ownership, and moved Somra Toppa's homestead to this ground. In Jotiapara adivasi palli (cluster of villages) the landless members organised themselves into groups and guarded the areas in the evenings to ensure security of the adivasis.

Role of Jotdar and administration

Abdul Bari hired an armed gang to threaten the adivasi members. He filed two false cases alleging destruction of crops, vandalising of homes and looting. But the landless members were not arrested due to the instruction of UNO and upazila chairman. With solid support from landless group, from 20 May 2010 Jotiapar adivasi palli was provided with security.

Result

Everyone in Jotiapara adivasi palli have formed landless group. Somra Toppa's land is being jointly cultivated in harmony. The cases Abdul Bari's filed against the landless were declared false by the police administration. Hence, the cases against landless members were withdrawn. At present the adivasi landless groups are self-sufficient in conducting their own organisational activities.

Overall Result

Division	Registration of land				Establishing rights on Khas land. (Occupying)				Establishing rights on water bodies (Occupying)		Dislodging illegal occupiers from their own land Joint family	
	Family headed by female		Joint family		Family headed by female		Joint family		Amount of land (area)	Benefited families	Number of families	Amount of land (area)
	Number of families	Amount of land (area)	Number of families	Amount of land (area)	Number of families	Amount of land (area)	Number of families	Amount of land (area)				
Rajshahi	-	-	3	1.10	-	-	44	13.95	-	-	3	0.40
Dhaka	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.60
Khulna	-	-	-	-	3	0.11	14	3.80	5.35	450	2	0.08
Chittagong	4	6.00	6	7.40	30	7.55	405	239.80	6.38	800	41	5.50
Nijera Kori	4	6.00	9	8.50	33	7.66	463	257.55	11.73	1,250	47	6.58

In the activity year the landless groups organised movements in various activity areas to establish their rights on khas land-water bodies. Some of the movements are on-going. The success of movements by landless groups in four sectors is shown in the table above (10). **Firstly**, in the area of establishing rights on khas land, 496 landless families have established their rights on 265.21 acre of agricultural khas land by evicting illegal occupiers. It should be mentioned that of these 496 families, 33 are headed by women. **Secondly**, a total of 13 families have registered 14.50 acres of agricultural khas land; 4 of these families are headed by women. **Thirdly**, 11.73 acres of Khas land was recovered and made open for the public. As a result, 1,250 families were able to use the land for their family needs, agriculture, washing of cattle and fishing, and have thus experienced a positive improvement in their life and livelihood. **Fourthly**, local Jotdars were evicted from 47 small farmers covering 6.58 acres of land that they were illegally occupying. As a result, families were able to recover their land. Above all, because of the movements by landless groups for establishing rights on Khas land-water bodies, families have achieved food security and learned that rights can be established through collective and organised voices.

Case Studies-2

Violence against women and children

Case summary

Poor women are especially vulnerable to abuse in male-dominated Bangladesh. It is not uncommon for fathers to force young girls to quit school and marry, for husbands to torture their wives, for men to subject women to unwanted sexual advances, and for entire villages to obstruct the hopes and dreams of their female members. These case studies demonstrate how the landless people, through education, power, and persistence, were able to directly improve the lives of women and girls as well as increase the general awareness of women's rights.

CASE STUDY 2.1

Twenty years of marriage, twenty years of inhuman treatment

Area

Village- Alengi, Union- Sadki, Upazila- Kumarkhali, District - Kushtia.

Twenty years of family life

Sharmeen Khandakar Simi is 38 years old. Her father, Nurul Islam, has passed away. She lives in village Batikamara Union- Sadki, Upazila- Kumarkhali, District- Kushtia. About 20 years ago, she was married to Mamunur Rashid (Manu), also from the same village. He is a pick-up truck driver. Together they had one daughter and two sons. Simi wanted to educate all of them at all cost. Her eldest daughter, Mithun, completed her higher secondary education and her twin sons, Shaon and Shefat, are in class VII. Mamunur Rashid Manu never felt satisfied despite his children's achievements and would often take out his frustrations by physically abusing Simi. Simi silently tolerated the abuse in the hope of getting her children established. She used to add to the family coffer by selling eggs, poultry etc. In 2009 Manu completely stopped supporting his family, but intensified his abuse against Simi. Simi did not understand why he was treating her in such an inhuman manner.

Manu illegally took a second wife

Towards the beginning of 2010 Mamunur Rashid Manu took a second wife named Parveen from Hogla village of Kumarkhali upazila. After the second marriage, he started abusing Simi for no reason at all. In May 2010 Manu mercilessly beat Simi and the children and threw them out of the house. Homeless, Sharmeen went to her father's house in Batiamara village. Despite the extreme hardship during this time, Simi's daughter Mithun passed the honours entrance exam, but due to financial constraints, could not get admission. The twin sons were also forced to stop their education due to the family financial crisis. Simi was desperate to continue her children's education. The sons refused to ask their father for any assistance, so Simi secretly constructed a plan with her daughter to demand a maintenance allowance from Mamunur Rashid Manu.

17 January 2011, Simi was tortured and set on fire

As per plan their plan, on 17 January 2011 Simi went to her husband's house in Alangi village with her daughter Mithun. Simi demanded family expenditure from Mamun and an altercation started. Mamun, his two brothers and Parveen beat Simi ruthlessly. Despite the torture, Simi stayed in her husband's house because she was desperate for enough family allowances to educate her children. At one stage Simi lost consciousness. Manu took advantage of her unconscious state and doused her in kerosene oil and lit her on fire. Mithun and Simi's screams were so loud it got the attention of the neighbours who rushed to the scene. They doused the fire and promptly admitted her to Kumarkhali upazila health complex. The story spread quickly throughout the area.

The landless organisation demands justice

On the evening of 17 January 2011 the leaders of landless group arranged a representative meeting. They decided to organise a movement for justice, which they began the next day with a protest meeting on the upazila ground. Nearly 500 females and males, including members of professionals groups such as Mahila Parishad, Press club, and a local NGO participated in the event. The participants also proposed forming a joint movement to demand justice. After the gathering they again arranged an opinion-sharing meeting to further organise the strategy.

Joint movement-legal steps

On 19 January nearly a thousand females and males submitted a memorandum to UNO Kumarkhali after a protest meeting, and copies of the memorandum were distributed to District Administrator, Police super, and upazila Chairman. The UNO promptly asked the thana police to arrest the culprit and start legal action. It should be mentioned that on the night of the 17th, the landless group assisted Shumi's sons to file a case in Kumarkhali police thana and list Mithun as a witness. The case number is 8/2011. In response, the police arrested Mamunur Rashid Manu and his second wife Parveen. The pressure from the joint movement demanding justice later compelled the police to arrest the remaining culprits. In the meantime, Shumi's condition deteriorated. The landless people took a mass collection to raise the funds for her to be transferred to Dhaka Medical College hospital.

Result

Shumi survived the incident and has decided to join the landless organisation. The local school has agreed to provide her children with a free education. In addition, one of her sons was granted an additional stipend. Her daughter, having received a lot of support from the landless, is currently re-applying for the honours class. The incident served as a means to pull the community together and develop a strong community alliance against domestic violence.

Box-14:- -Polygamy law

According to 1974 Muslim marriage and divorce (registration) law, a married person cannot marry a second time without the consent of shalishi parishad's written permission. As per law if the person wants to marry again he has to give the reasons in writing and he has to obtain the consent of his present wife or wives. He must also pay a fixed fee and apply to the Union parishad chairman. The chairman, after receiving the petition will request to appoint separate representatives for the applicant and the wife or wives. A shalish parishad formed by selected representatives will decide through arguments the need for the re-marriage and if it is considered to be legally valid, the applicant will receive permission for re-marriage. If another marriage is performed without the permission of the shalishi parishad –

- Dowry money has to be paid instantly to the wife or wives.
 - If it is proved that the remarriage was performed without consent of the wife or wives, the person will be jailed for 1 year without hard labour, or pay TK 10,000 as fine or both.
-

Sapna's decision to establish women's rights and status – An unique example

Area:

Village- Tatera, Union- Barira, Upazial- Chandina, District- Comilla.

Introduction

Zayeda Begum, 35, is a landless member of Tatera village. Her husband is Mohammed Ali, age 41. Together they have three children –Sapna Begum- 19, Sharif –15 and Arif- 11. Sapna Begum studies in college and the other two study in school.

Father decides to get Sapna married

Bachehu Mia is also from Tatera village. His son is Abdul Awal – age 25. Abdul works in the United Arab Emirate as a labourer. To ensure Sapna's security, her father made arrangements for her to marry. Her mother, however, was in favour of having Sapna graduate college before getting married. But her father ignored the mother's wishes and arranged for Sapna to marry Abdul Awal, an employee from United Arab Emirates. To avoid family conflict, Sapna agreed to the marriage.

Marriage on mobile phone

On 14 August, 2009, Sapna was married to Abdul Awal over a mobile phone, as he was still abroad. After the marriage they talked to each other on the mobile phone for some time. Even after several months of the marriage, however, Abdul Awal did not send money to support Sapna, and her father continued to maintain her. After a while Abdul Awal would only call on occasion to demand money, rather than to inquire into Sapna's well being. Sapna told him that she was not going to pay him money, because there was no demand for dowry before the marriage and dowry is illegal in Bangladesh. She did, however, demand the maintenance from him that she was legally due. Abdul threatened to divorce Sapna and mentally tortured her with threats and allegations. Sapna sealed Awal's number from her phone so she would not have to receive his calls.

Sapna's decision

Sapna decided to divorce Abdul Awal. Her father did not agree, but her mother gave her consent. Sapna's mother discussed the matter with the leaders of landless group, who advised the family on how to get a legal divorce. On 18 March 2010 Abdul Awal was served a divorce notice according to law. The copy of the divorce notice was given to chairman, 6 No. Barera Union Parishad. She was present at the Comila Notary Public Office in 21 March 2010, and a divorce was given to Abdul Awal through affidavit registration.

Refusal by groom's side to accept divorce given by wife

Abdul Awal's family is quite affluent and related to the local influential people. Hence, the divorce was taken as an insult to them. To avenge this insult, they complained to the influential members of local shalish. Similarly, teachers from "Dobaria Koami madrasa," in an adjoining village started proclaiming that "a girl who divorces her husband must be a bad girl. If this incident remains untried men will be belittled in the area". In addition, Abdul Awal's bothers and friends, together with the area's terrorists, threatened and demanded money from Sapna.

Sapna is fought by three hostile groups

Sapna openly fought against three influential groups– her father-in-law and his supporters, a fundamentalist group, and unruly terrorists. These three groups had one thing in common: they were all against women’s freedoms. On 18 April, 2010, the three groups collectively organised a shalish against Sapna, demanding she pay TK 20,000 fine for the divorce. At the shalish, it was decided that she must deposit the demanded fine with the chairman by 24 April, 2010.

Sapna’s decision, movement by landless group

The landless group supported Sapna’s decision to divorce and gave her moral support. They also started keeping track of the developments in the locality and on 22 April, 2010 they organised a gathering in Tatera bazaar against false allegations that Shapna had an affair with someone else, that she was a bad girl etc., and protested the shalish and the imposition of the fine on Sapna. In the gathering, the members also discussed the high court’s verdict against fatwa and sexual harassment. In addition, the landless members declared that if any attempt was made to give fatwa against Sapna’s divorce, or if the threats and allegations were not stopped, they would take legal actions. They also announced a plan of besieging UNO’s office in protest.

The landless groups collected nearly a thousand signatures of men and women from various villages. On 24 April 2010 nearly 600 of them besieged the office of Chandina UNO office demanding justice. After an hour long barricade, they submitted the signatures and memorandum. Copies were given to District Administration, the Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs and the Home Ministry. The UNO promptly gave directions to the Chandina police office to investigate the matter and provide security to Sapna. With the help of the landless group, the factual truth of the incidence was revealed. In this situation, the chairman of Barara union parishad, the person who initiated the shalish, Ali Ahmed, and his father were asked to appear in the UNO’s office on 29 April. The landless members were also present at the meeting. During the questions by the UNO, the alleged persons admitted that the shalish and imposition of the fine was illegal. Ali Ahmed and his support was required to give a written pledge to the UNO and thana (*police station*) officer that they would never engage in this sort of offense in future.

Exchange of opinions at all levels to solve the problem

On 30 April, the landless group arranged a mass meeting in Tatera school ground. In the meeting the UNO and the officer in charge of upazila women’s and children affairs ministry were present. In the presence of everyone, the chairman of Barera union parishad admitted his mistakes. The UNO stated that allegations and threats against women are infringements of their freedom, and are therefore unconstitutional and punishable offenses. He also clarified that fatwas and terrorism are punishable offenses. He praised the bold steps taken by landless group in upholding women’s rights and dignity. He commented that such steps were necessary for the society.

Result

Sapna is continuing her studies. She is also taking training in the upazila “Self Employment Generation Project”. Society has accepted her decision to divorce Abdul Awal. The incident has become an example for other women who want to get a divorce or who are oppressed by illegal fatwas.

Area

Village- Nayer gao, Upazila- Matlab, District - Chandpur.

Introduction

Samparani Das (24), father- Khokon Dey, mother- Archana Dey, village- Biteswar, upazila- Daudkandi, District- Comilla.

Samparani's marriage and her struggle

Samparani was married in November, 2008 to Badal Das. Badal Das is from Nayergao village, upazila Matlab, District Chandpur. During their marriage, Samparani's parents sold their only property- some agricultural land, and paid 1 lac taka as dowry. With this money Badal Das started a business in Nayergao bazaar. Unfortunately, he died from illness after only six months of marriage.

Samparani's life became insecure. The landless group persuaded Badal Das's mother, Aratibala, to keep Samparani as a family member. Badal Das's younger brother, Polash Das, started looking after his late brother's business and also started asking Samparani to marry him. She refused for a long time, but his persistence eventually made her change her mind. When Polash asked for his mother's permission to marry Samparani, though, she responded that she would not support the marriage because it violated a Hindu social law against female widows remarrying. The local people agreed, and together they forcibly sent Samparani back to her father's house. They also threatened to isolate Polash's mother if the marriage ever took place.

Challenge of landless group against the decision of elite group

Polash sought assistance from the landless group. The landless group applied to the upazila women's and children affair's officer demanding security and shelter for Samparani. They also held discussions with the elite of her village. The people in the village tried to cite many social norms and values that supported their position that the marriage should not transpire, but they failed to prove that the marriage was actually illegal. The landless group thus accused the village elite of defamation and stated that they were willing to take legal action. In the mean time, in response to the application by the landless group on 21 May, 2010, the officer in charge of upazila women's and children's affair's ministry came to investigate the matter. Under the circumstances, the rural elite proposed a negotiation between the elite and the landless group. After reviewing the situation, the landless group discussed the proposal with the officer in charge of women's and children's affairs. With the consent of all groups a meeting was fixed on 26 May 2010.

As per plan, on 26 May, the officer in charge of women's and children's affairs started a meeting in Aratibala's house. In the meeting, the leaders of landless group wanted to know the opinions of Polash and Samparani. In the meeting the couple expressed their desire for marriage. The landless group asked for an explanation of why the community was opposed to the marriage. The officer added that legally "when an adult male and an adult female decide to get married, there is no legal bar against widow marriage." In this situation, Aratibala and the rural elite admitted their mistake and accepted the marriage proposal and promised not to spread any rumour against them. Aratibala said, "I was living with a false notion. I never thought about my family and my children. Whatever has happened is for my good."

Result

On 1st June 2010, in the presence of everyone, the couple was married. The community has fully accepted the marriage and it has become a symbol of the need to re-evaluate superstition, prejudice, and outdated social norms.

Box-15:-

Mohura is 11 years old

Father says – It is always best to get a daughter married at a tender age

Area

Village- Balughat, Union- Sreebardi, Upazila- Sreebardi, District - Sherpur.

Mohura to be married as per her father's decision

Mohura Khatun, age 11 years. Father Mafizul Huq. Mother Rabiya Khatun. In Sreebardi union's Balughat village this family resided in a small hut built on someone else's courtyard. Agricultural activity was their sole livelihood. Mohura Khatun did not get the opportunity to go to school because her family needed her to work as a servant. Without Mohura's knowledge, her father arranged for her to marry Delu Mia, the son of Kalu Mia from Rupapara village in Sreebardi upazila's Kazirchar union. Delu Mia was a 26 year old agricultural labourer.

Surveillance and action by landless group

The frequent visits between the two families was cause for concern by the leaders of the landless group. After enquiry they came to know that the marriage of Mohura was fixed on 31 May, 2010. The Balughat landless village committee leaders had a discussion with Mohura's father, Mafizul Huq, to inform him about the ills of child marriage and to ensure he knew that it was against the law. Mafizul Huq stuck to his position that the younger a daughter gets married, the better off she and her family her. He told the landless leaders that he married his wife when she was 10 years old and there was no problem and then asked them what their problem was.

In this situation Balughat landless village committee decided to inform the administration. On 28 April Balughat landless village committee submitted a memorandum demanding prohibition of child marriage to UNO. As per the memorandum the UNO directed Sreebardi union Parishad chairman to take adequate steps to stop the child marriage.

Result

On 29 May, 2010 Sreebardi union Parishad chairman and members visited Mohura's father's house. In the presence of the landless leaders the marriage was stopped. A discussion was held with all parties that served as a means to educate the entire community about the harms of child marriage.

Headmaster is women's persecutor. Teachers and students feel insecure.

Area

Village- Jalalabad, union- Kapuria, upazila- Natore sadar, District- Natore.

It is that school where the headmaster is in full control

Jalalabad higher school in Natore sadar upazila's Jalalabad village was established in 1996. There are 345 students, 170 of whom are girls. There are 11 teachers including the headmaster- only two of the teachers are women. Though Jalalabad school is not a government school, it falls within MPO jurisdiction. As a result the teachers regularly receive 80% of their salaries, benefits and educational supplies directly from the government.

Zulfiqar Haider has been in charge as the headmaster of Jalalabad school since 1996. Zulfiqar Haider is a local influential man. Every year, by exercising political influence, he picks a school committee comprised only of people who are his friends and puts them in charge of managing the school. Due to his influence, and lack of any oversight from the school management committee, he is able to falsify the school records. In addition, several people have complained that he has sexually assaulted or harassed people, but the school committee and administration did not take any action against him.

