

# Annual Report

April 2014 to March 2015



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<b>Executive summary</b>	

Four decades into the birth of Nijera Kori committed to its values of empowering women, establishment of rights, and fighting oppression, works with a broad spectrum of the population. The organisation works under the guiding principles of social mobilisation, gender equality, promotion of autonomy, and a strong belief in partnership and democracy.

The annual report for 2014-2015 is a reflection of Nijera Kori's work-structure based on documentation, feedback and deliberation. The report firstly gives an organisation history of Nijera Kori, the values and principles it upholds, and a brief overview of its organisational structure. It outlines the decision making process and the working area of the organisation. The report goes on to reflect on the activities of Nijera Kori during the reported period.

Nijera Kori covers 14 districts; 31 upazila, 147 unions and 1,168 villages. In these areas, there are 10,398 groups with 211,694 memberships, of whom 117,579 are women and 94,115 are male. If we compare this with the overall statistics on the number of poor in these villages, the nit appears that Nijera Kori has covered 10% of the target population.

Through data collection and comparison over the one-year period, the achievements of Nijera Kori were measured and evaluated in terms of social mobilisation, formation of committees, cultural activities, legal aid assistance, availing the right to information and it uses, role of watch committees, access to natural resources and government services, fight against corruption, representation in the UP standing committees, participation in shalish, involvement in economic and gender issues among others. The report also outlines the financial and administration accounts of Nijera Kori.

The organisation structure of Nijera Kori can be broadly described to be composed of groups and committees. The groups are formed, trained and organised to gradually increase the spectrum of activities they can undertake from each working area through basic social development courses. The core working structures of Nijera Kori are these landless groups which mobilise to fight for the collective demands of individual villages—from issues of violence against women to access to khaslands and water bodies.

The degree of success in implementing the targeted number of groups formed and meeting held varied. In total, 188 groups were formed against the planned 253—it was further found that in terms of gender, the percentage of women's group formation was 93% while for men this was 56%. Of the total planned meetings (157,195), 79% were implemented.

In terms of social mobilisation and organisation building, the rate of achievement over the reporting period was 74%. The group development process secured enrolment of 3,618 new members. The activity is portrayed in the report based on the number of weekly/monthly meetings of the groups, 158 (w-92 and m-66) groups graduated from the primary to the secondary level, and 40 (w-24 and m-16) groups graduated from the secondary to the tertiary level. The number and activity of various committees is given in the report as well, inclusive of the leadership coverage in the working area. A total of 356 landless committees at various levels have been reported to be active through mobilisation, co-ordination and organisation of issue-based programmes.

The landless group build up their own capital through a monthly savings deposit to finance their collective activities and at times to support members during unforeseen crisis/emergencies. The

report shows that landless groups invested Taka 68,790,013 out of their savings fund for various collective economic activities, which gave them an 8.3% return on investment.

Through the training structure of Nijera Kori, various capacity building exercises were undertaken. The number of training programs were 65% of the targeted benchmark. But the rate of participation of women in the programs was high, with Khulna leading with 83%. In the trainings, 55% of the participants were women—a clear sign of their interest in acquiring knowledge and taking leadership in initiating social change

Nijera Kori also undertook various cultural activities during the reporting period. From cultural meetings, drama performance to children's programs—the success rate ranged from 93 to 121% of the planned outcome. The activities included 10 two-three days long long marches, composition of 30 new dramas and 416 performances.

landless groups faced 52 new legal cases, of which 34 were filed by the groups themselves. The prime issue that came out from the analysed data was that there was a 71% increase in the number of cases concerning violence against women. Of 111 cases whose judgements were received, 94 were in favour of the landless groups, which is 85% of total judgements passed.

The utilisation of the Right to Information Act was a major area of focus for Nijera Kori. The report found 142 applications for information submitted during the period, of which in 133, the groups received the information. The application for information can be categorised as: safety-net programme-39; Khasland-25; local infrastructure development-52; education-7; health service-11; agricultural service-5; and Blue Gold project-3.

In landless group initiated education programme, the number of students enrolled was 4,531 with the rate of girl student's enrolment 8% greater than male students.

The landless organisations organised 1,277 distinct protests. Of these protests, 754 addressed violence against women, 33 resisted fundamentalism, 240 concerned establishing rights to local resources, and 250 addressed local corruption and irregularities.

## **Outcome**

The significant qualitative and quantitative changes in our working areas have been classified into the following broad themes: (I) Social action (II) Governance and accountability issues (III) Economic action (IV) Gender issues

### **Social action**

Due to the activity of the landless organisation a total 81,229 were enrolled under the various SSNP and 12,313 deserving people were registered under the program—the economic value received by the beneficiaries standing at Taka 41,215,725.

Through their actions against corruption, they were able to save Taka 22,426,915 and also increase their wages by Taka 7,653,100 due to better implementation of development projects.

### **Governance and accountability issues**

The year also showed an increase of representation in various local committees. A total of 590 group members (w-170 and m-420) contested against the local powerful elite in the election of the school, market and sluice gate management committees. Of the 590 candidates from the landless groups, 449 got elected. Among the candidates who got elected 113 were women. These shows significant achievement in terms of women's representation in local bodies.

Participation of landless members was also seen in the UP standing committees. Data on the landless member representation in the UP SC compared with the total working area of Nijera Kori, shows that the landless groups succeeded in securing positions in the SC in 63% (92 out of 147) of the Unions under the working area.

The participation of landless members in local shalish—this achievement is amplified by their success in redirecting criminal matters to relevant courts. A total 3,984 members (w-1,340 and m-2,644) participated as judges in shalish during the period.

### **Economic action**

Through the movement of the groups, 873 acres of khasland and 262 acres of water bodies were recovered or freed from illegal occupation. A total of 4,973 landless families are benefited in terms of food security, and have access to or are regaining ownership of natural resources. The economic value of these resources is Taka 438,308,900. This in turn provided for economic sustainability; a total of 39,983 families were benefited by using khasland and water bodies collectively and achieved economic empowerment.

A total of 381 (w-234 and m-147) groups have started collective economic activities with their savings. The groups invested Taka 68,790,013 for collective economic activities and made a profit of Taka 5,703,812 (w-2,379,826 and m-3,323,986), which amounts to 8.3% return on investment. Its generated work for 7,412 (w-2,505 & m-4,907) members for a period of 6 months.

### **Gender issues**

On more qualitative terms, changes were also seen regarding gender issues. A total of 1,773 landless male members reported on their participation in domestic work; 1,860 landless member families reported that presently family decisions are taken through mutual discussions; 297 women were elected in 261 open posts of different committees.

In this time, 65 child marriages were stopped; 101 dowry marriages were avoided; 54 irrational divorces were prevented; 48 polygamy issues brought to justice; and 621 case of domestic violence were stopped.