Sexual harassment against student Kohinoor Khatun

Kohinoor Khatun, age 20, was a S.S.C candidate from Jalalabad school. She came from Birahimpur village, the same village as the headmaster Zulfiqar Haider. They were neighbours. Kohinoor Khatun started studying in Jalalabad high school in the neighbouring village. She stopped her studies in 2007 because she got married, but she rejoined class 9 in 2009. Kohinoor Khatun was doing well in school, but the headmaster pressured her to take private coaching from him after school. He would also regularly require her to go to his office, almost always because of a bogus reason. He made inappropriate remarks and made unwanted sexual advances. Initially Kohinoor Khatun ignored his remarks, but soon the headmaster came on so strongly it was no longer possible for her to ignore him. Kohinoor Khatun protested, but the headmaster threatened that he would ensure that she failed her exams if she resisted his sexual advances. Despite the headmaster's threat, Kohinoor Khatun refused his advances and appeared for her examination. She had to prepare ten papers. Traditionally, all ten would be graded by a different teacher.

Box-16:-

Woman persecutor Zulfiqar Haider

Zulfiqar Haider, age 39. Village home Birahimpur. In the area he was a politically influential person. He was involved in many offensive activities. Due to his political influence he was appointed as the headmaster in Jalalabad high school in 1996. In 1999 the management committee of the school suspended him for two months. In 2004 he was again accused with sexual persecution by local women and children. The number is 480/2004. Again Kohinoor gave written complaint against sexual persecution by him to school committee. In addition, Kohinoor filed a case under the anti-women and children persecution tribunal. The number is 242/2010. There are many file such offences about which nobody ever dared to file cases.

The headmaster, however, graded five of Kohinoor's papers, a highly unusual practice for a headmaster. Kohinoor received an 80% on the papers that were graded by the teachers, but failed all five of the ones graded by the headmaster. Kohinoor Khatun was concerned that this would mean she was unable to sit for the S.S.C. examination, so she made a written complaint to the school committee documenting the harassment she had been subjected to by the headmaster and how it was directly affecting her ability to succeed. The school management committee failed to take any action, however, out of friendship with the headmaster.

The landless fight for Kohinoor's rights and education

Kohinoor's parents and others in the family felt insecure about the whole situation. For Kohinoor it became a major personal life challenge. She told the Jalalabad landless village committee about the incident and they called a meeting to review the facts. The landless village committee organised a representative meeting with landless leaders from other villages on 27 October and framed their strategy for the movement. On 2nd November 2010, they resubmitted Kohinoor's written complaint to the school management committee, demanding justice for sexual harassment, dismissal of headmaster, re-examination of Kohinoor's papers and the chance for Kohinoor to sit for the S.S.C examination. The school committee did not take prompt action. The landless organisation, therefore, arranged a press conference on 4th November to demand that Zulfiqar Haider be arrested and fired. This caused Zulfiqar Haider to flee. Kohinoor filed a case, but Zulfiqar Haider bribed the police and they refused to arrest him. Rather, the police focused their attention on harassing helpless Kohinoor and framed a report against her. In this situation, another representative meeting was organised with the landless leaders of another village and they decided to organize a powerful movement. Over two thousand landless men and women and school students signed a petition that was submitted to the District Administrator together with a memorandum explaining the situation. Copies of the memorandum were distributed to the police super, UNO and upazila women's and children ministry officer.

Box-17:-

Kohinoor- passionate about education

Kohinoor 20, Mother-Maner Begum. Father- Khalilur Rahman, day labourer. Kohinoor is a very bright student, but was given in marriage while she was in class VIII because her family was s poor. She had to quit her studies and marry a small business man . They quickly had a child. Her health became poor and she became sickly, but her husbandkept pressuring her for dowry. When her father failed to provide the dowry money Kohinoor's husband divorced her. Hence, as Kohinoor was released from her domestic duties she again took to her schooling. Despite looking after her infant, intelligent Kohinoor came first in all the examinations in the school. Her brilliant results made her parents and the villagers hopeful for a bright future and they are doing everything they can to encourage and support her.

They demanded the headmaster be dismissed, Kohinoor's exam be re-graded, and she be allowed to sit for the S.S.C. exam. On 18 November 2010, the landless group organised a meeting on the grounds of Jalalabad school. They announced that in case of failure to take prompt action they would besiege the office of district administrator on

14 November 2010. In addition, they succeeded in convincing the students to abstain from classes for two hours out of solidarity with their classmate. As a result the administration was compelled to take quick action.

Action by administration

Due to the pressure the administration promptly made two decisions: 1) The upazila social welfare officer was asked to re-investigate the case and 2) the upazila education officer was directed to re-examine Kohinoor's test papers. The landless group monitored the activities of the administration. In addition, they developed alliances with other villages, schools and professional groups. In response to the pressure the administration decided to take prompt action. While re-investigating the report, the social welfare officer interviewed villagers of Jalalabad village and collected students' statements, opinions etc. During the investigation the headmaster's financial corruption and sexual persecution were exposed. In addition, the education officer reviewed the five examination papers which the headmaster had graded before. This time Kohinoor achieved more than 80% marks in all the subjects. On 29 November 2010, the upazila administration organised an opinion sharing meeting at the Jalalabad school ground. In the meeting he informed the landless of the steps taken by the administration, and the landless group stopped the two hour strike of classes by the students.

Result

Kohinoor was able to sit for her S.S.C. examination because she is a dedicated and well-qualified student. Kohinoor's case is currently in court. The court has dismissed the police report, and accepted the report submitted by the social welfare officer. It has also dismissed the school management committee. The people in the area, particularly Kohinoor's peers, are more aware of sexual persecution and will be more cognizant of ways to combat it in the future.

Case Studies-3

Fatwa and fundamentalisms

Case summary

While the majority of landless members are practicing Muslim, they are concerned about the rise in fundamentalism in Bangladesh that threatens to subject people, especially women, to illegal extra-judicial punishments and erode the rights of women. These case studies illustrate how the landless have worked together to prevent religious fundamentalism from adversely affecting those who do not share the same beliefs.

CASE STUDY 3.1

Fatwa: Challenge by landless group

Area

Village- Shullakiya, Post office- Dharmapur, Upazila- Noakhali sadar, District- Noakhali.

Introduction

Shefali Begum (35), Husband: Jasim, father Kayum Munshi (80), Mother Sajeda Begum (70). Md. Jasim (35), father Mafizul Haq Saddar (85), Mother Bibi Mariam (75).

Background

Jasim and Shefali have been married for twenty years. They live in a char area where Jasim works as a share-cropper. In the char areas only one crop can be harvested in a year. For two-thirds of the year, there is acute unemployment and most people are compelled to go elsewhere in search of work. This year the harvest was not good, and after Jasim and Shefali repaid their share-cropping loan, there was almost nothing left for them to live on for the rest of the year. The dire financial situation resulted in many fights between the couple. On 29 June 2010 the couple got into a huge public fight. In a fit of rage, Jasim legally divorced Shefali under Muslim law by repeating the word “Talaq” three times. Abul Kahair and Kader Munshi overheard the proclamation and promptly reported it to the Imam of the local Mosque. On 16 July, 2010, after Jumma prayers Abul Khair led a group to Jasim’s house. They gave fatwa that Jasim and Shefali were divorced and if they still desired to live together than Shefali would have to go through “hilla” marriage.

Box-18:

Fatwa and Hilla

Fatwa is a matter of the Muslim religion and provides legal decisions on different issues relating to Muslim life on the basis of injunctions and guidance of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah or Hadith.

Hilla is an injunction given in religion that if after divorce a couple wishes to reunite in marriage, the woman must consummate a marriage with a man other than her husband, and after voluntarily divorced by that man, will the couple allowed to remarry. As per Bangladesh Muslim Family Law Ordinance prevalent now, hilla is not legal.

Hilla marriage is illegal: challenged by landless group

Landless cultural group's leader Belal Misri heard the news about the fatwa. He instantly informed the landless anchalic committee about Shefali's "hilla" marriage. The landless anchalic committee called an emergency extended meeting on July 16, 2010

The landless group discussed the high court's verdict on fatwa given on 8th July, which held "fatwa" was illegal. Hence, the landless group decided to challenge this fatwa for hilla marriage. The landless members began by distributing copies of the High Court verdict on fatwas to all union parishads. They also demanded the cessation of fatwa and action against those who decree "fatwa". The chairman, as demanded by the landless groups, went to the mosque and in the presence of the Imam and nearly a hundred other people, demanded to know the reason for "fatwa". The members also gave the chairman a copy of the high court's verdict and told him that fatwa was officially illegal in Bangladesh.

Result

The Imam admitted he was unaware of the high court decision and begged forgiveness for violating it. He gave assurance to the people that in future he would not give fatwa.

CASE STUDY 3.2

Asia Begum attends talim class, Not for the sake of learning but to take revenge

Area

Village: Shadhibari, Union- Alakdia, upazila- Muthupur, District - Tangail.

Description

Aisa Begum is a member of a landless group. One day she went to Doctor Kuddus's house to get medical treatment, and found 20-25 ladies sitting in a group receiving a talim lesson (Islamic class) from a burkha-clad woman.

Aisa pretended that she also came to take the talim lesson and sat with the group. After nearly three hours the session was suspended for the day. After the lesson, the talim teacher started collecting TK 5 from each person as *hadia* (fees for talim classes). Aisa questioned her, asking "you have come to give lessons on religion. Why are you asking money for it? How long will you continue to do business here?" This started a heated argument that attracted people from their homes. The burkha-clad talim teacher took shelter inside the house of the doctor and bolted the door. In the mean time, about one hundred landless men/women came to the doctor's house. After some time, the burkha-clad woman was compelled to come out of the house. The members wanted to know who she was. She said, "She came from Mymensingh district and preached talim lessons in various areas." At the demand of landless group she was forced to give assurance that she would never return to this area to give talim lessons.

Result

Due to the protest and resistance of the landless group, the talim centre in Doctor Kuddus's house was closed. In addition, the fight of the landless in this area resulted in two neighbouring villages also forbidding talim classes. The landless group is monitoring the issue vigilantly.

Case Studies-4

Access service and accountability

Case summary

Due to their marginalized status in society, the landless people find themselves vulnerable to the greed of those in positions of power and authority. This year landless members were denied social service benefits because they did not pay bribes, were forced to pay illegal tolls, and were subjected to harassment from micro-credit loans sharks. But, the landless members refused to become victims. Rather, they exposed the foul play and generated enough support that those in authority were forced to treat them in accordance with the law. The following case studies show how the landless organisations have defeated corruption and increased their economic security.

CASE STUDY 4.1

In public service sector rejection of government and non-government list Alternative formation of list by landless group.

Area

Total number of villages- 44, Union- Rajibpur, Upazila- Rajibpur, District- Kurigram.

Background

The Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) programme is a government safety net programme, targeting households that are chronically food insecure, have minimal or no land, very low income and the poorest housing conditions. Preference is given to female-headed households. VGD aims to promote self-reliance among the most vulnerable women, by providing them with food assistance and training in an alternative livelihood. Through the VGD programme, the World Food Programme (WFP), in collaboration with the Government, assists extremely poor women directly.

Government initiative in formulating the list

After the social safety net activities of the government expired, the government started formulating a new list. In Rajibpur Upazila, the Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) card expired on December 10. From December 10, the office of the UNO took steps to form a new list. As per government law, announcements were made in the area that a new list was being formulated and the office of the UNO. took the necessary steps to formulate the new list. The preliminary draft list for the area consisted of 1,705 names from 44 villages. While the list was being formulated, the landless members collectively monitored the process and collected complaints of irregularities, parochialism, and bribery.

Presentation of draft list before the people and demand for scrutiny

On 13 December, the Rajibpur landless union committee organised a meeting to discuss potential actions against the irregularities and corruption it found in creating the list. At the meeting it was decided that the landless organisation would write a memorandum and circulate a petition to demand that the preliminary list be revealed and they be given the opportunity to scrutinize the formation of the new list. The members collected nearly a thousand signatures from various villages for the petition. In addition, on 26 December, nearly 500 females and male organised a protest procession and besieged the office of the Upazila Executive (*Nirbahi*) Officer (UNO). They presented the signatures and memorandum to the UNO reiterating their demands. The UNO promised to review the primary list as per the demands of the landless people.

Administration's tactic to avoid responsibility in solving complaints

Rajibpur UNO designated a non-governmental organisation, scrutinize the new list. The landless people remained diligent in overseeing the process, but due to the influence of the local union parishad and powerful coterie, and also to lack of sincerity of the NGO staff, irregularities and bribery again became a problem. As a result, the extreme poor were excluded from the final list. Unfortunately, the UNO accepted this list as the final list and hung it on the notice board of UNO's office. The landless groups collected the list, and under the leadership of the landless union committee, started gathering information on the field-level about the families of the final list. They found that 300 families on the list were not eligible for VGD card: some of them owned houses, some were involved in small business, some of them were relatives of the chairman/members, and some did not appear to actually exist. The landless union committee decided to organise a representative meeting to discuss the course of action and strategy with the landless leaders of 24 of the 44 villages in Rajibpur union. They decided to organise a movement against corruption and irregularities.

People's movement against corruption and irregularities

The landless group organised meetings, gatherings in the 'haat' and bazaars, staged people's drama and led protest procession against corruption, irregularities, parochialism, favouritism etc. Landless groups received support from other landless members and the local poor. Realising the gravity of the situation, Rajibpur union parishad proposed to settle the problem amicably, but the landless group did not accept their proposal because they wanted to set an example against corruption. On 13 February, led by landless leaders, nearly two thousand people staged a protest procession and besieged the office of Rajibpur UNO. After the meeting they staged a sit-in-strike and declared that until a positive action was adopted they would continue the sit-in-strike. After striking for two hours, the UNO upazila chairman and vice-chairman asked to discuss the matter with the landless leaders. The landless leaders agreed and a two hour meeting transpired between the administration, elected representatives, and landless leaders. The landless leaders raised the issues of corruption and irregularities in forming the VGD list. They also specifically demanded the exclusion of names that were placed there as a result of corruption from the list. The UNO took the blame for the corrupt list. He also said, "If there are any irregularities, the related NGO must also take the responsibility". The landless leaders would not let the UNO off that easily, and stated, "It is the responsibility of the government to formulate the list. Instead of performing your duty you delegated the responsibility to an NGO.

Is this how lists are formulated?" The landless leaders also asserted, "You have signed a flawed list and approved it. Hence, you are answerable." The landless groups distributed press releases written by news papers regarding the corruption and irregularities in formulating VGD list to the UNO. They also demanded the exclusion of 300 names that were not eligible for the VGD cards, and threatened a press conference if their demands were not complied with. Under pressure, the UNO sought the assistance of the upazila chairman and vice-chairman. The female landless leader, Hafiza Begum, and the elected upazila female vice-chairman proposed a solution for the problem: "the landless group would scrutinise the VGD card list, and by 15th Feb, would submit the names of 300 genuinely poor people who were eligible for receiving a card. Hundreds of females and males gathered outside the UNO office to show support of the proposal, and the UNO officially agreed to the resolution and suspended the previous list. As agreed upon, the landless group collected the names of genuine poor by organising meetings in various villages.

Box-19:-

Josna Rani's life and livelihood is balancing between security and insecurity

Area: Village – Pakarhat, union- Angarpara, upazila- Khansama, District- Dinajpur.

Fight for life and livelihood: Josna Rani. Age 45. Village Pakarhat. She had a five member family. Husband - Girish Chanda Sen. He was a day labourer. In 2007 his left leg was paralyzed. Since then he has been unable to perform any heavy manual work. Hence, Josna Rani became the sole bread earner in the family. She used to earn money by working temporarily in households and by doing agricultural activities in the fields. Food insecurity made the family feel helpless.

Slight ray of hope for security: The government started a 100 day work-activity program to provide people in vulnerable situations with jobs for 100 days. Josna Rani tried to get her name included on this list of recipients and therefore visited the union parishad member and chairman several times. But they refused to include her unless she paid a bribe. Later on, due to pressure exerted by the landless group, Angarpara union parishad was compelled to include her name. She was able to dig earth for 40 days, which paid her 100 taka a day – enough to feed her family.

But repeatedly she was forced to face insecurity: From March 20, 2011, the second phase of earth digging activity started. When Josna Rani went to work, however, she was forbidden from working there. Her livelihood became insecure again. In this situation, under the leadership of the landless group, the other employed workers and landless members went to the chairman on 22 March, 2011 to inquire why Josna Rani was no longer enrolled. Angarpara union chairman informed, "She has been given VGD card. One person is not entitled to both programs. That is why her name has been dropped from this list."

Challenge by landless group: The leaders of the landless groups challenged the assertion by the chairman. Landless member Anwara Begum said, "VGD cards were given two months back. I received a VGD card. In two months I received rice twice. Where is Josna Rani's Card? She did not receive any rice. Where has her rice varnished?" The chairman responded by threatening the members. Under the circumstances, the landless leadership decided to abstain from any earth digging activity until Josna Rani was given work. In addition, on 23 March, 2011 they gave a written complaint and memorandum to UNO. On the basis of memorandum, the upazila PIO (Project Implement Officer) came to investigate the incident on 26th March. Corruption and irregularities in the union parishad were exposed during the investigation. The upazila PIO gave his assurance, in public, to enroll Josna Rani in the project. In addition, the 100 days activity management committee was disbanded. The landless group suspended the activity for three days and from March. 27, 2011 the activity started again.

Result:

Josna Rani has been assured that she will get her job back. In addition, the project management committee will be formed by the upazila PIO only after discussion with the landless group. It should also be mentioned that three landless leaders have been included as members in the current committee.

On 12 February the landless leaders organised a representative meeting in all the villages and drafted a correct list. On 13 and 14 February, these names were announced in the villages and the opinion of the people was collected. On 14 February, in Rajibpur, the landless union committee met to assess the opinions gathered. After assessing the opinions, four proposed names were corrected and the list was finalized with 300 names. On 15 February 2011, the landless leaders submitted two proposals to UNO: **first**, demanding exclusion of 300 ineligible names from the final list, and **second**, demanding inclusion of 300 names in the final list selected by the landless group.

Result

As per the proposal of the landless group, the UNO excluded the 300 ineligible names from the list. In the new list he included the 300 names provided by the landless group. In addition, a strong message was sent to those who thought they could manipulate the list. In all, 594 of the 1,705 families on the final list were landless members.

CASE STUDY 4.2

Collecting subscription in the name of toll, loss is faced by the fisherman

Area

Municipal area- Harishpur, upazila- Sanddwip, District - Chittagong.

Introduction

Geographically, Sandwip is an isolated island in the Meghna river. Fishermen families have lived on the island for a long time. However, due to river erosion and oppression by influential people, the unprotected fishermen families were forced to resettle in other places. Their only livelihood became deep sea fishing.

The fisherman are forced to pay illegal tolls

To get income, the fisherman would sell their catch in 'haat' on the river bank or in the bazaar. Unfortunately, the government, to earn revenues, started leasing the river banks. The lease owners changed every time a new government was put in power.

As per government regulation, the fisherman had to pay a lease toll for the movement of boats in the river and for loading and unloading goods. In addition, the lease owners of Harishpur also imposed an illegal 10% toll on the sale of fish by the fishermen. The fishermen refused to pay this illegal toll, but the politically influential lease owners forcibly took the toll from them through hired armed goons.

The fishermen might not be powerful alone, but they can organise into a force

The fishermen were unprotected individually, but they were well organised as members of landless groups and knew they could reclaim their rights through collective movements. On 11 May, under the leadership of landless group, nearly three hundred landless males/females marched to the office of UNO and besieged the office. They held a meeting in the UNO office ground and demanded to stop illegal subscription in the name of toll, harassment and terrorist activities. After the meeting, they submitted a memorandum to UNO and municipal chairman.

When they observed that no action was being taken, the representatives of landless groups held a meeting. As a part of the movement, they decided to stop fishing and selling fish from 14 May. Instead, they staged a sit-in strike everyday in the bazaar. They also organised gatherings and meetings in the “haats” and bazaars. When the common people wanted to know the reason for abstaining from selling fish, they explained their view-point. As a result the common people became sympathetic to their cause. The local news paper published articles about the strike and the demands of the fishermen. This pressured the local administration to propose a meeting to resolve the issue. Considering the people’s interest, the landless group agreed to the meeting. On 16 May, 2010, the UNO, upazila chairman, municipal chairman, lease owners of ghat (river port) and the landless leaders sat for a discussion. In the meeting, the landless leaders asked for the official rules and regulations governing the management of the lease system of the ghat, and it was proven that the landless people were right.

Result

The underrepresented fishing communities were able to preserve their rights. They were included in decision-making, which is a positive aspect of empowerment. In addition, 207 families no longer have to pay the 10 percent illegal toll for selling fish in the ghat. As a result, every family is earning an average of TK 25 more a day.

CASE STUDY 4.3

For the development of one village there are 11 development organisations

Area

Village – Hashimpur, Union – Khoksha, Upazila – Khoksha, District – Kushtia.

A regulation which is not a regulation at all – people are victims of this regulation

Hashimpur village is a big village with approximately 450 families and 11 development organisations and NGOs. The main activity of these organisations is micro-credit. Nearly 80 percent of the poor populations of the village are micro-credit holders. Most of the loan holders took the loans hoping to achieve economic betterment. Micro-credit loans start from TK 5 to 10 thousands. Thirteen members of landless groups took loans from an NGO called Web Foundation.

Their life is entangled in a net – they are unable to come out of it

In the hopes of finding a better life, these credit holders got entangled in a web of loans. Many of them have failed to repay the instalments and the only way to repay the future instalments is by borrowing from another source. This is exactly what happened to landless members, Jamela, Rakhi, Razia and Ruma.

On 25 October, 2010 Jamela, Rakhi, Razia and Ruma paid off their entire debt to Web Foundation. After paying off the debt, they asked Web Foundation to return their savings that was put down as collateral. But the staff of Web Foundation, after calculating the debt, declared that there was a deficit of TK 500. Web Foundation demanded that the only way they could reclaim their saving was to first pay TK 500 and then make an application to the manager of the organisation to withdraw the capital. This procedure would take nearly a month, he stated. The women objected, asserting: “This is not according to the regulation. The group has cancelled our membership because the loan was repaid in full. According to regulation, savings have to be returned from the moment of cancellation of membership. Why, then, would you need one month time?” The other landless members supported them, but the staff of Web Foundation refused to return their savings. Instead the staff member threatened the landless members that he would file a case alleging that the money had been hijacked by the members. In addition, the staff member also intimidated the members in other ways.

In the meantime, other landless members and villagers who were credit holders gathered at the Web Foundation central office. Nearly 150 landless members and other villagers made strong demands that the savings should be returned on the same day of debt repayment. They threatened that if need be they would barricade the Web Foundation centre. In addition, under the leadership of landless leaders, a protest gathering was organised against the conduct of the staff of Web Foundation, particularly about the threat of false case and intimidation. In the meantime, the news reached the office of Web Foundation. On hearing the news the manager of the organisation, with two other staff and local union parishad chairman, came to Hashimpur para credit centre. The manager realized that the landless people were correct and offered to work out a settlement. The landless group demanded to see the pass books of Jamela, Rakhi, Razia and Ruma. The pass books were reviewed by the local union parishad chairman and the manager, and they declared that the four debt holders had paid off their entire debt. The staff member admitted his mistake and begged for forgiveness. The manager of Web Foundation assured everyone that this sort of behaviour would not be repeated. After this, the local union parishad chairman apologized to the landless group and suggested a settlement. The landless group demanded the closure of Hashimpur village’s Web Foundation centre. The manager conceded to the demand of the landless group.

Result

The savings of the four landless women who were harassed by Web Foundations was returned to them in full without further incident. The credit centre of Hashimpur village has been closed. At present, a total of 23 credit holders, after repaying their loan, have cancelled their membership. They said, “We eat or we starve; at least we are not plagued by the threat of loan, we can sleep in peace now.”

Safety Net Card: number remains intact but the name gets changed if money is paid.

Area

Village – Royhati, Union – Ghurka, Upazila – Royganj, District – Sirajganj.

Price of one card is worth about three thousands taka only

Anwara Begum, wife of Martuja Ali, of Royhati village was enlisted for the VGD card. The number of the card was 219. When Anwara Begum went to get her card, Sohrab Ali, member of the ward no. 6 of Ghurka Union demanded TK 3,000. As she could not satisfy the demand, Sohrab Ali told her that her name had been removed from the list of people eligible of the card. Sohrab Ali then gave the VGD card to some other Anwara because she was able to pay him the bribe. He was clever enough to also change the name of Anwara's husband-father so as not to create suspicion. As such, the name Martuja Ali (the husband of the Anwara entitled to the VGD card) was substituted for Panjer Ali (the other Anwara's father). She took Anwara Begum's wheat ration from February 2009 onwards.

Landless organisation to probe the irregularities and corruption

Panjer Ali and his daughter, Anwara, are comparatively well-off. Their family used to take all the food items provided under the VGD card secretly. On July 2010, a landless member named Parveen came to take the food items of her VGD card and saw Anwara's father taking the items allotted to VGD card holders. Parveen instantly reported the whole incident to the landless group and organised a meeting of the village committee on 17th August. Leaders of the Royganj Regional Committee were present in the meeting. Later, leaders of the village and the regional committee went to the Union Parisad to examine the register and collect information. The landless leaders could see that the names on the VGD registry had been switched.

Application against corruption- legal steps

The landless organisation later took steps to inquire into the irregularities and corruption and take administrative measures. On 23rd August of 2010, the landless organisation handed over a memorandum to the Upazila Project Officer (UPO). The UPO then took measures to probe into the complaint described in the memorandum. It was revealed in the investigation that the list from the Upazila Parisad registrar contains the name of Murtaja Ali while the registrar of Ghurka Union Parisad mentions the name Panjer Ali. Thus the allegations of corruption were clearly proved. Upazila Project Official then submitted his inquiry report to the Chairman of Union Parisad and Sohrab Ali, a member of the ward no. 6 responsible for reducing corruption in distributing VGD cards. The landless organisation, on the basis of the inquiry report, decided to file a case against the corrupt local government officials. Anwara Begum, member of the landless organisation, became the plaintiff and filed a case in the Sirajganj Judicial Magistrate Court on 30 August 2010 against Sohrab Ali, Member of the Ghurka Union Parisad and UP Chairman Osman Gani. After the hearing, the Court directed the Royganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) to send the probe report. The Court then decided to award a fine of TK.5000 to the Chairman and TK 3,000 to the ward member. In addition, the Court ordered all the food items be returned to the rightful owner.

Result

The decision of the court has been in favour of the landless people. This legal step taken by the landless organisation against corruption has been able to create public opinion against corruption and has also set an example. Even the administration was inspired by the endeavour of the landless organisation to take necessary steps against corruption. Finally the UP Chairman was compelled to return Anwara Begum's VGD card to her, which was worth TK 10,450 [(the price of total 475 kg of wheat for 19 month (25 kg per month)].

Overall Result

Table 11 shows that in every division, landless organisations organised small and big movements against irregularities and corruption. These movements have been sub-divided into three main categories: 1) service and support for health care and scholarship, 2) safety-net and subsidy, social security activities, agricultural subsidy card and 100 days activities, 3) irregularities and corruption,

school buildings, irregularities in construction of culverts, corruption in distribution of safety-net cards, embezzlement, demand of forcible toll etc. It can be seen that the landless have achieved

Table-11: Result of movements against corruption and irregularities						
Description	Division	Safe money and recovery (Taka)		Benefited families		
		Safe money	Recovery	Female	Male	Total
Service and Support	Rajshahi	71,300	-	232	198	430
	Khulna	198,700	-	578	311	889
	Chittagong	1,500	-	2	3	5
Safety-net and Subsidy	Rajshahi	817,000	-	395	21	416
	Dhaka	64,800	-	10	3	13
	Khulna	1,500	-	-	3	3
	Chittagong	143,400	-	62	107	169
Irregularities and Corruption	Rajshahi	-	50,500	100	108	208
	Khulna	-	51,350	265	293	558
	Chittagong	-	1,009,000	1,100	1,520	2,620
Total		1,298,200	1,110,850	2,744	2,567	5,311

results in all categories in two main ways: 1) stopping irregularities and corruption and 2) recovering money paid in bribes. In the activity year, a total of TK 2,409,050 was recovered, benefiting a total of 5,311 females (female-2,744 and male- 2,567). This means the average family received an average of an extra TK 453 per year. This has brought a positive economic benefit in their lives. The poor masses are realising that if bribery and irregularities stop they will have greater access to economic resources.

Case Studies-5

Demand for recognition increased wages

Case summary

This year the landless have worked to ensure that people are able to earn a living wage. These case studies illustrate how they were able to stand up to factory owners to increase the pay of the workers by 50% and to fundamentalists that refused to allow women to work in a government program.

CASE STUDY 5.1

Movement for recognition of weavers and demand for raise in wage

Area

Village- Khaddatarapur, Union- Sadka, Upazila- Kumarkhali, District- Kushtia.

Background

Thousands of men and women are employed as weavers in Kumarkhali upazila in Kushtia district. The owners of the factories hire the workers as day labourers, which means that the workers are not protected by labour laws and policies such as minimum wages, allowances, and work hours. This is especially egregious because the owners of the factory are legally obliged to hire the weavers as workers because the owners benefit from bank loans and government subsidies.

Description of the incident

In Kumarkhali's sadka union's Khaddatarapur village and the adjoining three other villages, Bathai, Betbaria, and Islampur, the weavers make towels (*gamchha*). There is a huge discrepancy in how male and female workers are treated. The women apply colours to the thread, which requires that they squat on the floor for hours at a time. The chemicals from the dyes give them skin diseases. Most women are able to earn about TK 60 a day. In contrast, the men work on handlooms, which cause less physical distress to the body, and they are typically able to earn TK 140 a day.

The landless became concerned about two issues: **1)** that both men and women were earning below the minimum wage and **2)** the men were making twice that of the women. They thus organised a movement to assist the workers in demanding a pay raise. The owners of the factories did not agree to the demand, and tried to weaken the landless movement by harassing the members, which included filing false cases against the landless and firing the landless workers in the factories (a total of 58 were fired).

Movement by landless group

The landless group organised group meetings to create strong public support in favour of increasing the wages and ending the gender pay discrepancy. They also organised gatherings, protest processions and people's dramas. On 8th October the landless group organised a meeting in Khaddatara school ground against the owners. In the meeting they demanded the police harassment end, the false cases be withdrawn, and the fired landless be able to return to work.

They were joined by people from all strata of life, including labourers, lawyers, reporters, professional groups, women activists, and teachers. The landless and their supporters threatened that if the demands were not met within two days, all the factories in three villages would be shut down. The owners did not agree to the demands by the October 10th deadline and the landless responded by organising a labour strike. On 15th October, the landless group then organised a protest procession and besieged the office of the Kumarkhali UNO. After the meeting they presented a memorandum with nearly three thousand signatures.

Role of administration

Because of the demands of the people, the UNO agreed to engage in a discussion with the landless leaders. He became sympathetic to the cause and agreed to assist the landless. He also ordered the police to stop harassing the landless members immediately. True to his word, the UNO hosted a formal meeting the next day to discuss the issue at hand with the owners, weavers, and landless members. After the discussion, the UNO invited three factory owners and four landless leaders to have a separate meeting to resolve the issue. At the meeting it was decided that the wages of the women would be raised by about TK 36 a day and the men would receive a daily increase of about TK 72 a day. In addition, the landless who lost their jobs would be rehired and the false cases against the landless would be dropped.

Result

In three villages, nearly 225 female workers and 400 men received a 50% increase in pay, greatly improving their economic condition. The success story has inspired other workers in other villages to organise movement and mobilise people's support for raising wages.

CASE STUDY 5.2

Women should be in home, why they are roaming in the fields?

Area

Village: Magurata, Union- Gala, Upazila- Tangail Sadar, District- Tangail.

Description of the incident

According to the government policy for the 100 day employment generation program, at least a third of the people in the programme must be women. One of the programs was an earth digging project. A group of men and women successfully completed the first phase and reported to work on 07 April 2010 to begin an additional 40 days of work on the second phase of the project.

A number of powerful Muslim fundamentalists, led by local UP member Farid, opposed the policy and did not want to allow women to work in the field. The women in the program challenged him saying: “Our names are on the government list! Is there any law that says we cannot do the work simply because we are women?” Farid answered “This is the rule of religion as well as society. Society cannot exist if it is not adhered to.”

Demanding for participation of women in economic activities

The landless leader Farida discussed the issue with the Union Committee on the day of the incident. The committee members agreed that it was wrong to deny women the right to work. The landless organisation also held a demonstration in the Magurata village on 09 April 2010 where they demanded that the female workers be allowed to join the project the next morning. The local residents echoed these sentiments by saying: 'If men and women can work together in home, why can they not work outside of the home? Why a line of difference would be drawn? If men and women can work together in other villages, why won't they be able to work jointly in this village?'

The female workers returned to work the next morning, but Farid again prohibited them from working. The male workers threatened to stop working unless the women agreed. The landless organisation also made a written complaint, supported with numerous signatures of support, to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer and Upazila Chiarman. The Upazila Chairman investigated the incident and found that the landless' assertions were correct.

Result

The administration fired Farid from the project management committee because he was violating government policy by not allowing women to work. A new committee has now been formed that allows women to work.

Overall Result

The landless organisation mobilised 21 movements in the working year (women- 10 and men- 11). An analysis of the **table number-11:** reveals that the movement of enhancing wages has increased in lots of areas. The average income of 1,715 workers has increased by about TK 6,860. In addition, a total of 1,715 workers got TK 11,764,250 more in wages. The extra income has positively impacted the lives of the landless members.

Description	Name of the Region	Benefited Worker Families			Person Days	Total Amount of Money
		Female	Men	Total		
Agricultural Worker	Rangpur	200	-	200	4,000	80,000
	Kumarkhali	-	45	45	4,050	162,000
	Dinajpur	200	-	200	14,500	410,000
	Bagatipara	70	245	315	28,350	830,250
Weavers	Tangail	-	400	400	100,000	7,200,000
	Kumarkhali	225	20	245	62,250	1,530,000
Day Labourers in other sectors	Kumarkhali	-	275	275	33,000	1,530,000
	Comilla	-	10	10	1,200	12,000
	Sandwip	-	25	25	200	10,000
Total		695	1,020	1,715	247,550	11,764,250

Case Studies-6 Demand for Information

Case summary

Often, there is a disparity between what the government regulates and what happens in practice. In order to ensure that projects and policies are implemented as the government intends to, people must be able to access official government records. As such, the Government of Bangladesh enacted a Right to Information Act in 2009. This section describes how the landless people have already mobilized to use the act to fight corruption and demanded that they receive all the products and services to which they are rightfully entitled, including maternal health cards and school buildings.

CASE STUDY 5.1

Information inquiry and demanding information: accountability – establishing rights

Area

Gangni Municipality Corporation, Dhankhola and Saharbarati Union, Upazila- Gangni, District – Meherpur.

Description of the project

The goal of the government directed "Safe Motherhood Health Voucher" project is to provide safe prenatal treatment to poor expecting mothers. Each month around 75 poor and expecting mothers are supposed to get a card which allows each of them to receive TK 8,000 in health care services until she delivers the child.

Probing into the irregularities

Members of the landless group were informed of irregularities in distribution of the cards of the "Safe Motherhood Health Voucher" project. Members of the landless area committee collected information at the field level from poor and expecting mothers. The landless members also carried out some fact finding activities. It discovered that cards had been granted to expecting mothers from comparatively wealthy families rather than to those really in need. There were allegations that the concerned health officials charged a TK 200 bribe per head for granting the health cards in Gangni Municipality Corporation, Dhankhola and Saharbarati Union. The health official also stopped distributing cards, most likely because of the poor families' inability to pay the bribe.

Applying for entitlement to information under the RTI law

The President of the Gangni landless area committee and three other members jointly applied to the Upazila Health Officer on July 19 2010 to obtain information regarding the "Safe Motherhood Health Voucher" project. The major information sought in the application was: **1)** how many cards should be distributed in each union/municipality corporation each month; **2)** what are the conditions for selecting women to receive the cards; **3)** who is responsible for distributing the cards; **4)** what services are covered by the card; **5)** how much money should be on the cards; and **6)** do the selected families need to register by paying any fees; and **7)** if registration is needed, what are the fees for registration.

Analysis of the information obtained

The Upazila health officer responded to the request for information. The landless learned that 47 families in Dhankhola and 33 families in Saharwati have received the card to date. No information was provided about the Gangni municipality corporation. The landless members complained that it took a long time for the health officer to respond to the request and that the response was incomplete.