Access to justice was a significant portion of the work of Nijera Kori during 2014-2015. 11% of cases were on issues of dowry; 8% related to divorces; 6% on polygamy; 9% related to child marriages; 43% on domestic violence; 11% on the claiming of maintenance allowances; and 12% on sexual harassment. With regards to inheritance, the economic value of inheritance property recovered due to proper justice was found to be equivalent to Taka 6,201,000. This shows the economic value of awareness building and mobilisation activities.

The report, with relevant data explores the above factors in details — with explanations to the benchmarks set, what was achieved, and the reason behind the results. It details the activities of the organisation over the period and culminates with news of the recognition of the 7 women leaders of the landless groups through the awarding of the national Joyeeta awards.

With accompanying graphs, lists, annexes, case-studies, and analysis, the annual report has tried to present a transparent, complete and detailed overview of Nijera Kori's commitment towards building a society free from oppression and deprivation through the establishment of the fundamental rights of people.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

## **1. Background information**

### **1.1 Birth of Nijera Kori**

Nijera Kori started as a program led by a group of Dhaka-based female social workers to protect the dignity of destitute rural women who migrated to Dhaka city in the aftermath of the 1974 devastating flood and severe famine through provision of shelter and food, and imparting some skills such as jute works, knitting, making of handicrafts and pickles that could give them some income earning opportunities to live on their own and eventually resettle themselves in the society. Since the main effort was to do something on one's own initiative, the initiators decided to name the program as Nijera Kori, a Bengali word, which means "we do it ourselves". This social initiative continued for few years, and in 1978 Nijera Kori was formally registered with the Department of Social Welfare, Government of Bangladesh as an NGO. In 1979 several staff of the CUSO's (Canadian University Service Overseas) women's program joined Nijera Kori, and expanded Nijera Kori's program particularly to cover CUSO's programs with rural poor women in four districts: Chittagong, Noakhali, Jessore and Khustia. A year later in early 1980s another group of field workers of BRAC, due to their disagreement with BRAC's approach to development also joined Nijera Kori. Such inclusion of new staff had significant influence in shaping the direction and content of Nijera Kori's programs. By mid-1980 Nijera Kori introduced a fundamental change in its work approach and decided to focusing on awareness raising of the rural poor and building their own organization to address the multiple economic, political and social constraints which prevent them from establishing their rights over the institutions that govern their lives and livelihoods. By then Nijera Kori also decided to get all legal clearance from the government to pursue its work. To this effect, in February 1981 Nijera Kori registered as an NGO under the Societies Registration Act and in April with the NGO Affairs Bureau, and subsequently secured government's approval for receiving "Foreign Contribution".

### **1.2 Nijera Kori's Mission, Goal and Objective**

The mission of Nijera Kori is to empower the rural poor, both women and men to create independent democratic organization for taking up challenges within their own spheres for a better and more meaningful life for themselves and their immediate community, and establishing their rights over the institutions that decide on the allocation of resources and services for the poor.

Nijera Kori's overarching goal is a society free from oppression and deprivation through the establishment of the fundamental rights of people. Nijera Kori believes that the struggle to transform the underlying structures of inequality, injustice and exclusion must be conducted at different levels, starting with the individual and extending to the regional and national levels. In addition, it must encompass the various spheres; i.e. economic, social and political decision making processes, in which the poor are denied of their rights of participation.

Nijera Kori's objective is to raise awareness and unite the rural poor, who have long been the victims of exploitation and social exclusions to voice their opinions and to ensure it is being heard, and involving them in decision-making processes at village and local levels which effect their lives.

### **1.3 Whom Nijera Kori works with – the Target Population**



Nijera Kori team based on a thorough analysis of the causes of poverty, inequality and social injustice, concluded to work with a broad spectrum of poor people who primarily depends on selling of labor as their main source of livelihood. They include wage laborers, sharecroppers, small and marginal farmers and people involved in various traditional trades and occupations. Furthermore, Nijera Kori makes it a priority to involve the ethnic communities of Bangladesh within its program. In sum, Nijera Kori aims to work with the poor who lives under extreme poverty and whose basic human rights and needs are largely ignored by the society.

The defined target population, according to Nijera Kori's analyses, is faced with multiple constraints such as economic, social and political. In terms of economic constraint, the poor i.e., the landless and asset-less rely on direct or indirect sale of their labor power to meet their basic needs. However, due to existing structure and organization of the labor market the poor as a labor-seller have very little or no bargaining power. They must therefore accept wages for their labor, which are often arbitrarily determined by the buyers and may not be sufficient to meet even their daily subsistence needs. In political terms the poor rarely have any voice in local or national structures of decision-making. At the informal village level and/or local government institutions the powerful landed sections of village society dominate the shalish (informal village court) which addresses disputes within village society and in the delivery of the government's programs. In social terms, the poor are kept in their place by powerful norms and beliefs which legitimate their oppression and disenfranchisement and also prevent them from questioning the status quo. Due to their lack of exposure to any alternative set of values, and often reinforced by their lack of basic education, has left the poor unaware of their legally recognized rights, while absence of their own organization prevents them from claiming and establishing these rights. An additional set of cultural norms and practice further undermines the position of women.

#### **1.4 Fundamental Principles of Nijera Kori:**

Nijera Kori's overarching goal, as noted above, is a society free from oppression and deprivation through the establishment of the fundamental rights of people. It believes that the struggle to transform the underlying structures of inequality, injustice and exclusion must be conducted on a number of different levels, starting with the individual and extending to the village, regional and national levels. In addition, it must encompass the various spheres, economic, social and political, in which the poor are denied their rights. In realizing this goal, Nijera Kori follows a number of principles that Nijera Kori adheres to and they are:

***Nijera Kori emphasizes on social mobilization:*** Nijera Kori believes that there is poverty, unemployment, concentration of wealth and power and various other injustices in the society. The majority of the poor are exploited by a handful of few, as the means of production as well as political power are owned and controlled by the latter. In this back- drop, Nijera Kori defined its role to act as a facilitator of a dialogical process, through which people would be equipped with the ability to analyze and assess their situation and to take action to redress the prevailing system. In this effort, Nijera Kori provides technical services to promote self-confidence and enhance people's organizational capacity so that they are able to claim and/or establish their rights through building their own organizations rather than depending on the agency such as Nijera Kori to act on their behalf.

**Nijera Kori do not run any credit program:** Though Bangladesh has become famous for its innovation in the arena of micro-credit, Nijera Kori continues with its principle of 'non delivery of credit'. Nijera Kori believes that micro-credit cannot and does not reach all sections of society - especially the neglected communities and people, who needs it the most. At the same time, Nijera Kori also believes that micro-credit program of NGOs, as an alternative financial institution, instead of making people self reliant self-reliant, succeeded in creating dependencies and vulnerabilities among the communities those have enlisted under the micro-credit program.