Next step

The landless area committee had already called an emergency meeting on the issue of irregularities, and expanded it to include corruption in the "Safe Motherhood Health Voucher" project and the poor response to their request for information. An initiative was launched to collect more specific information, gather proof, and drum-up support. A petition was signed in support of the project by well wishers, professionals, elected municipality corporation mayor and upazila chairman. On July 29 2010, more than two-hundred men and women staged a demonstration against the irregularities in the project, held a procession, and handed over a memorandum with the signed petition to the civil surgeon office. Copies of the memorandum were also sent to the Deputy Commissioner – Meherpur, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO), Upazila Health and Family Officer, Upazila Chairman of Meherpur, Gangni.

The landless also leaders made a list of the names and addresses of the 20 families who paid a bribe to receive a card.

The landless leaders also held an opinion sharing meeting with the mayor of the municipality corporation, upazila chairman and upazila health official to offer evidence that there had been corruption. The landless leaders demanded detailed information regarding the project in that meeting. In response, the upazila health officer admitted that accurate information could not be given due to lack of sufficient information at both the office and field levels. He assured the landless leaders that he would try to furnish detailed information.

Box- 20:- Life- Death Risks and Safety

Bilkis Akter. I am 20 years old. My husband's name is Firoze Ahmed (age: 30). I come from a village named Gangni Eidgahpur of the Meherpur district. I got married in 2009. I have been a member of the landless group for the last eight years. I had to live with much hardship in my husband's family since my marriage. My husband had no land or homestead of his own. He used to work as an agricultural day laborer in the land of others. My first child was a son. He is three years' old now. I came to know about the "Safe Motherhood Health Voucher" project before the birth of my second baby. I got a card because of the movement by the Gangni landless group demanding card distribution in a fair and just way. I visited the hospital three times to receive check-ups. My child was born through a caesarean operation.

I received financial and medical support for three months prior to the delivery of my baby. In addition, after childbirth, I received other relevant opportunities from the hospital like meals for the baby and diapers. Now my daughter is in good health. It was impossible for my poor husband to bear the costs of the surgery and the everyday family expenses. Obtaining the card under the "Safe Motherhood Health Voucher" project enabled me to undergo my surgery free of costs and it safeguarded me and my baby health and lives. It also helped us make ends meet economically.

Administrative steps

Motivated by the petition submitted by the landless, the civil surgeon of Meherpur came to investigate the incident on 01 August 2010. The civil surgeon found that there was corruption in the distribution of the cards, validating the landless member's complaint. In the meantime, more than 300 landless members gathered together in the school field of the Dharmachaki village and demanded proper justice from the civil surgeon. The landless also wanted the civil surgeon to answer a lot of their questions about the project.

The civil surgeon provided detailed answers about the aim/goal of the project, beneficiaries, system of selection, services and opportunities received in the project. He then asked the audience to select beneficiaries, and was provided with 20 names of poor and expecting mothers.

Result

The health official who was found to have accepted bribes has been transferred and has had to return the money he illegally collected. The 20 poor and expecting mothers that the landless group proposed to the civil surgeon have all received health cards.

CASE STUDY 5.2

Agriculture friendly budget: lives of the farmers- accountability

Area

Amanullah Union, Sandwip Upazila, Chittagong district

Background information

The landless organisation began reviewing the national budget after the declaration of the 2010-2011 budgets. The landless members believed that the new measures to the agricultural sector could have both positive and negative impacts on their lives. For instance, the total budget allocated to the agricultural sector increased, but the total amount of subsidies was reduced from TK 4,950 crores to TK 4,000 crores. As a result, the landless members were very interested in learning more about the agriculture section of the budget.

Initiatives of the landless organisation in collecting information for the policy, principles and others

The landless organisation obtained a copy of the "National Agricultural Policy 2010" with the support of the Nijera Kori staff. They learned that the Union Parishads have been given the important power of implementing the measures in the policy. As a result the landless organisation took the initiative to collect the budget of the Union Parishad. The landless organisation questioned the legality of some sources of income that the Union Parishad had claimed was their own. An example of this is illustrated in a case study below.

Introduction: amanullah union parishad, upazila- sandwip, district- chittagong

The members of the landless organisation decided to apply to the Amanullah Union Parishad to obtain the 2010-2011 policy. Shah Alam, one of the members of the landless organisation, applied to the Chairman on August 3rd. The Union Parishad, in response to the application, gave the landless members a photocopy of the budget on August 21 of 2010. The landless members conducted a budget analysis and determined that the UP was expecting to receive grants for development projects, but the projects were based on the desires of the UP staff rather than the needs of the local people. As a result, the landless organisation made preparations to raise their collective demands to amend the proposal of the development programme on the basis of the people's needs.

In the meantime, the government began distributing agricultural cards for the agricultural subsidy in Amanullah Union. As a result, the landless organisation decided that they should monitor how the farms were selected to receive the agricultural subsidy cards.

Inauguration of the agricultural card programme: demanding for information by the landless people on behalf of common people

Amanullah Union Parishad organised a discussion meeting to inaugurate the Agricultural Card distribution programme on September 16, 2010. Government officials, elected public representatives and local community people participated in this meeting. After the inaugural address, Shah Alam, a member of the landless organisation demanded that the public be informed of: "what should be the selection procedure of the farmers, would the draft list be published before public and be finalised by taking inputs and opinions from people, would the farmers need to pay any money to get the agricultural card?" People present in the meeting supported this demand. The Upazila Chairman and the Deputy Assistant Agriculture Officer made a brief presentation to the people regarding the rules and regulations of the agricultural subsidy card distribution and the adjoining duties and responsibilities. The information included that the deputy assistant agricultural officer would perform the duty of farmer selection; the draft list should be sent to the Upazila Agricultural Officer along with the proposals presented; the agricultural cards issued by the Upazila administration should be returned again to the Union Parishad for distribution amongst the farmers; the farmers would have to collect cards from the Union Parishad; and no money would have to be paid for getting the cards.

Demanding money in illegal way in the name of own income

The farmers went to the Amanullah Union Parishad office to collect the agricultural cards at different times. The Secretary of the Union Parishad demanded TK 20 per head to distribute the agricultural cards. Some farmers agreed to pay the TK 20, but the fact that bribes were requested was quickly circulated in the community. The landless organisation organised an opinion sharing meeting with the local people to determine the best course of action. The landless organisation, in a collective manner, decided to learn more about the incident, and if needed, make sure the Union Parishad office was held accountable to the common people. On 28th October, more than 400 men and women gathered in the field of the Amanullah Union Parishad office. The Secretary of the Union Parishad replied to the questions of the landless and informed them that the TK 20 was being taken to enrich the coffers of the Union. The money was already accounted for in their budget and was supposed to go towards development work in the union.

Challenging the verbal speech by use of legal information

The landless members challenged the collection of TK 20 as bribes. The leaders of the landless organisation showed the budget of the Union Parishad to the Secretary and presented arguments as to why the payment constituted corruption and bribery. The landless stated, "You have given us the copy of this budget in response to the application of Shah Alam, a member of our landless organisation. There are no provisions in the budget to collect this money. Government law also prohibits you from taking money for the cards." The landless members also informed him that both the Upazila Chairman and deputy assistant agriculture officer had told the public that the government policies mandated that farmers would not have to pay for the agricultural card on September 16. Moreover, they mentioned that the Union Parishad is not giving any receipt of the money taken from the clients, which it has to do for any valid transaction. The landless clearly told the Secretary that the payment constituted bribery and corruption.

Demands of the landless people- establishing accountability

In the meantime, the landless members gathered in the Amanullah Union Parishad field and began launching slogans demanding a proper answer from the Chairman. The Chairman began changing his stance after seeing the collective strength of the landless and considering their persuasive arguments. He came out of his office and explained that the Union Parishad cannot claim TK 20 per agricultural card as constituting its own source of income.

Box – 21:

Free of Costs Agricultural Card Has Changed My Life

Belal Uddinn (age: 33 years). Father: Shah Alam. My home is in the Aman Ullah Village of Sandwip Upazila. I became landless and shelterless after the arable lands and homestead of my parents and grandparents were washed away by the mighty Meghna. I got shelter in the Aman Ullah village of the Aman Ullah Union through the help of one of my relatives.

I formed a family when I got married ten years ago. Now I have a family of six persons: one daughter, a wife, two brothers and my mother. My only source of livelihood is share-cropping. I came to know from the fellow villagers that if I can get an agricultural card I would be entitled to a number of privileges and opportunities, including receiving seeds and cash money and having access to subsidized fertilizer. Hence, I went to the Chairman and members of the Union Parishad several times to try to get the agricultural card. They said that I must spend some money to get the agricultural card. As I ran short off money, I could not insert my name on the list and did not get the card.

Meanwhile, I learned from Mafiz Uddin, my neighbour and a member of the landless committee, that according to the government regulations no money is required to get an agricultural card. He also told me that the landless organisations are mobilising movements so that the farmers can get agricultural card free of costs. I decided to join their movement. My name was also added to the list of landless group members. I got an agricultural card without paying any bribe or undue money. Later I was also able to open a bank account by giving only 10 taka because I showed the bank officials my agricultural card.

Result:

Because of the agricultural card, I got one mound of fertilizer for share cropping at subsidized price for the land amounting to 1.60 acres. Although I have no land of my own, my name is still in the records of the government as a share cropper. Now I am helping other farmers to get an agricultural card who are yet to have it. Now I have also become a member of the landless group.

He stated, "The sources of Union Parishad income are determined according to government regulations. Legally, we are not entitled to TK 20 per agricultural card. But we decided to take TK 20 per card to increase our own income because the money allotted for development in the Union Parishad is not sufficient to conduct the development activities. However, we should have discussed this with you prior to taking your money. But, we did not do it. It has been a great fault on our part and we are really sorry for this fault. No such incident will happen in the future. I am giving my word to work together for the development of the union through collective discussion."

Result

The landless organisation challenged the information provided by the Union Parishad. As a result, 300 farmer families received agricultural cards without paying a bribe.

Box-22:- Learning

The members think that collection of information is not possible by applying individually. They need a collective movement to establish accountability and obtain information. In addition, they need to assess and prioritize which information to collect on a regular basis.

CASE STUDY 5.3

Application for Receiving Information- Re-application, Realisation of Information

Area

Union- Alexander, Upazila- Ramgati, District- Lukshimipur.

Need for Information

The landless organisations have been mobilizing movements for a long time to demand that they have access to the khas land which they are entitled to, as per government regulation. The local jotedars have illegally occupied most of these khas land by forging records and papers and taking advantage of the government's apathy towards the division of the khas land. This year, to advance their effort to gain their rightful access to the khas land, the landless organisation used the Right to Information Act to obtain government documents regarding the rightful owners of the mouza wari khas land.

Application of the landless people to obtain information

Riaz, a member of the Alexander landless organisation, applied to the Assistant Land Officer of the Alexander Union land office on 23rd September of 2010 under the RTI ACT. The Assistant Land Officer of the Union received the application and signed his name to show receipt. When Riaz returned to receive the information requested on the date specified, he was verbally informed that they were unable to honour his request. The landless member asked why his request could not be granted, but the Assistant Land Officer simply told him to re-apply to the Upazila Land Office.

Next step of the landless members in collecting information

The landless organisation organised a representatives' meeting on November 13 to determine its next steps. It was decided to make a formal complaint in the upazila administration regarding the non-cooperation of the Union land office to furnish information. On November 24 of 2010, more than one hundred landless members went to the Upazila land office as part of a demonstration procession. The landless members made verbal complains to the information officer in charge of the Upazila land office regarding the non cooperation of the Union land office in providing information without explaining any concrete cause. The Assistant Commissioner (land), against the backdrop of the collective demand raised by the landless members, proposed they discuss the matter and instantly initiated a dialogue. The Assistant Commissioner (land) informed the landless that, 'An information officer is performing his duties in the Upazila land office. You should apply to him and we guarantee you will be furnished with the requested information within the specific time period.' In response, Siddiqur Rahman, a landless member, applied to the Information Officer, Upazila Land Office- Ramgoti on November 24.

Result

The Information Officer, Upazila Land Office- Ramgoti, provided all the information requested about khas land within the specified time period.

Box-23:- Learning

The administration did not take any measures against the non-cooperation of the Union land office in furnishing information requested under the RTI Act. The members learned that 'it was not sufficient to place complaints verbally. This is why the administration did not take any official measures.' If a similar incident happens again, they will put their complaint in writing and present it as a unified group.

CASE STUDY 5.4

The construction of the school was executed by collecting information applying information, public-audit and planning.

Area

Union Padumshahar, Upazial- Saghata, District- Gabandha.

Description of the school

Majid's vita government primary school is located in padumshahar union. Although it is a government school, there is not enough space for the students to receive a quality education. As a result the teachers of the school applied to the government for extension of the school building.

Leadership and role of landless members in school management

In the 2010-2011 elections, landless group leader Fazlul Huq was elected as the president of the school management committee. After the election, Fazlul Huq had a discussion with the landless members regarding the extension of the school building. The landless collected three thousand signatures demanding the extension of school building. The school management committee, backed by the leadership of landless group, submitted the people's signatures and a memorandum demanding extension of the school building to the office in charge of primary education development programme.

Copies were also given to the office of primary and mass education as well as the local administration, Palli unayyan and co-operation ministries.

Project sanctioned, and construction management

Due to the demands of landless group, the extension was approved. The project was named Atirikta Sreni Kakkha Nirman (“Horizontal Extension”). The local government put the Engineering office (LGED) in charge of implementing the project. The estimated budget was TK 12,75,704. In June 2010 the local government invited tender from the engineering office. The lowest bidder was Abdul Hamid Babu, and thus he was awarded the contract. Later Abdul Hamid Babu assigned the work to local contractor Enamul. Sub-contractor Enamul started the construction work on August 7, 2010.

Gathering information and monitoring of the construction work

The sub-contractor was not paying any attention to the quality of the construction project. In response, the landless group requested the local government engineering office to provide information about the project, including the blueprints and specifications of what type of materials were to be used. On 26 September 2010 the landless group received this information and used it to monitor the progress of the school extension.

Irregularity in construction work-movement by landless group

The landless members detected discrepancies between the plans for the construction project and how the school was actually being built. On 27 September 2010, the group discovered that there was more sand in the cement than the plans called for and the proper rods had not been used. The landless demanded that the construction company give them their building plans, but they refused to respond to the demands and threatened them. When the members protested the contractors attempted to assault them. To avoid this unwanted clash, the landless members left the area and held a meeting to decide how to best proceed. They decided to submit a memorandum to upazila engineer and local government engineering office. They also decided to mobilise people’s support and provide the government information about the contractors falling short of their responsibility under the contract.

On 29 September the landless presented a memorandum and signatures of about 200 people to upazila government engineer. After presenting the memorandum, the landless members jointly stopped the construction work. On 10 October 2010, upazila government engineer LGRD, main construction firm’s owner, Abdul Hamid, and Padumshahar Union Parishad Chairman came in person to review the situation. Nearly 300 men and women came out in support. In the inquiry it was proved that proper materials had not been used for building the basement of the school. The landless members demanded to know why the contract was assigned, why information regarding the construction was not provided to them by the contractors, why non-local workers were recruited for the project, and why the project manager did not come to inspect the site often.

Result

After taking questions from the landless, the government engineer admitted the lapses in monitoring. As a result, changes were made. The original contractor was required to do the work directly and rebuild the basement according to specifications. He also promised to inspect the building regularly. Thanks to the efforts of the landless, the school expansion was successfully completed, by local workers, on 9 November 2010.

Case Studies-7

A constant struggle against Industrial Shrimp

Case summary

A constant struggle for the landless people is how to secure enough food and clean drinking water to survive. This struggle intensified when the land they depend on for survival is flooded with saline water by shrimp cultivators who want to increase their profits. The saline water is catastrophic for the typical farmer because they are not able to cultivate crops, raise livestock, or, in some instances, even access fresh drinking water. The following case studies illustrate how the landless groups, through strength and persistence, were able to overcome the harassment and abuse of the shrimp cultivators to regain access to common lands and water bodies.

CASE STUDY 7.1

Movement to stop commercial shrimp cultivation and to ensure food security

Area: Village- Chabrabanda, Union- Sholadana, Upazila- Paikgacha, District- Khulna.

Background

The south-west coastal area of Bangladesh is mainly formed by the ebb and flow of tides. The fertile agricultural land once provided life and livelihood for the inhabitants of the area. In the 1960s an embankment was constructed to protect the land from salt water. As a result, the amount of agricultural products doubled because the land began to yield two crops a year rather than just one. There was a surplus of food.

Overnight change, farmers were deprived of their land

In the 1980s shrimp cultivation started in these areas. The local powerful coteries who were able to influence the administration, illegally made breaches in the “beribandh” and the once prosperous land was flooded with salt water. They also dislodged the farmers from their land by harassing, persecuting and giving threats. The non-local shrimp cultivators forcibly occupied their land. For example, in 1998 the village of Charbanda, with a population of 550, had 235 acres of its agricultural land forcibly taken by goons hired by the shrimp cultivators.

Shrimp cultivation shattered the food security of the farmers

Due to shrimp cultivation the farmers could not cultivate crops on the land that used to yield two-crops a year. The shrimp cultivators promised that during the season of aman crop the salt water would be drained from the land. But instead of draining the salt water as promised, the shrimp cultivators hired goons to intimidate the farmers from going near their land. As a result, the granary became empty and the once farmers were forced to become day labourers in order to eat. In addition, people were harassed with legal cases: nearly 30 legal cases were filed against them; 25 G.D. (*general diary*) were made; and 5 G.R (*general record*) cases were filed. In the area almost everyone was accused of some offence.

In 2008 demand was made to retrieve agricultural land

Under the leadership of landless group, the local farmers made a written complaint to the Sholadana union parishad chairman. Though the chairman gave assurance several times, he never actually made any attempt to solve the problem. On 15 July, 2008 the landless made an appeal to the district administrator, Khulna, but failed to get any assistance. They continued to make appeals and submit memorandums. They also organised people's support against commercial shrimp cultivation and restoration of agricultural land.

Landless male and female work together to restore agricultural land

On 27 March 2010, the landless groups organised a representative meeting in the area. On 10 April 2010 nearly one thousand male and females, after a protest procession, broke the embankment containing the illegal shrimp gher. They hoisted a red flag to announce their right to ownership. On that same day the landless group submitted a memorandum to district administrator, Khulna demanding security. Copies of this memorandum was given to police super, U.N.O, Paikgacha, upazila chairman, officer in charge of Paikgacha

police thana. Despite this, Paikgacha thana accepted cases filed against the farmers who opposed shrimp cultivation. The thana office became alert to the false arrests. In this situation on 20 April, 2010, the landless group organised a protest gathering in Paikgacha sadar. After the protest meeting nearly a thousand males/females besieged the office of the U.N.O. On the demands of the landless groups the U.N.O. declared in public that shrimp cultivation is illegal. He then directed the Paikgacha thana police to provide security to the people.

Result

Shrimp cultivation was stopped in 40 acres of land. The land owners have established their rights on the land and are cultivating it.

One hundred and twenty-five families have directly benefited and another 250 have been indirectly benefited.

Box-24:-

The village whose every family is accused in random law-suits.

Area

The village is named Charbanda, Union- Sholadana, Upazila- Paikgacha, District- Khulna.

Description

Charbanda is a tiny village. About 108 families currently reside in this village. Since 1988, 700 acres of land belonging to these families were forcibly occupied and shrimp farming was started by non-local influential people by intimidating the local population and filing false cases against them. The number of cases is currently at thirty. Every one in the village, including minors, are accused in at least one case. Many have had to serve time in prison and others have had to abscond from the police or have to bear the time and expense of going to court on a regular basis.

These families are owners of agricultural land but they have no right to their own land. Their granaries were empty. Despite making repeated applications to the local administration they have not received any assistance. Because of the false cases filed by the administration the local administration seem to ignore them. Every time the local people attempted to seek assistance from the administration they were denied assistance on the plea "this is a court case, we can not do anything."

Making river and water-body open: Harvesting paddy in sweet-water

Area: Polder- 31/1, Union- Shurkhali, Upazila- Botiaghata, District - Khulna.

Background

The north-west coastal region of Bangladesh is composed of river-canal, water-bodies and lakes. In the 1960s, in the name of a green revolution to save agriculture from salinity and to increase production of food, a coastal embankment project was started. Within this project, in the coastal areas, “beribandh” embankments were constructed on the river, canals and water-bodies. These embankments are called polders. The polders were designed for farming; special gates were placed around the polder to prevent saline water from entering the area and destroying the crops. For example, polder number 31/1 consists of about 20 big and small villages and holds about 875 families. The River Goba once flowed through four villages, Gojalia, Gaoagora, Katakhal and Goria danga. The local people derived their fresh water, for drinking and other daily chores from Goba river and Boga canal.

Goba is no longer a river, it is a canal, and Bogakhali is a stagnant drain. Why did this transformation occur?

Forcible shrimp cultivation started in this polder in the mid-1980s. The non-local influential shrimp cultivators forcibly occupied agricultural land by employing armed goons and dislodging the local farmers. Political influence was also exerted by bribing officers in the administration. By flouting all the rules and regulations the shrimp cultivators made breaches in the beribandh, which let the saline water inside the agricultural farm area, and started to cultivate shrimp in the saline flooded lands. They also illegally grabbed the Goba river and Boga canal. The Shrimp farmers used the river and the canal to carry the salt water. The water flow was hampered for constructing small embankment within the shrimp ghers. Shrimp ghers were constructed in the river and the canal. As a result, in a few years time the flowing river became nothing more than a measly canal.

Enduring movement by landless groups

In 1995 the landless organisation started a movement against commercial shrimp cultivation. The main issues were agriculture, food security, environment, human rights, anti- terrorism, and persecution. In the beginning they prepared the ground for the movement by mobilising people’s opinion in different villages and by forming landless groups. By 1997, 13 out of 20 villages had formed landless organisations. Among the villages around Goba river, Gozalia, Gaoghera, Katakhal and Goriadanga had strong landless groups. In all these villages the landless groups mobilised movements against commercial shrimp cultivation. Though they did not achieve instant success, they steadily continued to organise the movements. By a continuous process of movements the landless organisation created a powerful foundation and as a result the local unorganised masses (those who were not landless members) also started supporting their cause. Initially it was moral support, but gradually by participating in the activities of the landless groups local big and small farmers joined the movement against shrimp cultivation.

As a result, movement against shrimp cultivation, retrieving agricultural land and demand for cultivation of agriculture became a common demand of the people in this locality. This tremendously helped the movement gain momentum.

A victory for the landless

In 1996-97 the non-local shrimp cultivators forcibly evicted 325 families from 180 acres of land and made shrimp ghers. This forcible eviction of farmers from their land became a reason for movement in the area. The local people under the leadership of landless group continued their movement against illegal shrimp cultivation. After a protracted movement in 1998, the landless group succeeded in dislodging the shrimp ghers. In this movement 6 landless members were injured in the assault by shrimp farmers. In addition, 98 landless people were accused in two false cases filed by shrimp farmers. During these assaults, the landless members went to the thana to file a case but they were unable to do it. The shrimp cultivations kept on harassing the landless members by hiring hired goons to intimidate them and by filing false cases.

The landless are forced to flee

In 2001 the hired goons again forcibly flooded 125 acres of land with saline water by exercising political influence and getting assistance from the administration. In addition, in the dark hours of the night, they inundated nearly 650 acres of agricultural land with salt water by making breaches in the embankments and breaking the sluice-gates. The landless members were unable to fight back because they were forced to leave their locality because of false cases filed against them. Hence, from 2001 to 2010 the influential shrimp cultivators forcibly cultivated shrimp.

The landless demand support from elected officials and the community

The landless groups continued to retaliate against the assaults by the influential shrimp cultivators. They also fought the false legal cases filed against them. By 2006/2007 most of the cases filed against the landless were proved false or baseless in the court and were thus either withdrawn or nullified. As a result, the landless group started reinforcing their movement and again began to mobilise public opinion in favour of their cause. In the meantime parliamentary election and upazila elections were held. In the election, the landless group took a stand against the candidates who were in favour of shrimp ghers, and they supported the candidates who previously favoured the movements against the shrimp cultivation. As a result, all the candidates were compelled to give assurance to the farmers that they would work against illegal shrimp cultivation. After the election the landless members started mobilising public opinion in the locality so that the elected representatives would be forced to fulfill their pledges to work against shrimp cultivation. The landless group continuously organised discussion meetings, gatherings, processions and people's drama to expose the negative aspects of industrial shrimp cultivation.

Landless group succeeds in gaining the assurances given by the elected representative

The landless group consolidated the support of the general masses in favour of their movement to dislodge illegal grabbers from Goba river and Boga canal. While they were engaged in these activities, the season for shrimp cultivation started. The shrimp cultivations attempted to raise salt water in the agricultural farm land through Goba river

and Boga canal. Again the armed goons started to roam in the area. To combat this attack, the landless organisation gave a petition with numerous signatures to parliament member and upazila chairman that argued for freeing the agricultural land and opening the lake.

The landless group came to know about the visit programme in various unions of parliament member, Khulna-1. They started making preparations for a huge gathering. On 11 January, 2011, a parliament member and a previous upazila chairman came to Shurkhali union. In response nearly two thousands males/ females, under the leadership of landless group, barricaded the road demanding cessation of shrimp cultivation and opening Goba river and Boga canal. The parliament member, in answer to the demands of the landless group said, "If the local people want to cultivate paddy than it will be so. Sluice gates have been made for the benefit of the local people, please use the sluice gates to serve your purpose and protect them. Your have elected me. I am with you."

Goba river and Boga canal becomes open, landless groups take control of sluice gates

On the basis of support given by the parliament member, the landless group decided to dislodge the shrimp cultivations at once. Nearly two thousands males/females marched in procession and snapped the illegal embankment in Goba river and Boga canal. They hoisted a red flag to proclaim their rights. The landless group took possession of sluice gates and in-let pipes.

Result: 750 acres of land have been freed from shrimp cultivation. Nearly 1,150 families have benefited - 750 directly and 400 indirectly. The local union parishad has formed an 11 member sluice gate management committee. At present a landless group is managing the committee.

Overall Result

Assessment of total result reveals that commercial shrimp cultivation is normally done in Nijera Kori's area Paikgacha in Khulna district. In Paikgacha activity area the landless

Upazila	Description	Measurement of land (acre)	Benefited families
Boticighata	Gobabeel, Boga khal	235	550
Paikgacha	Char Bandha	40	125
Dumuria	Boro beel	700	1,200
Total		975	1,875

organisation organised big and small movements against shrimp cultivation and for restoring farming of agricultural products. From these movements by landless groups two exciting results arose. **First-** by being inspired by the movements of landless groups against shrimp cultivation, and by

deriving experiences from these movements, local people themselves in areas where there was no organized landless group started to unite to fight shrimp cultivation. The landless groups were available to advise their efforts. For example in Dumuria upazila's No 5 No union, the area liaised with the landless organization to form an alliance against shrimp cultivation. **Second** - due to movements by landless groups, in the activity year, the landless group has succeeded in stopping cultivation of salt water shrimp in a total of 975 acres of land. This has directly helped 1,875 families who live on the land. The lands are now so prosperous that the vegetables, poultry, and fish are in abundance and the people can sell the excess. As a result another 1,875 families have had an increase in their food security.

Fresh water sources founded by the masses but they are denied from entry

Area

Mouja- Charzia, Union- Char Jubilee, Upazila- Shubarnachar, District - Noakhali.

Description

CharZia had emerged from the depth of Meghna river about 10-15 years back. According to government record this is a khas land. From the beginning some families rendered landless by river erosion took shelter in this char. Year after year they fought against salinity to make the char habitable.

Despite their efforts struggling with nature, those who had taken shelter in the char were faced with an acute shortage of fresh water. They volunteered their time to find fresh water sources, but these water sources were the only supply of fresh water for these families and they barely met their daily requirements. Other sources of fresh water existed on the char, but since 2003 they were forcibly occupied by the owners of shrimp ghers. They denied the landless families the use of the water bodies. When the local landless people attempted to collect water from the water-body on April 1, 2010, the shrimp farmers lodged a false complaint against them to the CharZia police camp, stating that they were stealing fish. As a result, the local landless people were assaulted by the police. In addition, they demanded access to the water-bodies the landless had been using to collect their water, despite the fact that the shrimp cultivators did not live in the area and the landless people depended on this water for survival.

Protest by landless group: besieging the office of upazila parishad

In this situation the inhabitants of other chars decided to organise a united movement. The leader of various chars called representative meetings and declared their strategy for the movement. On 4th April nearly one and a half thousands males/females besieged the office of upazila parishad demanding justice against this inhuman assault. The upazila chairman heard the incidence of abuse by police. He gave them assurance that justice would be done and gave orders to the officer-in-charge of charJabbar police station to cease any further harassment of the landless.

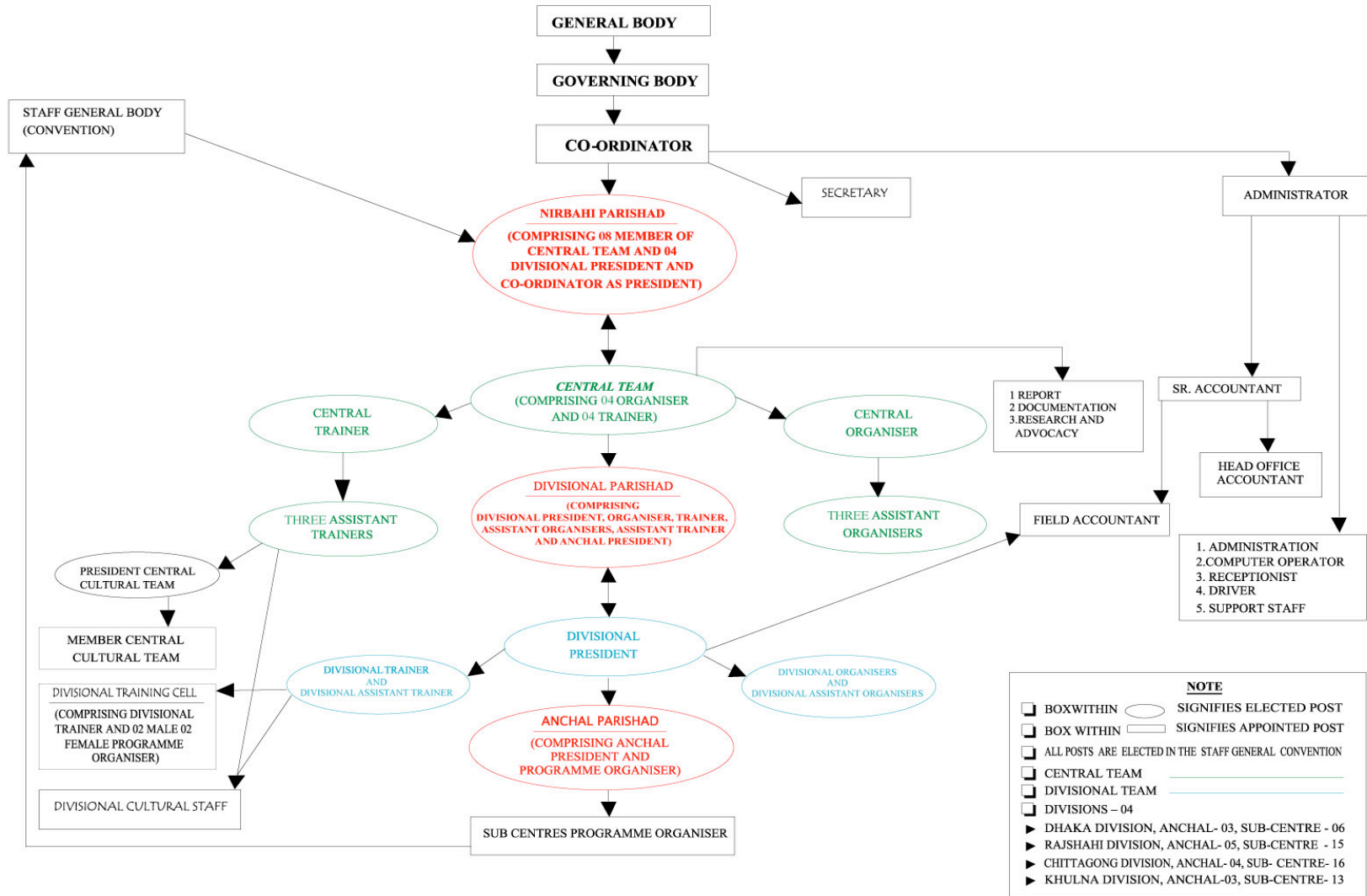
Investigation of the incidence

On the demand of the landless, the upazila chairman created a five-member investigation team. The committee visited the char in person on 7th April and found that the complaint lodged by the landless was true. As per the demand of the landless, the committee gave assurance that necessary action would be taken.

Result:

The upazila chairman declared the water-body used by the shrimp cultivators as an open water-body, meaning all the inhabitants of the char could use the water -- nobody can own or use it personally. He also created a water-management committee with representatives from the landless group.