**Nijera Kori strongly believes in gender equality:** For Nijera Kori, gender equality is one of the pillars of the organization and remains central to Nijera Kori's understanding of poverty and social injustice. Nijera Kori recognizes 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-specific forms of discrimination and domestic violence within their household as well as face restrictions on their physical movements and discrimination within the labor market in the larger society. Nijera Kori also believes that male-female relations need not be inherently antagonistic and that men can become women's allies in the struggle against patriarchal oppression. Indeed, without active support and participation of the men from their families and from their class, poor women will find their own struggle for respect and recognition far more difficult.

**Nijera Kori commits to promote autonomy:** Nijera Kori's capacity-building strategy emanates from a fundamental belief that "power" should and must remain with the people. Hence, Nijera Kori's programs and activities are structured to ensure that financial and organizational autonomy remains with the people. Nijera Kori emphasizes on promoting autonomous nature and structure of the working people's organizations so that the resource-poor members gradually decrease their dependency on Nijera Kori and finally rely on their own strength.

**Nijera Kori values partnership:** Nijera Kori believes in the enormous power of collective action, and consciously deploys its resources to strengthen bonds among the members of the poor people's organization. This process is supported by high frequency of meetings, for both staff and landless groups. This frequency of face-to-face meetings is important for promoting closer relationships, establishing trust and ensuring participatory decision-making and accountability.

**Nijera Kori strongly believes in democracy:** Participatory democracy is the core value that shapes Nijera Kori's management structure and decision-making process. Nijera Kori also aims to infuse the democratic principles in the management of the people's organization that they facilitate to develop. Nijera Kori strongly believes that democratic management is the key to successfully establish the rights of the poor

### **1.5 Organizational structure, decision making and work culture of Nijera Kori**

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. General Body, made up 39 members, which is responsible for overall governance and elects a Governing Body, every two years. The role of the Governing Body who meet quarterly, is to ratify policies and programs proposed by Nijera Kori, to approve the audited account and budget for the coming year, as required by government legislation and to appoint the Co-ordinator who is responsible for coordinating the overall programmes and management of Nijera Kori on regular basis.



Nijera Kori's organizational structure and culture demonstrate the basic organisational principles to which it is committed. Therefore, 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.

At present, Nijera Kori's has 14 anchals (area), and 31 upa-kendras (sub-centre). In its headquarters, there is a central team which is made up of the coordinator, 3 central organizers and 3 central trainers. This team oversees organisation-wide co-ordination, administration overall programmes. The Dhaka office is also made up of the cultural team, accounts e office, reporting and monitoring team, administrative and other support staff. Field level responsibility for these functions are decentralised to the divisional and anchal teams.

### ***Programmatic Decision-making and reporting:***

Democratic decision-making, based on documentation, feed-back and deliberation, is a central organizational principle of Nijera Kori. All officials with decision-making responsibilities, with the exception of the Coordinator, are elected from amongst the staff to the relevant levels and committees. For instance, each division elects a Divisional Coordinator who works with a Divisional parishad (committee) to co-ordinate and provides overall supervision at divisional level. The Divisional Coordinator also represents the division in the central executive council (nirbahi parishad) which has strategic executive powers. There is provision for an additional woman member if no woman is on any of the elected committees, but this was never needed.

While there is a fixed percentage of women and men groups represented among elected members, election to specific posts is open to both women and men. Currently, there have been 2 women elected to open anchal posts out of 14, 4 into open divisional posts out of 12 and 4 into open central posts out of 7).

The entire staff at both field and central levels participates in strategic decision-making, both directly and through these elected representatives. Nijera Kori's decision-making, reporting and evaluation processes are closely inter-twined. There is a great deal of emphasis on documenting these processes through written minutes, reports of visits and activity reports, all of which are then synthesized into the annual report. Decisions are made and modified, and progress evaluated through open and participatory processes on the basis of these vertical (mainly staff) and horizontal (amongst staff and groups) flows of information. Importantly, staffs are informed by the self-reflection and learning process of groups. This is particularly important in the context of protests and struggles for physical occupation of Khasland, where decisions on how to act have to be made by groups themselves, and not staff.

A description of the processes by which different levels of Nijera Kori staff perform their duties, share information, evaluate performance, take decisions and engage in forward planning will best help to illustrate how principles of democracy, accountability and transparency are built into its organizational culture. It will also help the readers to understand Nijera Kori's organizational strategy.

- Staff at the 31 different sub-centre meets on a weekly basis to reflect on their performance over the week, share problems they have encountered, evaluate each other and discuss plans for the coming period. These are minuted. Every staff member has to maintain a separate file for each of the groups which she or he is overseeing so that continuity is maintained in relationships with groups even if the staff member in question is changed.

- 2-3 day monthly area meetings are held each month at the 14 anchal (areas) level. Individual staff member in an anchal submits a written activity report for the month and provides a verbal self-evaluation of their performance for comments and questions. Individual and anchal-level activities are decided at these meetings.

These meetings are minuted and a monthly report prepared. Administrative decisions regarding leave internal transfer are taken here. One day is kept aside for study and learning, based on current newspaper articles, reports, books and periodicals which have been recommended by the trainers.

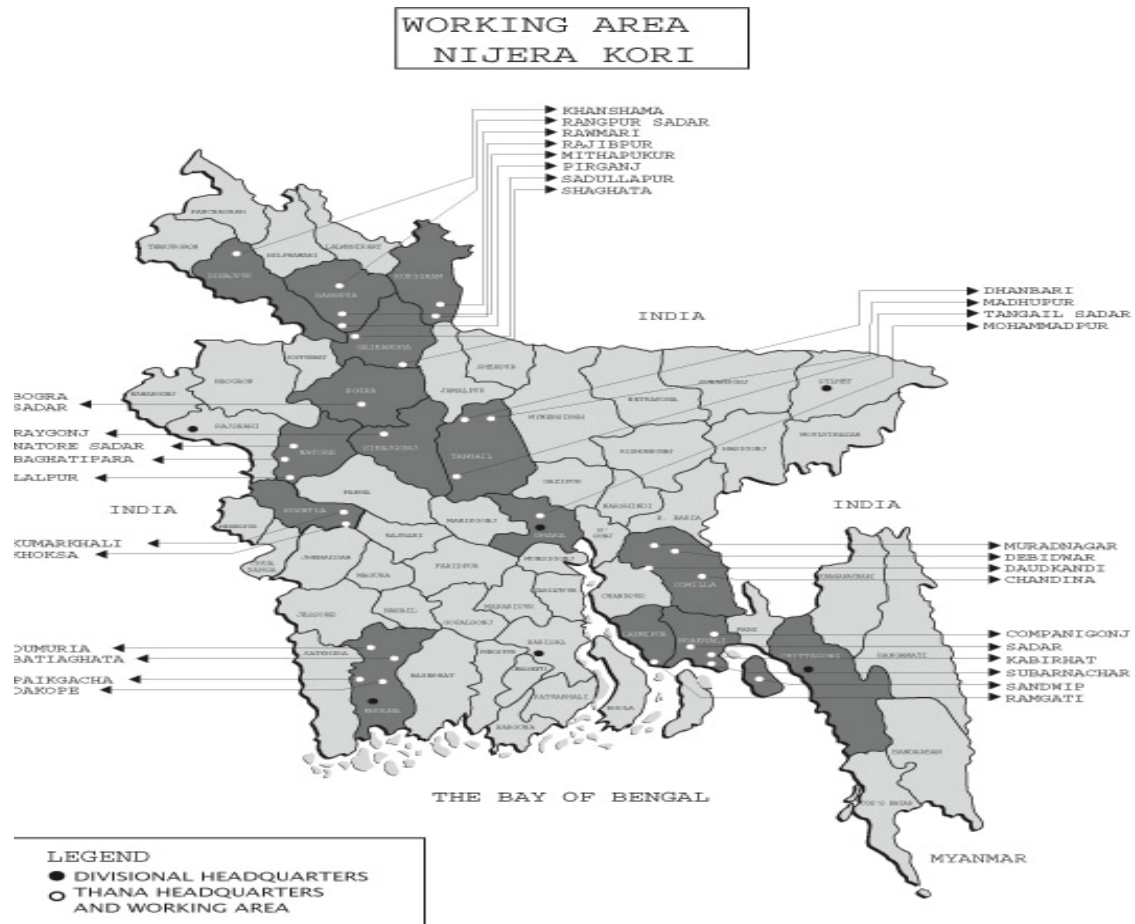
- 2 day divisional council meetings are held by the divisional parishad every second month. The anchal chair and office holders at the divisional level review the entire division's performance against the objectives and targets of the annual plan, evaluate its activities and make adjustments where necessary. Administrative decisions for the divisional level are also taken here. Recommendations which have implications beyond the division are sent on to the central team which either makes a decision itself or takes it up at the staff executive committee (nirbahi parishad). Proceedings are minuted and sent to the anchals and to the centre.
- 2-3 days quarterly meetings are held by the executive council (nirbahi parishad). Four divisional chairs and all central committee members, including the coordinator, meet to review the entire program. The divisions give their reports, identify and discuss key issues and decide on new strategic directions. The entire administrative decisions for the organization are taken here. Proceedings are minuted and circulated among the divisions and anchals and read out at their respective meetings.
- Annual 3 day conventions are held at the divisional level. All staff of the division, including divisional accountants, conducts a review of divisional and area performance, check achievements against targets & prepare a report on divisional activities for the entire year.
- 4 day central convention meets every second year. All Nijera Kori staff members are present, including the accountants, administrative and support staff. During the convention, each division presents a report for the past year, reviews policies and guidelines in the light of any changed circumstances. An annual report, which synthesizes the quarterly reports of each division and hence provides an overview of the organization's activities and achievements over the past year, is presented for discussion at this convention. Staff members at the convention also elect representatives to different levels, either retaining or changing the previous representative on the basis of their performance over the past year. Thus, anchal staff elects the anchal chair; divisional staff elects divisional coordinator, the divisional organizer and divisional trainer. The entire bodies of staff elect the central organizers and the central trainers. The only non-elected members in the decision-making structure are the coordinator who is appointed by the Governing Body and has remained the same for the sake of continuity since 1980.
- 4 day council meetings are held every alternate year. Here, every five NK staff members are represented by an elected councilor. This is thus a smaller forum than the biennial convention and allows for more in-depth analysis and evaluation than is possible in the larger forum. The annual report for the year in question is presented at this meeting. Any changes to decisions or policies taken at these biennial council meetings have to be approved at the next convention.

Finally, if specific issues need discussion, an extended meeting of the nirbahi parishad and all elected representatives is convened. This is to ensure that decisions taken on unanticipated issues or unplanned changes are also taken democratically and implemented at the relevant level. The outcomes of all meetings, at different levels, are transmitted back to lower level committees and groups after each meeting.

### 1.6 Nijera Kori's Working Area

Nijera Kori works in four divisions in Bangladesh: Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chittagong and Khulna. Its main criteria for selecting the areas are that the majority of the population in those areas belonged to its target group and second, that where there were few other NGOs working there. Nijera Kori plans to continue work in these four divisions in the foreseeable future, widening and deepening its coverage within them rather than expanding into other parts of Bangladesh. The critical constraint on the expansion of the activities of social mobilization organizations like Nijera Kori is quality of staff and Nijera Kori is reluctant to expand into new areas, with the attendant start-up costs, unless it is sure of maintaining the quality of staff.

Currently in these four divisions, Nijera Kori covers 14 districts; 31 upazila, 147 unions and 1,168 villages (see map). In these areas, there are 10,398 groups with 211,694 memberships, of whom 117,579 are women and 94,115 are male. If we compare this with the overall statistics on the number of poor in these villages, the nit appears that NK has covered 10% of the target population.



## CHAPTER TWO

### **2. The Process of Developing Poor People's Organization**

#### **2.1 Group formation**

The formation of groups at the village level is the starting point for Nijera Kori's activities in an area. When Nijera Kori's decides to work in a new village, its program organizers (PO) carry out participatory analysis to identify households which fall within its target group. Each PO takes responsibility for overseeing around 55-60 groups in a village area. They act as catalysts for group formation and training, although once groups have begun to function, households from neighboring areas or villages come forward themselves to form their own groups. Male and female groups are formed separately. Each group comprises 16-30 members.

A group leader, secretary and cashier are elected in each group on the basis of perceived commitment or ability. They are responsible for the day-to-day running of the group and serves as the link between the group members and the local Nijera Kori office. Soon after selection, they are offered a basic training course in social development issues as well as in group dynamics. As the group matures, further training is provided, usually to the elected members who are then responsible for facilitating the dissemination of the information, skills and ideas which they receive to the rest of the group.

Every week group members sit together to discuss group and village activities and formulate working plans for the coming weeks. In addition, group meetings are used as a forum to analyze a range of issues from their personal lives to broader political, social, cultural and economic issues. For most villagers, this is the first time they have been exposed to the idea that they might have rights, as citizens and human beings. In addition, it is also the first time that they come to learn about women's rights as human rights. In many groups, a written record is kept of the minutes of the group meetings and the cashier maintains written accounts. Workshops are organized at regular intervals at village level. There are two kinds. One deals with organizational matters while the other focuses on local issues and perceived needs of the area. These last between 1-2 days.