ORGANOGRAM OF NIJERA KORI



Planning and Monitoring Structure

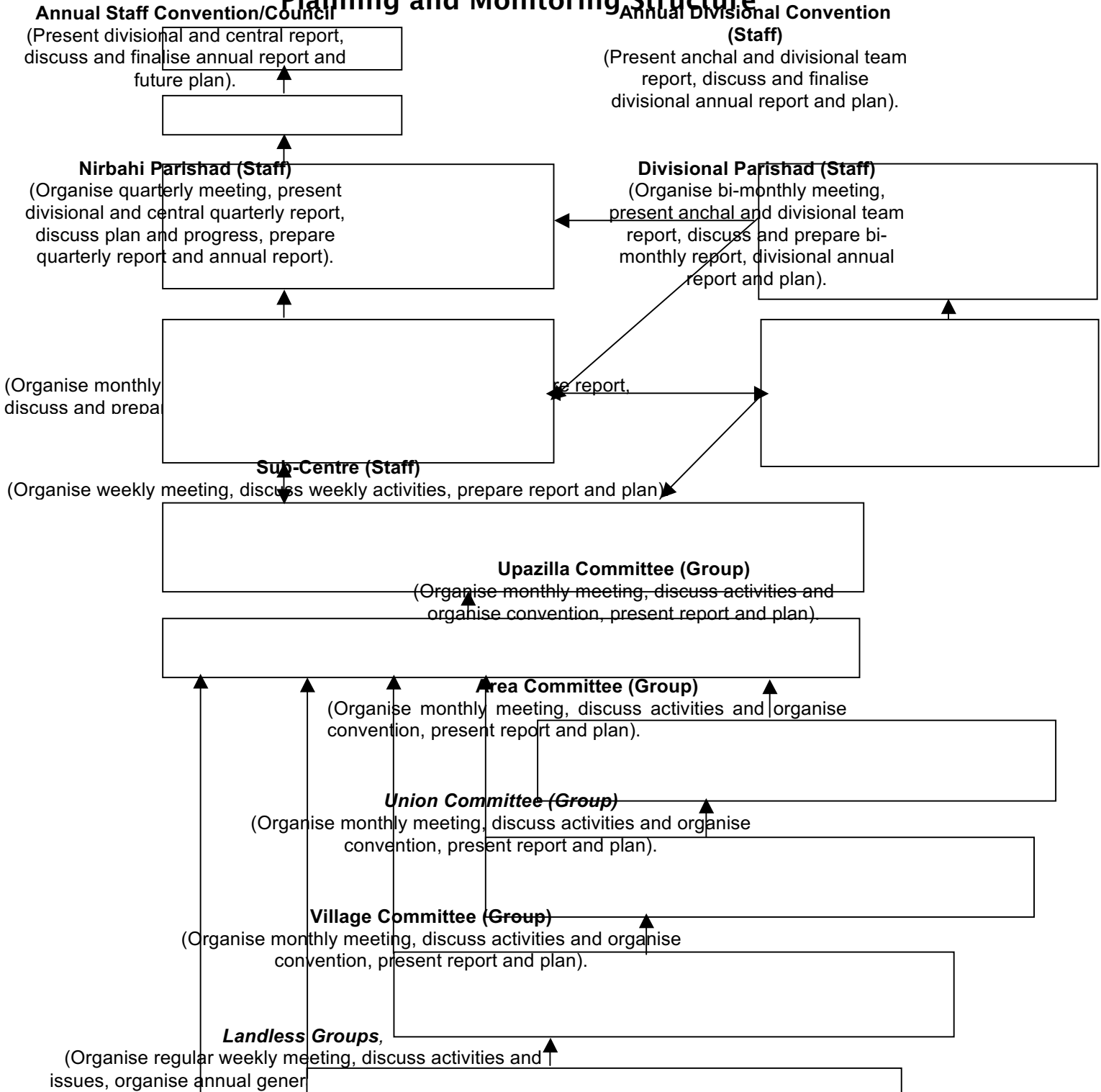


TABLE - 01: Geographical Location of Programmes of Nijera Kori

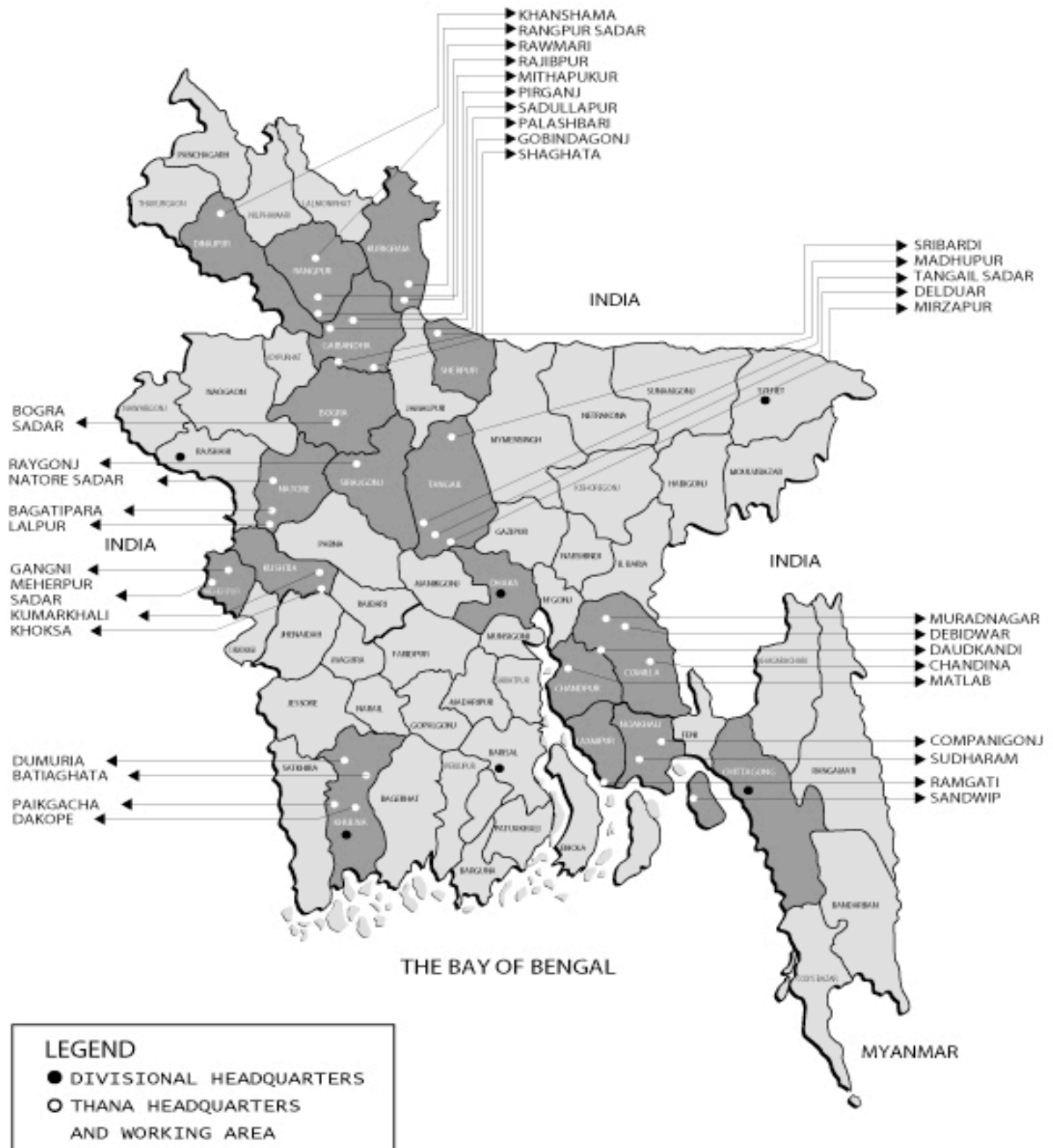
Sl. No	Division	Total up to March 2011	Village Coverage		
			Up to	New	Up to

NEX-D-A

					Union	Village	Union	Village	Union	Village	March 2010	2010-11	March 2011	
1	Chittagong	Comilla	Chandina	Comilla	5	26	128	-	1	26	129	25	-	25
			Daudkandi											
			Debidwar											
			Muradnagar											
		Chandpur	Matlab	Charjabbar	5	9	45	-	-	9	45	5	-	5
		Noakhali	Sudharam											
			Companigonj											
	Kabirhat													
	Lakshmpur	Ramgoti	Ramgoti	3	6	28	-	-	6	28	3	-	3	
	Chittagong	Sandwip	Sandwip	4	13	27	-	-	13	27	-	-	-	
	1	5	11	4	17	54	228	-	1	54	229	33	-	33
2	Dhaka	Tangail	Mirzapur	Tangail	4	11	84	-	1	11	85	26	-	26
			Delduar											
			Tangail Sadar											
			Madhupur											
			Dhanbari	Madhupur	2	12	127	-	-	12	127	20	-	20
	Sherpur	Sribardi	Sribardi	1	3	24	-	-	3	24	1	-	1	
	1	2	6	3	7	26	235	-	1	26	236	47	-	47
3	Khulna	Kushtia	Kumarkhali	Kumarkhali	2	7	51	-	-	7	51	13	1	14
			khoksa											
		Meherpur	Meherpur	Gangni	4	7	48	-	-	7	48	18	-	18
			Sadar											
			Gangni	Paikgacha	9	17	165	1	2	18	167	38	1	39
		Khulna	Paikgacha											
Dumuria														
Batiaghata														
	Dakope													
	1	3	8	3	15	31	264	1	2	32	266	69	2	71
4	Rajshahi	Sirajgonj	Raygonj	Raygonj	3	5	82	-	-	5	82	13	-	13
		Bogra	Bogra Sadar											
		Rangpur	Rangpur	Rangpur	2	9	79	-	1	9	80	24	-	24
			Sadar											
			Mithapukur	Dinajpur	1	4	22	-	-	4	22	5	-	5
		Dinajpur	Khanshama											
		Kurigram	Rowmari	Rowmari	2	8	84	-	-	8	84	21	-	21
			Rajibpur											
		Gaibandha	Palashbari	Gaibandha	4	23	194	-	-	23	194	73	-	73
			Saghata											
			Sadullapur											
Gobindagonj														
Rangpur	Pirgonj	Bagatipara	3	10	168	-	2	10	170	41	1	42		
Natore	Bagatipara													
	Lalpur													
	Natore Sadar													
	1	7	15	6	15	59	629	-	3	59	632	177	1	178
T	4	17	40	16	54	170	1,356	1	7	171	1,363	326	3	329

T=Total

**WORKING AREA
NIJERA KORI**



LIST OF GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS 2010-2012

01.	Nurul Islam Khan	- Chairman
02.	Latifa Akanda	- Vice-Chairman
03.	Khushi Kabir	- Secretary
04.	Ira Rahman	- Treasurer
05.	Dil Monowora Monu	- Asstant Treasurer
06.	Syeda Jamil Akhter	- Member
07.	Makbula Monjoor	- Member
08.	Mohammad Shahid Hossain Talukdar	- Member
09.	Abdul Majid Mallik	- Member
10.	Shaheen Islam	- Member
11.	Bashirul Haq	- Member
12.	Biren Shom	- Member
13.	Shafiq Uz Zaman	- Member

ANNEX - F

TABLE – 02 (Group Formation)

Division	Up to March 2010			Plan			Achievement			Total up to March 2011		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Rajshahi	2,528	2,104	4,632	74	72	146	100	57	157	2,628	2,161	4,789
Dhaka	641	531	1,172	36	25	61	25	19	44	666	550	1,216
Khulna	1,061	621	1,682	36	23	59	38	15	53	1,099	636	1,735
Chittagong	1,073	725	1,798	37	41	78	47	37	84	1,120	762	1,882
Total Core	5,303	3,981	9,284	183	161	344	210	128	338	5,513	4,109	9,622
MJF	901	673	1,574	17	19	36	21	18	39	922	691	1,613
Total (NK)	6,204	4,654	10,858	200	180	380	231	146	377	6,435	4,800	11,235

TABLE – 03 (Group Member)

Division	Up to March 2010			Plan			Achievement			Total up to March 2011		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Rajshahi	49,283	44,714	93,997	1,480	1,440	2,920	1,928	1,092	3,020	51,211	45,806	97,017
Dhaka	12,535	11,779	24,314	720	500	1,220	457	364	821	12,992	12,143	25,135
Khulna	22,152	14,749	36,901	720	460	1,180	690	275	965	22,842	15,024	37,866
Chittagong	21,292	16,197	37,489	740	820	1,560	959	726	1,685	22,251	16,923	39,174
Total Core	105,262	87,439	192,701	3,660	3,220	6,880	4,034	2,457	6,491	109,296	89,896	199,192
MJF	17,333	14,982	32,315	340	380	720	425	351	776	17,758	15,333	33,091
Total (NK)	122,595	102,421	225,016	4,000	3,600	7,600	4,459	2,808	7,267	127,054	105,229	232,283

TABLE – 04 (Group Meeting, Attended by Staff, Only Group and Group Annual General Meeting)

Division	Plan for Group Meeting Attended by Staff and Group			Achievement of Group Meeting Attended By Staff			Achievement of Group Meeting Attended By Group			Total Achievement of Group Meeting By (Group and Staff)			Annual Group Meeting					
													Plan			Achievement		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Rajshahi	54,214	44,574	98,788	20,500	7,387	27,887	28,292	32,533	60,825	48,792	39,920	88,712	2,528	2,104	4,632	2,186	1,760	3,946
Dhaka	26,201	23,017	49,218	7,347	3,841	11,188	11,788	12,987	24,775	19,135	16,828	35,963	641	531	1,172	450	347	797
Khulna	29,932	17,522	47,454	14,464	5,943	20,407	6,888	5,911	12,799	21,352	11,854	33,206	1,061	621	1,682	902	524	1,426
Chittagong	23,196	15,048	38,244	14,957	7,278	22,235	7,399	5,516	12,915	22,356	12,794	35,150	1,073	725	1,798	1,251	863	2,114
Total Core	133,543	100,161	233,704	57,268	24,449	81,717	54,367	56,947	111,314	111,635	81,396	193,031	5,303	3,981	9,284	4,789	3,494	8,283
MJF	9,101	7,384	16,485	4,424	3,009	7,433	2,774	2,761	5,535	7,198	5,770	12,968	901	673	1,574	539	394	933
Total (NK)	142,644	107,545	250,189	61,692	27,458	89,150	57,141	59,708	116,849	118,833	87,166	205,999	6,204	4,654	10,858	5,328	3,888	9,216

MJF- Manusher Jonno Foundation, Total Core- Nijera Kori Core programme, Total (NK)-Total Nijera Kori (Core and MJF)

TABLE – 05 (Workshop, Representative Meeting and Joint Group Meeting)

Division	Workshop				Representative Meeting		Joint Group Meeting	
	Plan		Achievement		Plan	Achievement	Plan	Achievement
	Number	Participant	Number	Participant				
Rajshahi	60	1,500	60	1,526	272	302	419	520
Dhaka	29	725	29	691	88	117	23	58
Khulna	42	1,050	42	1,082	98	132	120	181
Chittagong	41	1,025	41	1,028	205	272	32	33
Total Core	172	4,300	172	4,327	663	823	594	792
MJF	28	688	29	717	76	90	9	14
Total (NK)	200	4,988	201	5,044	739	913	603	806

TABLE – 05 (A) (Workshop Group Level: Issue Based)

SI No.	Workshop Activity: Group Level (Issue Based)	Plan			Achievement			
		Core	MJF	Total	Core	MJF	Total	
	Total workshop	172	28	200	172	29	201	
	Total participants	Female	2,245	351	2,596	2,316	374	2,690
		Male	2,055	337	2,392	2,001	343	2,344
		Total	4,300	688	4,988	4,327	717	5,044
1.	Follow up workshop for watch committee at field level	6	-	6	3	1	4	
	Participants	Female	75	-	75	41	12	53
		Male	75	-	75	49	18	67
		Total	150	-	150	100	30	130
2.	Workshop for watch committee on planning and coordination at central level	1	-	1	1	-	1	
	Participants	Female	7	-	7	7	-	7
		Male	18	-	18	20	-	20
		Total	25	-	25	27	-	27
3.	Follow up workshop for watch committee on planning at central level	-	-	-	1	-	1	
	Participants	Female	-	-	-	12	-	12
		Male	-	-	-	12	-	12
		Total	-	-	-	24	-	24
4.	Workshop on fundamentalism and its impact	18	-	18	16	-	16	
	Participants	Female	225	-	225	200	-	200
		Male	225	-	225	190	-	190
		Total	450	-	450	390	-	390
5	Workshop on gender	16	-	16	14	-	14	
	Participants	Female	200	-	200	192	-	192
		Male	200	-	200	156	-	156
		Total	400	-	400	348	-	348
6	Workshop on reproductive health right	16	-	16	14	-	14	
	Participants	Female	300	-	300	277	-	277
		Male	100	-	100	65	-	65
		Total	400	-	400	342	-	342

SI No.	Workshop Activity: Group Level (Issue Based)		Plan			Achievement		
			Core	MJF	Total	Core	MJF	Total
7.	Workshop on leadership development		16	9	25	15	11	26
	Participants	Female	200	113	313	209	145	354
		Male	200	112	312	183	130	313
		Total	400	225	625	392	275	667
8.	Workshop on strategic planning and collective decision making		53	-	53	40	-	40
	Participants	Female	663	-	663	499	-	499
		Male	662	-	662	495	-	495
		Total	1,325	-	1,325	994	-	994
9.	Workshop on adibasi and land rights		4	-	4	3	-	3
	Participants	Female	50	-	50	38	-	38
		Male	50	-	50	37	-	37
		Total	100	-	100	75	-	75
10.	Workshop on globalisation and sustainable development		16	-	16	12	-	12
	Participants	Female	200	-	200	151	-	151
		Male	200	-	200	152	-	152
		Total	400	-	400	303	-	303
11.	Workshop on joint cultivation system		10	-	10	10	-	10
	Participants	Female	125	-	125	143	-	143
		Male	125	-	125	115	-	115
		Total	250	-	250	258	-	258
12.	Workshop on food sovereignty		16	-	16	13	-	13
	Participants	Female	200	-	200	168	-	168
		Male	200	-	200	162	-	162
		Total	400	-	400	330	-	330
13.	Workshop on right and access to information		-	-	-	13	-	13
	Participants	Female	-	-	-	177	-	177
		Male	-	-	-	151	-	151
		Total	-	-	-	328	-	328
14	Workshop on local infrastructure development		-	-	-	17	-	17
	Participants	Female	-	-	-	202	-	202
		Male	-	-	-	214	-	214
		Total	-	-	-	416	-	416
	Workshop on land and woman		-	9	9	-	7	7
15	Participants	Female	-	120	120	-	90	90
		Male	-	105	105	-	85	85
		Total	-	225	225	-	175	175
16	Workshop on landless organisation and local issues		-	9	9	-	9	9
	Participants	Female	-	115	115	-	124	124
		Male	-	110	110	-	100	100
		Total	-	225	225	-	224	224
17	Drama(Cultural) workshop on land issues		-	1	1	-	1	1
	Participants	Female	-	3	3	-	3	3
		Male	-	10	10	-	10	10
		Total	-	13	13	-	13	13

MJF- Manusher Jonno Foundation, Total Core- Nijera Kori Core programme, Total (NK)-Total Nijera Kori (Core & MJF)

TABLE – 06 (Formation of Structural Committee)

Division	Total No. of Committee				New Formation of Structural Committee								Total No. of Committee			
	up to March 2010				Plan				Achievement				up to March 2011			
	Name of the Committee				Name of the Committee				Name of the Committee				Name of the Committee			
	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Village	Union	Upazila	Area
Rajshahi	177	11	1	4	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3	178	11	1	7
Dhaka	46	6	1	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	47	6	1	3
Khulna	65	3	-	12	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	66	3	-	12
Chittagong	34	2	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	2	-	7
Total Core	322	22	2	26	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3	325	22	2	29
MJF	27	1	1	7	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	28	1	1	7
Total (NK)	349	23	3	33	1	-	-	-	4	-	-	3	353	23	3	36

TABLE – 07 (Committee Meeting and Group Convention)

Division	Committee Meetings								Group Convention							
	Plan				Achievement				Plan				Achievement			
	Name of the Committee				Name of the Committee				Name of the Committee				Name of the Committee			
	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Village	Union	Upazila	Area
Rajshahi	2,098	132	12	48	2,046	130	12	46	178	11	1	4	175	11	1	6
Dhaka	494	64	10	34	446	54	10	34	47	6	1	3	37	4	1	2
Khulna	780	36	-	144	661	34	-	141	66	3	-	12	59	1	-	10
Chittagong	532	29	4	118	533	29	4	116	34	2	-	7	32	2	-	7
Total Core	3,904	261	26	344	3,686	247	26	337	325	22	2	26	303	18	2	25
MJF	185	7	2	49	185	7	2	47	28	1	1	7	28	1	1	7
Total (NK)	4,089	268	28	393	3,871	254	28	384	353	23	3	33	331	19	3	32

TABLE – 08 (Group Saving)

Division	Total up to March 2010			Plan			Achievement			Distribution			Total up to March 2011		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Rajshahi	10,221,286	7,141,808	17,363,094	3,239,614	2,670,460	5,910,074	3,023,833	2,487,697	5,511,530	1,474,865	1,474,574	2,949,439	11,770,254	8,154,931	19,925,185
Dhaka	3,900,964	2,915,395	6,816,359	1,543,372	1,529,756	3,073,128	1,271,936	1,236,991	2,508,927	372,340	497,237	869,577	4,800,560	3,655,149	8,455,709
Khulna	7,205,892	3,505,543	10,711,435	2,886,000	1,550,863	4,436,863	2,383,541	1,358,435	3,741,976	2,080,060	1,088,200	3,168,260	7,509,373	3,775,778	11,285,151
Chittagong	8,268,450	3,684,840	11,953,290	2,834,252	2,120,110	4,954,362	2,578,522	1,941,550	4,520,072	841,700	688,400	1,530,100	9,346,934	4,408,725	13,755,659
Core	29,596,592	17,247,586	46,844,178	10,503,238	7,871,189	18,374,427	9,257,832	7,024,673	16,282,505	4,768,965	3,748,411	8,517,376	33,427,121	19,994,583	53,421,704
MJF	6,480,715	7,738,353	14,219,068	1,124,968	918,912	2,043,880	955,526	793,140	1,748,666	875,122	1,117,032	1,992,154	6,561,119	7,414,461	13,975,580
Total (NK)	36,077,307	24,985,939	61,063,246	11,628,206	8,790,101	20,418,307	10,213,358	7,817,813	18,031,171	5,644,087	4,865,443	10,509,530	39,988,240	27,409,044	67,397,284