As the groups become more experienced, they take on a range of other activities, such as weekly group savings. This is intended to reduce members' vulnerability to emergency credit needs and dependence on professional money lenders. The amount contributed to savings fund and the utilization of funds is decided by each group, taking into account the ability of the poorest members of the group. Nijera Kori encourages its groups to save their money in a bank account, partly to familiarize them with bank procedures. As groups become more self-confident, they begin to take action around various problems which have been identified through group discussion, many of these entailing forms of social mobilization. However, while useful, the savings mechanism for most groups remains a small scale activity in relation to their financial needs.

Meetings held by landless groups at village, area and divisional levels are used to review their own achievements, to identify problems and decide future course of action. This process of reflection-action is an important part of the awareness-building process.

At their annual conventions, organizational positions, roles and responsibilities of the committees are evaluated and problems and weakness are identified. Members of the committee/landless representatives visit one village to another and one working area to another for a short period in exchange program and evaluates their performance and exchange experiences.

## **2.2 Group federation and committee structures**

Along with these new initiatives, Nijera Kori emphasizes the need to strengthen organizational capacity through a phased process of federation. The different levels of federation of Nijera Kori groups proceeds by stages as coverage expands at each level. Committees are only established when groups reach a level of maturity that would make them relevant.

### **Village Committee**

The Village Committee is made up of representatives of different groups in a village and is formed when at least two-thirds of the target populations in the village have been organized. The groups meet at an annual conference to elect the committee which is made up of seven members including one president, one secretary, one treasurer, two male and two female group representatives. The village committee meets once a month. There are currently 302 village committees.

### **Area Committee**

The Area committee is an interim committee which co-ordinates the activities of village committees in a specific area until the conditions for forming a union or upazila committee have been met or if there is a need for an interim committee because of the specific needs of an area. It is made up of eleven members: a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a joint secretary, an organizing secretary, a finance secretary, a publicity secretary and representative of two male and two female groups. It's tasks include arranging meetings of representatives to organize campaigns on specific issues. There are currently 28 area committees

### **Union Committee**

The Union committee is formed when two-thirds of the villages (if not village committees, at least groups in the village must exist) are covered in the union. It is made up of thirteen members. The structure includes one president, one vice-president, one secretary, one joint secretary, one organising secretary, one finance secretary, one publicity secretary and three male and three female members. There are currently 23 union committees.

### **Upazila Committee**

The Upazila committee is formed when at least one third of the unions in an upazila have been covered. It is currently the highest federated committee in Nijera Kori. It is made up of twenty-one members including one president, one vice-president, one secretary, one joint secretary, one organizing secretary, one joint organizing secretary one finance secretary, one publicity secretary, one joint publicity secretary, one office secretary, one education and cultural secretary, one women affairs secretary, one production secretary and four representatives each of male and female groups respectively. An annual convention is held at the upazila level to evaluate the preceding years' activities, discuss problems of a regional nature and elect representatives to Nijera Kori's decision-making bodies. There are currently Upazila 3 committees.

### **Common principles of committee structures**

- All committees share the following common principles;
- They are democratically elected for the period of one year at the annual conference of the group members;
- Gender equity in representation and participation;
- The committees give leadership in social movements and lead the action programs at local level;
- The committees are important forums for taking decisions which are relevant for members within the committee's jurisdiction;
- Learning and self-awareness through a process of review is used to inform decisions;
- Accountability among the committees is maintained through leadership structure, annual conference, and regular discussion;
- Committee's responsibilities include solving internal problems of the organization and co-ordination of Nijera Kori group activities;
- They seek to liaise with other organizations in order to have a more powerful impact.

### **2.3 Training – an important input to Group/Organization Development**

Training constitutes a central aspect of Nijera Kori's organisational strategy. It fulfils a variety of different functions: providing group members with the opportunity to reflect and analyse their individual and collective problems as well as the larger political and economic situation; provision of information about rights and entitlements; practical skills for income-generating purposes; legal expertise; and finally leadership skills. Training occurs through a number of different channels. There are designated training courses, lasting between a day to 3 or 4 days; the weekly group meetings at which trained members disseminate what they have learnt to the rest of their group; refresher training to ensure retention of what is learnt and cultural program which uses songs, theatre, role plays as means of communicating similar messages.

Members for training are selected by their groups on the basis of their commitment and aptitude. The same members usually tend to get selected and evolve as the leaders of their groups. All members who are selected for training at different levels come together to form a training forum. The role of the forum is to provide village-based refresher courses to ensure the retention of the training received and to disseminate that has been learnt among group members on a regular basis.

Over time, the training becomes increasingly advanced in recognition of the growing self-confidence and experience of the selected leadership. Recognizing that groups also become increasingly self-confident and capable over time, Nijera Kori follows a strategy of classifying its groups as they mature over time:



- **Primary level:** Groups at this level concentrate on becoming organized, developing basic awareness and ensuring regular attendance at meetings. Group savings and account-keeping are given importance in group activity. Currently there are 6,440 (women-3,861 and men-2,579) groups at this level.
- **Secondary level:** These groups have reached a level of social awareness when they can act on behalf of all members of their class within their area, irrespective of whether they are group members or not. They have developed accountability and leadership skills and begun to initiate collective action. There are currently 3,432 (women-1,822 and man-1,610) groups at this level.
- **Higher level:** Groups are able to analyze national issues and relate these to their own situation. They participate in national rallies and organize rallies in their own localities. Their savings are used for the benefit of the community. They also ensure access to local and national resources for collective production or use. Their leadership is established in the locality. There are 526 (women-302 and men-224) groups at this level.

The third stage corresponds to a situation when groups become self-managing. They are able to initiate their own meetings and actions without the presence of Nijera Kori staff. While Nijera Kori's earlier experience with setting up an independent apex organisation of the landless has made it cautious about the idea of withdrawing its support entirely from its groups, it has adopted a process for withdrawing partial support from its groups as they progress from primary to secondary and then to higher levels. However, it remains involved in planning and executing projects which involve larger areas and which require brokering resources and advocacy with public and private systems at local, regional and national levels such as government administration, the courts and the police.

Nijera Kori's capacity to mobilize the poor goes beyond the efforts of its staff alone. The growth of a 'critical mass' of organized groups in an area generates a mobilizing dynamic of its own so that staff no longer need to persuade the landless and poor people to organize; rather the people approach Nijera Kori staff for help in forming groups. In addition, the growing maturity and independence of many of Nijera Kori's groups also helps to reduce the work load of staff. Nijera Kori staff withdraw from the meetings of its more advanced groups who then become responsible for initiating their own meetings and planning their own strategy for their area. In addition, advanced groups also take on the role of motivating their fellow landless in their own and neighboring villages to become members of Nijera Kori. Because these groups are able to take on some of the functions of Nijera Kori staff, the rate of expansion of Nijera Kori staff do not have to be as rapid as the rate of expansion of Nijera Kori groups.