TABLE – 09 (Bank Account and Position of Group Saving)

Division	Bank Account									Position of Group Saving			
	Up to March 2010			Increases in 2010-11			Total up to March 2011			Total up to March 2011			
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Bank	Cash	Investment	Total
Rajshahi	675	390	1,065	27	10	37	702	400	1,102	1,037,723	432,462	18,455,000	19,925,185
Dhaka	455	299	754	29	19	48	484	318	754	2,077,265	1,247,326	5,131,118	8,455,709
Khulna	666	194	860	22	13	35	688	207	860	1,602,073	1,072,940	8,610,138	11,285,151
Chittagong	556	183	739	17	2	19	573	185	1,055	4,503,910	4,450,761	4,800,988	13,755,659
Core	2,352	1,066	3,418	95	44	139	2,447	1,110	3,771	9,220,971	7,203,489	36,997,244	53,421,704
MJF	128	188	316	-	-	-	128	188	316	2,288,023	2,949,565	8,737,992	13,975,580
Total (NK)	2,480	1,254	3,734	95	44	139	2,575	1,298	4,087	11,508,994	10,153,054	45,735,236	67,397,284

TABLE – 10 (Training)

Subject	Rajshahi				Dhaka				Khulna				Chittagong				Total Core				MJF				Total NK				
	Participant				Participant				Participant				Participant				Participant				Participant								
	N	F	M	T	N	F	M	T	N	F	M	T	N	F	M	T	N	F	M	T	N	F	M	T	N	F	M	T	
Human Development Training																													
Basic																													
Up to March 2010		3,684	3,716	7,400	2,087	1,834	3,921	2,207	2,204	4,411	2,222	2,053	4,275	-	10,200	9,807	20,007	1,420	1,307	2,727	-	11,620	11,114	22,734					
Plan	4	50	50	100	3	50	25	75	4	50	50	100	9	36	45	81	20	186	170	356	9	64	80	144	29	250	250	500	
Achievement	4	50	46	96	3	50	22	72	4	50	50	100	9	36	44	80	20	186	162	348	9	67	84	151	29	253	246	499	
Total up to March 2011		3,734	3,762	7,496	2,137	1,856	3,993	2,257	2,254	4,511	2,258	2,097	4,355		10,386	9,969	20,355	1,487	1,391	2,878	-	11,873	11,360	23,233					
Advance																													
Up to March 2010		1,181	1,158	2,339	611	571	1,182	759	797	1,556	674	502	1,176	-	3,225	3,028	6,253	345	325	670	-	3,570	3,353	6,923					
Plan	1	13	12	25	-	-	-	-	1	13	12	25	2	10	8	18	4	36	32	68	2	16	16	32	6	52	48	100	
Achievement	1	13	12	25	-	-	-	-	1	13	11	24	2	10	8	18	4	36	31	67	2	18	14	32	6	54	45	99	
Total up to March 2011		1,194	1,170	2,364	611	571	1,182	772	808	1,580	684	510	1,194		3,261	3,059	6,320	363	339	702	-	3,624	3,398	7,022					
Higher Selection																													
Up to March 2010		358	420	778	229	215	444	278	322	600	196	174	370	-	1,061	1,131	2,192	196	165	361	-	1,257	1,296	2,553					
Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	9	9	1	-	9	9	1	-	16	16	2	-	25	25
Achievement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	8	8	1	-	8	8	1	-	15	15	2	-	23	23
Total up to March 2011		30	54	84	28	24	52	28	45	73	23	17	40		109	140	249	13	25	38	-	122	165	287					
OTHER TRAINING																													
Total up to March 2011		105	156	261	87	104	191	115	148	263	42	50	92		349	458	807	82	96	178	-	431	554	985					
Leadership Development																													
Up to March 2010		137	180	317	107	125	232	123	163	286	55	75	130		422	543	965	86	77	163	-	508	620	1,128					
Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	4	9	1	5	4	9	1	11	5	16	2	16	9	25
Achievement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	4	9	1	5	4	9	1	11	5	16	2	16	9	25
Total up to March 2011		137	180	317	107	125	232	123	163	286	60	79	139		427	547	974	97	82	179	-	524	629	1,153					

TABLE – 10 (Training)

Subject	Rajshahi			Dhaka			Khulna			Chittagong			Total Core			MJF			Total NK									
	N	Participant			N	Participant			N	Participant			N	Participant			N	Participant			N	Participant						
		F	M	T		F	M	T		F	M	T		F	M	T		F	M	T		F	M	T				
Right and Access to Information																												
Up to March 2010		122	145	267		108	119	227		111	156	267		58	73	131		399	493	892		70	77	147	-	469	570	1,039
Plan	1	13	12	25	1	13	12	25	1	12	13	25	1	12	13	25	4	50	50	100	-	-	-	-	4	50	50	100
Achievement	1	12	12	24	1	14	10	24	1	11	14	25	-	-	-	-	3	37	36	73	-	-	-	-	3	37	36	73
Total up to March 2011		134	157	291		122	129	251		122	170	292		58	73	131		436	529	965		70	77	147	-	506	606	1,112
Citizen Rights and Constitutional Guarantees																												
Up to March 2010		456	504	960		277	296	573		559	668	1,227		274	221	495	-	1,566	1,689	3,255		271	272	543	-	1,837	1,961	3,798
Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	5	9	1	5	4	9	1	7	9	16	2	12	13	25
Achievement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	5	9	1	4	5	9	1	7	9	16	2	11	14	25
Land Law and Management System																												
Up to March 2010		62	82	144		74	86	160		91	130	221		25	24	49	-	252	322	574		65	81	146	-	317	403	720
Plan	1	12	13	25	1	13	12	25	1	13	12	25	1	12	13	25	4	50	50	100	1	13	12	25	5	63	62	125
Achievement	2	20	17	37	1	15	11	26	1	16	15	31	1	5	4	9	5	56	47	103	2	21	21	42	7	77	68	145
Total up to March 2011		82	99	181		89	97	186		107	145	252		30	28	58		308	369	677		86	102	188	-	394	471	865
Adibasi and Land Management																												
Up to March 2010		24	25	49		9	18	27		-	-	-		-	-	-	-	33	43	76		-	-	-	-	33	43	76
Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Achievement	1	12	13	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	12	13	25					1	12	13	25
Total up to March 2011		36	38	74		9	18	27		-	-	-		-	-	-		45	56	101		-	-	-	-	45	56	101
Land and Women																												
Up to March 2010		20	21	41		18	14	32		19	15	34		13	16	29	-	70	66	136		6	4	10	-	76	70	146
Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	13	12	25	1	13	12	25
Achievement	2	26	24	50	1	15	11	26	1	16	9	25	1	5	4	9	5	62	48	110	2	26	15	41	7	88	63	151
Total up to March 2011		46	45	91		33	25	58		35	24	59		18	20	38		132	114	246		32	19	51	-	164	133	297
khas land distribution policy and procedure																												
Up to March 2010		-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-
Plan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	15	10	25	1	15	10	25
Achievement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	15	10	25	1	15	10	25
Total up to March 2011		-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-		15	10	25	-	15	10	25
Cultural (Basic)																												
Up to March 2010		32	251	283		59	218	277		53	188	241		30	69	99		174	726	900		43	93	136		217	819	1,036
Plan	1	4	10	14	-	-	-	-	2	9	11		-	-	-	1	6	19	25	-	-	-	-	-	1	6	19	25
Achievement	1	-	10	10	-	-	-	-	-	9	9		-	-	-	1	-	19	19	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	19	19
Total up to March 2011		32	261	293		59	218	277		53	197	250		30	69	99		174	745	919		43	93	136		217	838	1,055

N=No. of Training, M= Male, F= Female, T= Total

TABLE - 11 (Refresher Training and Training Forum)

Division	Refresher Training				Number of Forum		Forum Meetings	
	Plan		Achievement		Up to March 2010	Up to March 2011	Plan	Achievement
	Number	Participants	Number	Participants				
Rajshahi	14	350	15	375	16	16	192	189
Dhaka	5	125	1	25	5	5	60	54
Khulna	15	375	15	365	12	12	144	138
Chittagong	9	225	11	270	6	6	72	72
Total Core	43	1,075	42	1,035	39	39	468	453
MJF	10	250	8	199	3	3	21	21
Total (NK)	53	1,325	50	1,234	42	42	489	474

ABLE – 12 (Cultural Activity)

Total (NK)	Cultural Group	C. Workshop		Cultural Activity																	
		Plan		Achiev		Plan								Achievement							
		N	P	N	P	C.G. Meeting	C.Disc-ussion	Drama	D.F./ Padajatra	People Song	Folk Song	Children C.P	C.G. Meeting	C.Disc-ussion	Drama	D.F./ Padajatra	People Song	Folk Song	Children C.P		
Rajshahi	22	-	-	-	-	264	26	247	2	125	2	20	260	26	211	1	122	3	26		
Dhaka	15	-	-	-	-	171	27	110	2	102	4	7	163	16	96	2	76	4	6		
Khulna	17	6	120	6	117	204	19	133	2	102	2	3	190	16	116	2	89	3	6		
Chitt	5	-	-	-	-	60	10	81	1	108	1	7	60	1	88	1	116	1	3		
Core	59	6	120	6	117	699	82	571	7	437	9	37	673	59	511	6	403	11	41		
MJF	5	1	12	1	12	60	5	50	1	50	1	7	60	4	61	1	61	1	2		
Total (NK)	64	7	132	7	129	759	87	621	8	487	10	44	733	63	572	7	464	12	43		

N = Number of Workshop, P = Participants, C.G.= Cultural Group, C = Cultural, C.P = Cultural Programme, D.F = Drama Festival

TABLE – 13 (Joint Economic Activity)

Description		Agriculture		Fishery		Livestock		Rickshaw/Van		Shallow		Small Business		Total		
Up to March 2010		Core	MJF	Core	MJF	Core	MJF	Core	MJF	Core	MJF	Core	MJF	Core	MJF	NK
Group	Female	627	39	38	4	168	75	10	1	-	-	1,064	327	1,907	446	2,353
	Male	727	74	117	62	305	123	60	34	4	-	569	532	1,782	825	2,607
	Total	1,354	113	155	66	473	198	70	35	4	-	1,633	859	3,689	1,271	4,960
Member	Female	11,541	781	655	82	3,545	1,483	179	20	-	-	19,022	5,829	34,942	8,195	43,137
	Male	14,867	1,557	2,606	1,847	6,454	2,568	1,040	734	85	-	9,993	10,243	35,045	16,949	51,994
	Total	26,408	2,338	3,261	1,929	9,999	4,051	1,219	754	85	-	29,015	16,072	69,987	25,144	95,131
Employment	Female	1,044	10	409	3	599	47	2	-	-	-	4,728	131	6,782	191	6,973
	Male	5,775	50	1,775	26	109	88	286	47	42	-	3,008	131	10,995	342	11,337
Quantity (Acre/Number)		1,020.23	80.12	561.89	121.84	788	282	130	51	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investment in TK		16,806,045	1,056,004	4,745,012	642,881	5,475,232	1,495,715	183,549	289,550	81,000	-	5,476,650	5,704,089	32,767,488	9,188,239	41,955,727
Increase in April 2010-March 2011																
Group	Female	42	1	29	-	46	2	2	-	1	-	170	6	290	9	299
	Male	39	2	22	-	60	1	7	1	3	-	129	9	260	13	273
	Total	81	3	51	-	106	3	9	1	4	-	299	15	550	22	572
Member	Female	770	20	763	-	922	40	40	-	18	-	2,467	120	4,980	180	5,160
	Male	772	45	461	-	1,253	20	131	21	62	-	3,379	176	6,058	262	6,320
	Total	1,542	65	1,224	-	2,175	60	171	21	80	-	5,846	296	11,038	442	11,480
Employment	Female	32	1	5	-	26	1	2	-	4	-	51	3	120	5	125
	Male	34	2	4	-	37	-	8	1	4	-	37	6	124	9	133
Quantity (Acre/Number)		43.06	1.20	27.62	-	133	5	24	1	4	-	-	-	232	7	239
Investment in TK		1,845,260	63,000	1,181,100	-	1,463,410	33,350	83,200	7,500	40,700	-	1,772,599	474,347	6,386,269	578,197	6,964,466
Decrease in April 2010-March 2011																
Group	Female	2	6	-	-	26	16	1	-	-	-	21	7	50	29	79
	Male	8	18	2	3	49	30	5	1	4	-	29	14	97	66	163
	Total	10	24	2	3	75	46	6	1	4	-	50	21	147	95	242
Member	Female	38	139	-	-	483	320	38	-	-	-	402	139	961	598	1,559
	Male	174	335	40	69	1,050	639	94	20	85	-	580	293	2,023	1,356	3,379
	Total	212	474	40	69	1,533	959	132	20	85	-	982	432	2,984	1,954	4,938
Employment	Female	9	4	-	-	7	7	-	-	-	-	17	2	33	13	46
	Male	13	11	5	6	13	16	3	1	42	-	13	3	89	37	126
Quantity (Acre/Number)		23.17	24.64	0.12	2.41	77	41	11	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investment in TK		296,520	306,206	25,000	49,301	1,180,953	449,018	30,120	6,000	81,000	-	542,920	217,919	2,156,513	1,028,444	3,184,957
Total up to March 2011																
Group	Female	667	34	67	4	188	61	11	1	1	-	1,213	326	2,147	426	2,573
	Male	758	58	137	59	316	94	62	34	3	-	669	527	1,945	772	2,717
	Total	1,425	92	204	63	504	155	73	35	4	-	1,882	853	4,092	1,198	5,290
Member	Female	12,273	662	1,418	82	3,984	1,203	181	20	18	-	21,087	5,810	38,961	7,777	46,738
	Male	15,465	1,267	3,027	1,778	6,657	1,949	1,077	735	62	-	12,792	10,126	39,080	15,855	54,935
	Total	27,738	1,929	4,445	1,860	10,641	3,152	1,258	755	80	-	33,879	15,936	78,041	23,632	101,673
Employment	Female	1,067	7	414	3	618	41	4	-	4	-	4,762	132	6,869	183	7,052
	Male	5,796	41	1,774	20	133	72	291	47	4	-	3,032	134	11,030	314	11,344
	Total	6,863	48	2,188	23	751	113	295	47	8	-	7,794	266	17,899	497	18,396
Quantity (Acre/Number)		1,040	57	589	119	844	246	143	51	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investment in TK		18,354,785	812,798	5,901,112	593,580	5,757,689	1,080,047	236,629	291,050	40,700	-	6,706,329	5,960,517	36,997,244	8,737,992	45,735,236
Profit in cash (April 2010-March 2011)	Female	625,371	-	84,555	2,000	128,325	2,300	980	-	23,950	-	535,403	70,800	1,398,584	75,100	1,473,684
	Male	1,119,650	30,600	593,785	117,700	281,870	60,000	44,853	21,200	9,500	-	477,265	59,500	2,526,923	289,000	2,815,923
	Total	1,745,021	30,600	678,340	119,700	410,195	62,300	45,833	21,200	33,450	-	1,012,668	130,300	3,925,507	364,100	4,289,607

TABLE – 14 Access to Government Services (Safety net Programme)

Description	Krishi Card			VGF/VGD allowances			Elder allowances			Widow allowances			Other (relief) allowances			Total allowances		
	Total Card	Group member received card		Total Card	Group member received card		Total Card	Group member received card		Total Card	Group member received card		Total Card	Group member received card		Total Card	Group member received card	
		Normally by U.P	By protest		Normally by U.P	By protest		Normally by U.P	By protest		Normally by U.P	By protest		Normally by U.P	By protest			
Rajshahi	24,246	20,490	3,756	15,398	13,974	1,424	576	490	86	86	75	11	16,153	15,912	241	56,459	50,941	5,518
Dhaka	5760	4,980	780	1,899	1,570	329	19	14	5	8	6	2	1,992	1,890	102	9,678	8,460	1,218
Khulna	7,123	5,745	1,378	3,574	3,365	209	130	115	15	95	90	5	5,148	5,080	68	16,070	14,395	1,675
Chittagong	5,870	4,700	1,170	9,110	8,592	518	342	318	24	249	226	23	8,365	7,083	1,282	23,936	20,919	3,017
Total Core	42,999	35,915	7,084	29,981	27,501	2,480	1,067	937	130	438	397	41	31,658	29,965	1,693	106,143	94,715	11,428
MJF	5,700	4,125	1,575	8,308	7,688	620	252	204	48	66	43	23	5,433	3,993	1,440	19,759	16,053	3,706
Total (NK)	48,699	40,040	8,659	38,289	35,189	3,100	1,319	1,141	178	504	440	64	37,091	33,958	3,133	125,902	110,768	15,134

TABLE – 15 (Legal Aid Activity)

Division	Cases up to March 2010	New Cases	Total Cases	Cases Settled	Result		Cases on Appeal	Remaining Total Cases	Nijera Kori Run Cases	Group Run Cases
					Favour	Against				
Rajshahi	170	12	182	16	14	2	1	167	51	116
Dhaka	128	11	139	14	13	1	-	125	38	87
Khulna	182	9	191	27	26	1	-	164	64	100
Chittagong	108	21	129	11	9	1	1	119	15	104
Total Core	588	53	641	68	62	5	2	575	168	407
MJF	210	4	214	21	20	1	1	194	100	94
Total (NK)	798	57	855	89	82	6	3	769	268	501

TABLE – 16 (Level of Group Consciousness)

Description	Rajshahi			Dhaka			Khulna			Chittagong			Total Core			MJF			Total NK		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
Secondary Level																					
Up to March 2010	446	396	842	142	122	264	254	231	485	247	201	448	1089	950	2039	145	175	320	1,234	1,125	2,359
Plan	63	47	110	14	17	31	20	18	38	20	20	40	117	102	219	18	15	33	135	117	252
Achievement	54	43	97	13	13	26	19	17	36	19	20	39	105	93	198	18	15	33	123	108	231
Total up to March 2011	500	439	939	155	135	290	273	248	521	266	221	487	1194	1043	2237	163	190	353	1,357	1,233	2,590
Third Level																					
Up to March 2010	76	67	143	9	5	14	44	25	69	29	6	35	158	103	261	15	25	40	173	128	301
Plan	14	12	26	-	2	2	5	7	12	2	1	3	21	22	43	2	1	3	23	23	46
Achievement	10	12	22	-	2	2	2	1	3	2	1	3	14	16	30	2	1	3	16	17	33
Total up to March 2011	86	79	165	9	7	16	46	26	72	31	7	38	172	119	291	17	26	43	189	145	334