#### **2.4 Group voice within Nijera Kori**

The nature of Nijera Kori's mandate require close interaction with group members and the need for mechanisms to allow group priorities to influence its activities and group feed-back on Nijera Kori's performance. Through the weekly meetings of groups as well as the various committee meetings, which are attended by Nijera Kori staff as well, group members are able to determine what their priorities for action are and hence the direction of Nijera Kori's activities within the area. Members of committees visit each other's villages and working areas for short periods to evaluate performance and exchange experiences. These are fed to Nijera Kori staff at their meetings with them at different levels.

The close relationship between group members and staff mean that staff at the sub-centres are accessible to members at all times. Nijera Kori workers do not have any fixed hours of work. Male programme organizers often meet with their groups late into the evening as this is the only time the landless and poor laboring people are able to meet. Group members also visit the sub-centres whenever they need to. In addition, central and divisional staff pay regular visits to groups in which they are able to provide feedback on, or express dissatisfaction with, any aspect of Nijera Kori work.

## **2.5 Advocacy and alliances**

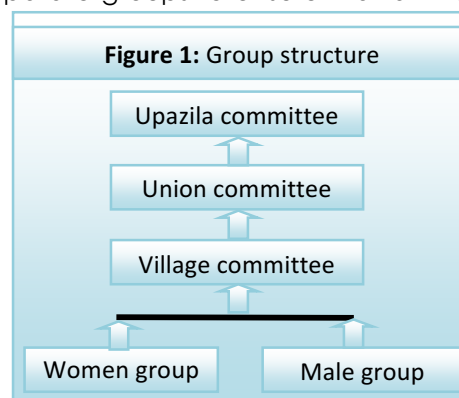
The processes by which landless women and men become strong enough to assert their rights are slow and uneven, which could be termed as processes of 'two steps forward and one step back'. Consequently, while Nijera Kori groups have gained considerable strength at the local level, they have not yet become an organized presence in national policy forums and governance structures. Even at the local level, the more distant the struggle for justice become from the village context which Nijera Kori groups are familiar with and the closer to urban, bureaucratic and legalistic procedures, the less confident are the poor and landless likely to feel. One strategy by which Nijera Kori sought to address this is through its own advocacy activities and by its alliances with like-minded NGOs in the field as well as with the more liberal and sympathetic sections of the bureaucracy, media and civil society in the areas in districts in which it works. In addition, it has also participated in broad-based people's organisations at the national level and helped to build national movements and campaigns around specific issues.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. Nijera Kori's activities and achievements

#### 3.1 Social mobilisation and organisation building

Primary landless groups (*Shamity*) are formed with a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 30 members. Male and female members are organised into separate groups to ensure that at the initial stage of group formation, the women get a safe space of their own to express their voice and concerns in the predominantly patriarchal society, which often exclude women from public spheres. At a later stage, when both women and men are more aware as well as receptive and able to work together as equals, committees are formed with both male and female representation. The committee is formed once group membership covers two-thirds of the target population of a particular village, union and upazila (See Figure-1)



However, at times, to give impetus to organisational activities, the members decide to form ad-hoc co-ordination committees called 'area committee' in areas where membership coverage is less than two-thirds. The formation and re-organization of the committees at every level is achieved through an annual convention of landless groups. This process gradually strengthens the landless groups, and the committee members gain credibility in their own communities, which ultimately helps the group to participate in the local decision making structures.

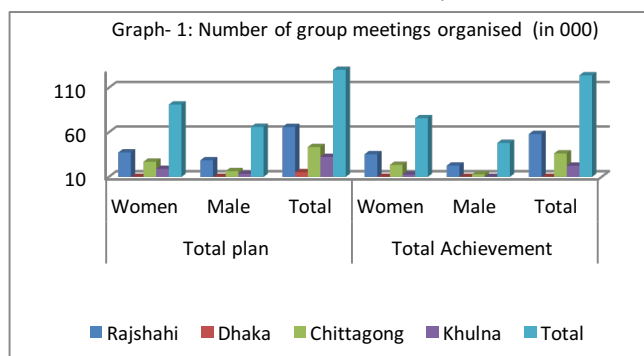
#### Achievement

During the reporting period of April 2014 to March 2015 a total 188 groups (w-117 and m-71) have been formed against plan 253 (Table-1). The rate of achievement is 74%. The rate of achievement varies due to variation of the number of groups across the division. Performance of Dhaka division is lowest with a 31% achievement rate. Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions achieved 81% out of their planned targets, while Khulna exceeded its target by 107%. Consistent political unrest

Description	Plan	Achievement	%
Rajshahi	72	58	81
Dhaka	48	15	31
Chittagong	107	87	81
Khulna	26	28	107
<b>Total</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>74</b>

around the country during the reporting period is the main reason of lower achievement against the overall target. For Dhaka division in particular, the previous plan had to revised instead of the formation of new strategy and efforts were made to make the group members of previous group who went inactive and irregular in project activities, active again. However, all inactive members of previous group did not participate regularly in the project activities.

The group development process secured enrolment of 3,618 new members (w-2,245 and m-1,373). The rate of achievement is 25% less than the previous year. Group meeting is the fundamental pillar of the awareness building process. The number of meetings organised stands at 123,937 (w-75,850 and m-48,087) against the planned target of 157,195 (see annex table-4). The rate of achievement is 79%. A detail of meetings against each divisional plan is portrayed in **Graph-1**.



On average, nearly 13 members attended each meeting and participated in the discussion. For women's group, average number of attendance was 14 and for men it was 11. The group meetings contributed to building a sense of collective identity among the members and also enhanced members' ability to analyse and understand the basis of existing exploitative social and political systems/structures as well as the potential strength of the poor as a group to challenge the status quo and establish their rights and entitlements.

In addition to regular weekly/monthly group meetings during the reporting period, 6,451 annual group meetings were held against the targeted 7,804. The landless group organise an annual group meeting. In the meeting, all of the members review their activities, formulate plans and elect the group committee. The rate of achievement is 83%. These meetings were attended by 1,417 (w-817 and m-600) group leaders, who were selected by the members of the primary groups.

Through holding of regular group meetings, the groups continue to enhance their level of awareness and get promoted from the primary to secondary and tertiary levels. This process is supported by the collective training process. In the reporting year, 158 groups graduated from the primary to the secondary level, and 40 groups graduated from the secondary to the tertiary level. It is important to note that once the group reaches tertiary level, they are fully capable in managing their activities independent of Nijera Kori's staff.

In the period, the landless group organised a total of 712 representative meetings against the planned 647, and 654 joint meetings were held against the planned 498. The rate of achievement is 110% and 131% respectively (see annex table-5). It is to be noted that, representatives from different groups participated in the representative meetings and three or four groups organised joint meetings. Due to political instability and communal attacks, the landless organisation organised more representative and joint group meetings for regular monitoring and formulating plan of action. Therefore, the number of representative meetings and joint meetings were higher than planned.

### 3.2 Formation of landless committee to enhance cohesion and building collective leadership

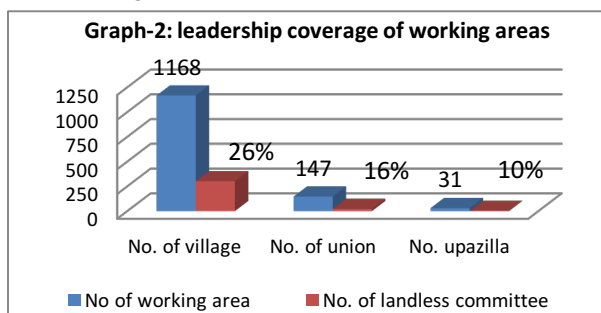
Committees are formed at the village, union and upazila levels when a recognisable percentage of the target populations are enrolled as group members. For example, when 66% of the target population in a village is organised, a village committee is formed with seven representatives.

Similarly, when 66% of the total villages of any union are covered under the programme, a union committee is formed with thirteen representatives. The same principle is also followed for formation of the upazila committee, where the committee is formed with twenty-one members. When it is not possible to form a committee at the union or upazila level, an area committee is often formed to support and co-ordinate activities, ensure accountability and organise right-based movements. The organising committee in such cases is elected for one year through an open voting process during the annual group convention.

## Achievement

A total of 356 landless committees at various levels have been reported to be active through mobilisation, co-ordination and organisation of issue-based programmes. As of March 2015, the distribution of the 356 Committees were as follows: 302 village committees, 23 at the union level, 3 at upazila level and 28 at area-level. Committees exist in 26% of the villages, 16% unions and 10% upazilas within the working area of Nijera Kori (see Graph 2).

These committees are increasingly being recognised as a legitimate voice of the poor within the community. This is a positive opportunity for building linkage with the Union Parishad.



The committee members as reported above are elected through a democratic process. During the reporting period for the 356 Committees, 492 posts were open for election. For these seats 1,427 members (575 women and 852 men) contested. In the committee election, 297 women members got elected. This means 35% of the women members succeeded in getting into the committees by defeating their male counterparts through the electoral process. This is a very significant positive indication of women's empowerment in rural Bangladesh, where women are the most vulnerable segment of the society.

Description	No. of open post where women & men both contested	No. of open post where women are elected	Contested Candidate		Elected
			Women	Male	Women
Rajshahi	240	128	277	469	128
Dhaka	40	15	47	22	15
Chittagong	122	116	152	200	116
Khulna	90	38	99	161	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>297</b>

During the reporting period, the landless committees at various levels organised 3,453 meetings against the planned target of 3,681. The rate of achievement is 94%. Of the committee meetings, 2,853 were organised by village committees, 257 meetings by union committees, 35 by the upazila committees and 308 by

the area committees. A total of 33,701 committee members attended these meetings. As a follow-up of the meetings' decisions, the landless groups organised 1,277 distinct protests march/meetings; addressed 754 cases of violence against women; and organised 33 marches to resist fundamentalism, 250 marches for establishing the rights of landless people over local resources, and 240 against corruption and irregularities (annex table-22).

Additionally, the landless committees organised many annual conventions, namely 243 at the village level; 16 at the union level; and 23 conventions at area levels. The number conventions organised at various levels have been less than the planned target (village-279, union-17, area-24 and upazilla-3). This is mainly due to political turmoil. The political situation deteriorated to such an extent that all upazila level conventions had to be called-off.

### **3.3 Group savings and its utilisation**

The landless group build up their own capital through a monthly savings deposit to finance their collective activities and at times to support members during unforeseen crisis/emergencies. The monthly contribution of members is kept in a collective group account with a bank.

In the reporting period, the landless groups mobilised Taka 24,035,148 (w-12,493,741 and m-11,541,407) as group savings. To manage these fund 107 collective bank accounts (w-87 and m-20) have been opened. Mobilisation of group savings during the reporting is 49% higher than the previous year (see Annex table: 8 and 9). The landless group members who were involved in collective economic activities through awareness and mobilisation programmes increase their group savings to continue their economic activity further.

Of the total amount mobilised, Taka 9,848,201 (11% of the total savings) was redistributed among the members (w-6453,086 and m-3395,115) to deal with personal immediate needs (production and consumption).

Mobilisation of group savings and its use to help members during crisis is a good testimony of the groups' awareness and commitments to support each other to overcome seasonal unemployment which is rather common in the rural agrarian society of Bangladesh. The group savings and its use substantially reduced members' dependency on the traditional money lending system practiced by the village *mahajans*, popularly known as *mahajanirin*, and/or micro credit lending programmes of the numerous NGOs.

The group savings is not only used for addressing unforeseen crisis faced by members, but also for undertaking collective economic activities and covering costs of various group activities such as, organising local workshops as follow ups of trainings, group conventions, providing legal support, organising protest-movements and cultural activities.

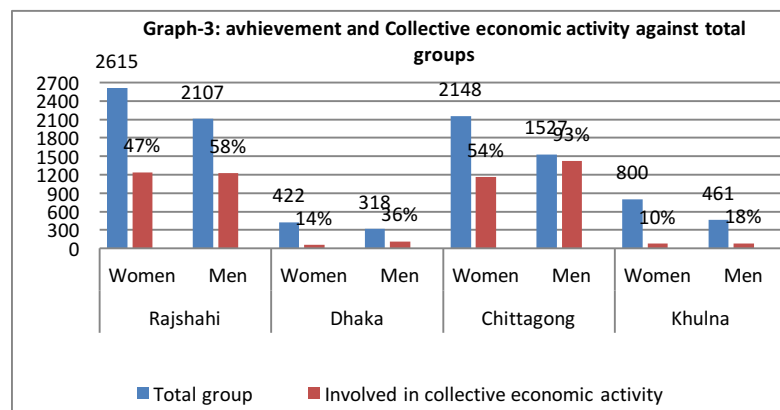
For such collective activities, the landless groups have spent a total of Taka 1,434,102. This amount, though appears to be a large sum, is 44% lower than the amount spent last year for similar activities. In addition to the above activities, the landless organisations have implemented various local development and welfare activities namely, repairing of schools, roads, culverts; clearing of drainage system; clearing of water bodies and canal; giving scholarships to meritorious students of the members; assistance for medical expenses; and celebrating dowry free marriages.