TABLE – 17 (Various Activities undertaken from Group Saving and Voluntary Services provided by Group Members)

Contribution	Participation				Contribution			Voluntary Labour			Beneficiary families		
	No. of Group			Support Provided To	Within Group (TK)	Outside Group (TK)	Total (TK)	By Group Member			Among Group	Outside of Group	Total
	Male	Female	Total					Male	Female	Total			
Workshop	1,428	1,170	2,598	172	55,860	-	55,860	53	56	1,428		Grassroots people	
Refresher Training	433	330	763	42	16,859	-	16,859	9	12	433		Grassroots people	
Landless Movement/Struggle	64	64	128	26	30,160	-	30,160	4	42	64		Grassroots people	
Village Convention	1,574	1,257	2,831	303	84,314	-	84,314	450	612	1,574		Grassroots people	
Union Convention	933	732	1,665	18	45,567	-	45,567	49	100	933		Grassroots people	
Upazila Convension	397	230	627	2	5,250	-	5,250	45	32	397		Grassroots people	
Area Convention	1,259	787	2,046	25	59,445	-	59,445	114	193	1,259		Grassroots people	
Cultural Programme	763	655	1,418	136	135,990	-	135,990	123	1,474	763		Grassroots people	
Observance of National/ International Day	1,900	1,491	3,391	225	113,559	-	113,559	277	381	1,900		Grassroots people	
Conducting Case	725	942	1,667	420	258,446	-	258,446	66	106	725	1,291	-	1,291
Assistance to Family of arrested Member	10	8	18	1	1,200	-	1,200	6	6	10	1		1
Sub Total (Core)	9,486	7,666	17,152	1,370	806,650	-	806,650	1,196	3,014	9,486	1,292	-	1,292
MJF	2,664	2,528	5,192	267	716,013	-	716,013	86	182	2,664	264	-	264
Total (NK)	12,150	10,194	22,344	1,637	1,522,663	-	1,522,663	1,282	3,196	12,150	1,556	-	1,556
Solidarity Activities													
Medical Support	1,070	883	1,953	312	155,250	25,950	181,200	239	264	1,070	190	122	312
School Repairing	-	-	-	1	300	-	300	5	-	-	301	700	1,001
Educational Support	74	81	155	32	21,600	15,350	36,950	6	10	74	15	17	32
Marriage without Dowry	71	59	130	22	23,830	3,550	27,380	113	109	71	9	13	22
Contribution in Marriage	652	542	1,194	87	123,515	15,000	138,515	189	190	652	52	35	87
Bridge Repairing/Construction	93	96	189	28	18,745	-	18,745	110	319	93	1,629	2,266	3,895
Road Repairing/Reconstruction	28	40	68	11	14,350	-	14,350	184	601	28	308	527	835
Dredging of Canal	36	71	107	9	2,700	-	2,700	109	420	36	2,628	3,040	5,668
Repairing of House	166	157	323	40	47,745	1,825	49,570	100	174	166	38	2	40
Tree Plantation	8	12	20	17	4,300	-	4,300	70	90	8	350	375	725
Burial and Others	113	104	217	20	33,343	1,380	34,723	19	91	113	11	9	20
Sub Total (Core)	2,311	2,045	4,356	579	445,678	63,055	508,733	1,144	2,268	2,311	5,531	7,106	12,637
MJF	703	764	1,467	93	101,910	25,450	127,360	111	423	703	610	1,578	2,188
Total (NK)	3,014	2,809	5,823	672	547,588	88,505	636,093	1,255	2,691	3,014	6,141	8,684	14,825
Grand Total (NK)	15,164	13,003	28,167	2,309	2,070,251	88,505	2,158,756	2,537	5,887	15,164	7,697	8,684	16,381

TABLE – 18 (Participation of Group Member in different Committee)

Description	Rajshahi				Dhaka				Khulna				Chittagong				MJF				Total (Core)				Total (NK)			
	No	F	M	T	No	F	M	T	No	F	M	T	No	F	M	T	No	F	M	T	No	F	M	T	No	F	M	T
Union Parishad Up To March 2010	14	16	12	28	6	4	5	9	12	9	10	19	20	8	14	22	5	6	7	13	52	37	41	78	57	43	48	91
Union Parishad Up To March 2011	14	16	12	28	6	4	5	9	12	9	10	19	17	6	15	21	8	8	6	14	49	35	42	77	57	43	48	91
Upazila Parishad Up To March 2010	2	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	2	2	2	-	2
Upazila Parishad Up To March 2011	2	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	2	2	2	-	2
School Management Committee till March 2010	149	33	106	139	20	8	29	37	53	22	51	73	45	-	44	44	37	27	93	120	267	63	230	293	304	90	323	413
School Management Committee till March 2011	157	39	112	151	22	8	30	38	65	25	66	91	50	-	42	42	38	28	97	125	294	72	250	322	332	100	347	447
Market Committee till March 2010	39	23	60	83	6	-	15	15	29	39	54	93	17	7	29	36	28	-	76	76	91	69	158	227	119	69	234	303
Market Committee till March 2011	40	23	61	84	6	-	15	15	25	33	48	81	17	7	26	33	28	-	79	79	88	63	150	213	116	63	229	292
Sugarcane Purchase Committee till March 2010	2	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	3	3	2	-	3	3
Nominated till March 2010	2	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	3	3	2	-	3	3
Project Management Committee (U.P) till March 2011	12	4	13	17	8	2	8	10	6	3	10	13	4	6	5	11	1	-	3	3	30	15	36	51	31	15	39	54
Project Management Committee (U.P) till March 2010	12	4	13	17	8	2	8	10	6	3	10	13	4	4	5	9	2	2	4	6	30	13	36	49	32	15	40	55
Sluice Gate Management Committee till March 2010	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	3	7	10	-	-	-	-	4	6	21	27	5	3	7	10	9	9	28	37
Sluice Gate Management Committee till March 2011	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	11	9	20	-	-	-	-	4	6	21	27	7	11	9	20	11	17	30	47
Movement Committee till March 2010	17	18	30	48	18	2	25	27	2	9	11	20	11	13	35	48	1	3	4	7	48	42	101	143	49	45	105	150
Movement Committee till March 2011	17	18	30	48	8	2	25	27	1	-	2	2	10	11	32	43	1	3	4	7	36	31	89	120	37	34	93	127
Watch Sub Committee till March 2010	6	15	15	30	6	15	15	30	6	15	15	30	-	-	-	-	6	15	15	30	18	45	45	90	24	60	60	120
Watch Sub Committee till March 2011	6	15	15	30	6	15	15	30	6	15	15	30	-	-	-	-	6	15	15	30	18	45	45	90	24	60	60	120

M= Male, F= Female, T= Total

TABLE – 19 (Participation in Local Shalish)

Description		Women against: (<i>dowry, divorce, polygamy, rape, kidnapping, physical assault, fundamentalism and religious indictment</i>)	Illegal Possession of Property from the Landless	Issue of Injustice & oppression	Total Core	MJF	Total (NK)	
Total Shalish of Current Year 2010-11		538	121	142	801	285	1,086	
Member attended the Shalish		Female	3,807	944	1,034	5,785	845	6,630
		Male	6,442	1,522	2,075	10,039	1,907	11,946
Nature of Participation in Shalish	Shalish at Self-initiative of Landless Leader Nijera Kori	By Female Leader	34	8	11	53	8	61
		Jointly by Female & Male Leader	224	32	47	303	108	411
	Shalish under Joint Leadership of Landless and Village Authority	UP Chairman	35	20	24	79	10	89
		UP Member	122	27	32	181	56	237
		Teacher	24	4	4	32	10	42
		Local Matbar	50	20	8	78	56	134
		Political Persons	49	10	16	75	37	112
Landless Leader as Judge/Mediator	Female	428	124	77	629	195	824	
	Male	1,101	300	276	1,677	471	2,148	
	Total	1,529	424	353	2,306	666	2,972	
Landless Leader as Judge/Mediator In Internal Group Shalish	Female	163	40	25	228	44	272	
	Male	465	105	85	655	130	785	
	Total	628	145	110	883	174	1,057	
Result	No of settled Shalish	523	110	132	765	281	1,046	
	No of unsettled Shalish	15	11	10	36	4	40	
No of Court Cases on Unsettled Shalish		11	6	5	22	1	23	

TABLE – 20 (Registration, Lease & Possession of Khas Land and Water Body)

Subject	Khas Land (Acre)								Water Body (Acre)						
	Land Registered		Land Leased		Land Owned		DCR		Water Body Leased		Water Body Owned		Water Body Open		
	No of Group Member	Amount of Land	No of Group Member	Amount of Land	No of Group Member	Amount of Land	No of Group Member	Amount of Land	No of Group Member	Amount of Land	No of Group Member	Amount of Land	No of Group Member	Amount of Land	
Up to March 10	Core	15,080	8,745.65	319	95.82	37,304	27,500.71	52	42.14	1,003	361.46	10,378	771.18	35,500	1,526.02
	MJF	7,077	12,527.17	26	12.48	10,129	14,731.50	-	-	40	12.48	3,950	225.00	4,000	74.00
Increase in April 2010 -March 11	Core	28	2.20	-	-	184	65.51	2	0.60	16	0.88	450	16.02	720	21.37
	MJF	10	13.40	-	-	333	220.35	-	-	-	-	80	3.50	-	-
Total March 2011	Core	15,108	8,747.85	319	96	37,488	27,566	54	43	1,019	362	10,828	787	36,220	1,547
	MJF	7,087	12,540.57	26	12	10,462	14,952	0	0	40	12	4,030	229	4,000	74
Total NK	22,195	21,288.42	345	108.30	47,950	42,518.07	54	43	1,059	375	14,858	1,016	40,220	1,621	

TABLE – 21 (Regaining of Properties of the Landless and Marginal Farmers from Illegal Possessors)

Description	No of Movement for Reclaiming Illegally Occupied Land	Won in the Movement for Own Land and Quantity of Regained Land		Beneficiary Family	No of Movement against Commercial Shrimp	Won in the Movement against Commercial Shrimp and Quantity of Regained Land			Beneficiary Family	No of Remaining Present Movement
		No. of Movement	Amount of Land (Acre)			No. of Movement	Amount of Land (Acre)	Amount of Water Bodies (Acre)		
Last Year	140	128	19.88	128	102	97	6,710.95	450.77	22,800	17
Current Year	Core	65	9.25	87	140	122	9.00	975.00	1,875	13
	MJF	6	2.12	12	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Total NK	71	11.37	99	140	122	9.00	975.00	1,875	13

TABLE – 22 (Activity relating to Social Movement/Struggle)

Issue of Social Movement /Struggle	Issue raised by organisation of women/ men	On going movement in 2009-10		Division wise movement/ struggle in 2010-2011							Total no. of movement in current year	In current year & running for last year total No of movement			No of movement won			On going movement till date		
		Women / Men	Total	Raj	Dh	Khu	Chit	Core	MJF	Total NK		Core	MJF	Total NK	Core	MJF	Total NK	Core	MJF	Total NK
Violence against women: dowry, divorce, polygamy, rape, physical assault, kidnapping, fundamentalism and religious indictment	Women	30	45	107	21	14	60	202	17	219	349	232	17	249	210	16	226	22	1	23
	Men	15		69	3	9	37	118	12	130		133	12	145	121	11	132	12	1	13
Fundamentalism	Women	2	2	1	2	5	1	9	-	9	20	11	-	11	10	-	10	1	-	1
	Men	-		5	-	4	-	9	2	11		9	2	11	8	2	10	1	-	1
Establishment of rights on local resources: establishment of rights on khas land, water bodies, regaining possession of disposed land Environmental Issues: resisting commercial shrimp aquaculture, creating public support against excessive use of chemical fertiliser and pesticides. Resistance to action and oppression of reactionary groups: resisting eviction of lands less from land, looting of ripe paddy, burning the houses, physical assault	Women	11	45	10	3	5	13	31	6	37	185	42	6	48	33	4	37	9	2	11
	Men	34		66	14	16	35	131	17	148		165	17	182	142	15	157	23	2	25
Resistance against corruption in Local Govt. (U.P), partial justice in exchange of money, decisions contrary to the interest of land less masses, misappropriation of wheat from food for work and food for education programme, illegal transaction of money and false cases. Resisting illegalities and irregularities of micro credit Movement for due wage. Movement against others	Women	33	61	35	26	11	23	95	7	102	240	128	7	135	116	6	122	12	1	13
	Men	28		40	10	19	62	131	7	138		159	7	166	148	6	154	11	1	12
Total	Women	76	153	153	52	35	97	337	30	367	794	413	30	443	369	26	395	44	4	48
	Men	77		180	27	48	134	389	38	427		466	38	504	419	34	453	47	4	51
	Total	153		333	79	83	231	726	68	794		879	68	947	788	60	848	91	8	99

TABLE - 23 (Opinion Sharing, Dialogue between Landless Group and Government Authority on following Issues)

Description	Initiative by Government /Landless Group		Govt Resource	Comme-rcial Shrimp Aqua-culture	Education, Food for Education and Work	Local Govt Corruption	Local Develo-pment Activity	Health	Environ-ment and Water logging	Natural Calamity and Relief	National/ Interna-tional Day	Oppres-sion on Women	Paddy Plantation and Harvesting	False Cases and Harass-ment	Fundame-ntalism	Law and Order situation	Total	
	Govt:	Group																
Deputy Commissioner	Core	Govt:	4	-	1	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	
		Group	46	1	9	3	3	1	-	2	2	2	2	1	-	3	75	
	MJF	Govt:	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
		Group	17	-	7	1	3	-	-	2	-	-	2	1	-	1	34	
Land Administration	Core	Govt:	75	-	-	5	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	3	-	4	91	
		Group	416	-	2	5	2	-	-	-	4	-	4	12	-	9	454	
	MJF	Govt:	23	-	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	-	3	33	
		Group	84	-	2	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	4	4	-	2	100	
Upazila Administration	Core	Govt:	80	6	31	19	28	5	-	17	27	21	6	16	-	12	268	
		Group	406	15	64	45	52	15	4	23	82	42	26	32	2	46	854	
	MJF	Govt:	24	-	18	10	13	2	-	10	4	-	4	6	-	3	94	
		Group	64	-	20	12	19	6	-	15	13	3	14	6	-	5	177	
Police Administration	Core	Govt:	37	10	1	31	6	1	-	-	5	68	18	128	-	54	359	
		Group	106	19	-	41	5	2	-	1	29	125	40	197	1	83	649	
	MJF	Govt:	13	-	-	14	6	-	-	-	1	10	7	44	-	20	115	
		Group	19	-	-	18	4	-	-	1	-	12	19	55	-	23	151	
Election Commissioner	Core	EC	2	-	3	1	2	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	12	
		Group	2	-	3	1	2	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	-	12	
	MJF	EC:	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	
		Group	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	8	
Political Party	Core	PP	2	-	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	12	
		Group	4	1	-	1	1	-	1	3	4	2	2	-	-	19	38	
	MJF	PP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	
		Group	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	3	
Parliament Member	Core	PM	22	3	9	4	18	-	-	7	3	2	5	11	-	13	97	
		Group	99	6	16	10	32	7	1	11	17	8	17	19	-	12	255	
	MJF	PM	8	-	5	1	6	-	-	4	-	-	4	3	-	6	37	
		Group	22	-	8	5	16	3	-	9	2	-	11	1	-	2	79	
Union Parishad	Core	UP	74	4	65	23	76	6	-	36	35	46	9	35	3	39	451	
		Group	304	17	68	55	145	15	2	58	125	105	40	58	2	78	1,072	
	MJF	UP	23	-	27	4	29	2	-	14	3	8	2	14	2	10	138	
		Group	44	-	23	9	36	4	-	22	13	16	13	8	-	4	192	

TABLE - 23 (Opinion Sharing, Dialogue between Landless Group and Government Authority on following Issues)

Description	Initiative by Government/Landless Group	Govt Resource	Commercial Shrimp Aquaculture	Education, Food for Education and Work	Local Govt Corruption	Local Development Activity	Health	Environment and Water logging	Natural Calamity and Relief	National/International Day	Oppression on Women	Paddy Plantation and Harvesting	False Cases & Harassment	Fundamentalism	Law & Order situation	Total	
Health Administration	Core	Govt:	1	-	-	10	149	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	2	165	
		Group	16	-	14	2	5	298	4	-	7	8	-	-	2	356	
	MJF	Govt:	-	-	-	-	1	56	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	1	61
		Group	-	-	-	-	2	66	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	69
Press Club	Core	P.club	11	-	-	1	1	-	5	5	17	2	11	-	9	63	
		Group	53	6	1	11	3	9	1	6	46	46	3	14	-	19	218
	MJF	P.club	2	-	-	-	2	66	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	71
		Group	6	-	-	4	2	2	-	1	4	2	1	2	-	2	26
Bar Council	Core	B.C:	9	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	15	
		Group	60	5	-	3	-	-	5	-	9	11	-	52	-	3	148
	MJF	BC:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Group	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	8
Women Organisation	Core	WO:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	6	
		Group	-	-	15	-	-	-	-	1	10	9	-	-	-	3	38
	MJF	WO:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Group	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Education Administration	Core	Govt:	1	-	155	-	-	1	2	1	1	2	1	-	-	164	
		Group	-	-	278	-	1	3	4	-	37	7	-	1	-	8	339
	MJF	Govt:	-	-	68	-	-	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	72
		Group	-	-	58	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	59
Total	Core	Govt:	318	27	267	85	143	164	4	72	86	162	42	205	3	133	1,711
		Group	1,512	70	470	177	251	350	22	106	373	366	134	387	5	285	4,508
Total	MJF	Govt:	94	-	119	32	57	127	-	35	12	19	18	69	2	43	627
		Group	257	-	118	51	85	81	-	51	34	35	66	85	-	44	907
Grand Total	Core		412	27	386	117	200	291	4	107	98	181	60	274	5	176	2,338
	MJF		1,769	70	588	228	336	431	22	157	407	401	200	472	5	329	5,415
	Total		2,181	97	974	345	536	722	26	264	505	582	260	746	10	505	7,753