For these activities the landless groups have spent Taka 965,699. The number of members benefitted from various activities undertaken by group savings is 11,373 (see annex table: 17). The above activities clearly demonstrate the growing awareness and commitment for collective ideology among the members, contributing in strengthening the process of social mobilisation -



the core focus of the work of Nijera Kori. In the reporting period, 381 (women-234 and men-147) groups have started collective economic activities with their savings.

In March 2015, the total number of landless groups was 10,398. Out of these groups, 52% were involved in collective economic activities. Number of groups engaged in collective economic activities is highest in Chittagong division, followed by Rajshahi and Khulna (see Graph-3). Engagement of women's group in collective economic activities was 22% less compared to men groups. As of end March 2015, 5,374 (women-2,530 and men-2,844) groups were involved in collective economic activities. These groups are engaged in a variety of activities. 1,042 groups



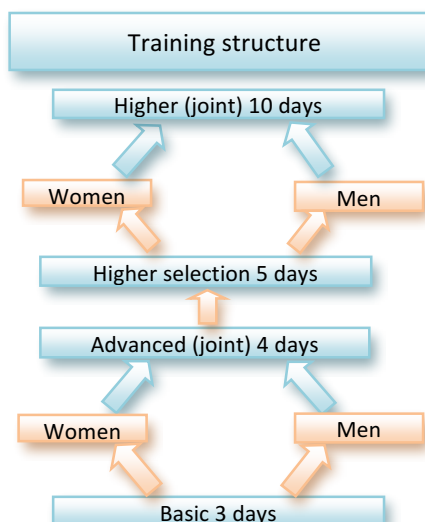
have taken up collective agricultural projects, 261 are in fishery, 614 in livestock rearing and 3457 in small businesses and the operating/pulling of rickshaw van (See Annex Table-13). 187 groups (women 101 and 86 men) had to close down their collective enterprises, at least temporarily, for not being able to renew their lease of Khasland and water-bodies, and/or buying new

livestock during the reporting period.

The landless groups invested Taka 68,790,013 out of their savings fund for various collective economic enterprises. This investment gave them a profit of Taka 5,703,812 (Taka 2,379,826 earned by the women groups and Taka 3,323,986 by men), which amounts to 8.3% return on investment. In terms of employment, the collective activities generated work for 7,412 (women-2,505 and men-4,907) members for a period of 6 months, meaning 1,334,160 labour days.

### 3.4 Awareness raising and capacity building activities

Nijera Kori on a regular basis organises various training sessions to enhance the analytical capabilities of the group members. Such trainings are normally organised with 20-25 participants. At the basic level, trainings are provided to female and male members separately; while at advanced level, both female and male members participate together in joint training sessions. Again, at the higher selection level training, the sessions are organised separately for women and men while at the advanced level of such training, the women and men sit in joint session. In recognition of the existing socio-religious values of the society, the gender dis-aggregated approach is followed, to create space for women so that they can express themselves freely and interact with fellow women at the initial stage of organisation building. Eventually as the groups continue to mature, joint sessions are organised at higher and/or advanced levels to create an environment of reciprocal

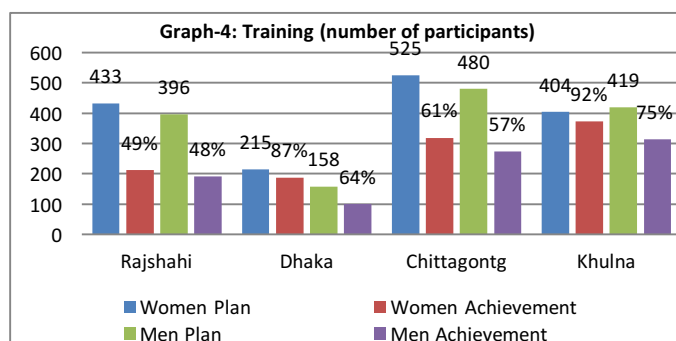


interactions, to develop greater understanding and overcome gender bias.

When special training sessions are organised at the request of the groups, they are normally organised as joint session. It is worth noting that cultural trainings, both at the basic and advanced levels, are organised jointly with female and male cultural group members.

## Achievement

During the reporting period, a total of 1,971 (women-1,091 and men-880) member participated in different training programs against the total planned target of 3,030 (women-1,577 and men-1,453) member. This gives an accomplishment rate of 65%. This lower performance rate is due to political turmoil as noted before, though all necessary arrangements were put in place. Furthermore, a number of training programmes could not be organised due to unforeseen delays in securing approval from the NGO Affairs Bureau (the Government agency mandated to clear NGO programmes and budget). Later on, the training schedule was revised and trainings were organised at the end of the reporting period.



Not with standing this lower success rate, one positive feature that needs to be acknowledged is the higher rate of women's participation in the training programs. Among the participants 55% were women. Details on training participants per division is presented in Graph 4, which shows that Khulna division has the highest achievement with 83%

followed by Dhaka at 77%, Chittagong at 59% and Rajshahi division with 49%.

In addition to the various trainings noted above, 98 follow-up trainings were conducted against the target 88. A total of 2,345 members (women-1,441 and men-904) participated in these training follow-up activities (see annex table: 11). On the other hand, compared to the plan, the rate of achievement of forum meetings is 93%. It is to be noted that, each of the forum consists of higher level women and men leaders. At present, 28 forum activities have been conducted.

The trained members are now facilitating discussions on various thematic subjects of concern in regular group meetings. They are also taking the lead in ensuring more engaged participation of members in the discussion and follow-up activities. Consequently, the quality of discussion and level of participation in the group meetings have improved remarkably.

During the period, a series of thematic workshops were organised. The aim of such workshops was mainly to develop the analytical and planning skills of members to launch movements in redressing injustices and improve their social position. 244 such workshops were organised against a planned target of 226. A total of 7,665 members (w-4,432 and m-3,233) participated in these workshops. Again, women's participation in the workshops was higher than that of men. This higher rate of women's participation is a clear sign of their interest in acquiring knowledge and taking leadership in initiating social change. **Table-3** gives

Description	Plan						Total %
	Plan			Achievement			
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	
Rajshahi	1,597	1,513	3,110	1,553	1,250	2,803	90
Dhaka	490	470	960	450	395	845	88
Chittagong	1,404	1,181	2,585	1,627	939	2,566	99
Khulna	804	756	1,560	802	649	1,451	93
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,295</b>	<b>3,920</b>	<b>8,215</b>	<b>4,432</b>	<b>3,233</b>	<b>7,665</b>	<b>93</b>

details on the number of workshops and men/women distribution of participants per Nijera Kori working division.

### 3.5 Cultural activity of the landless groups

Currently there are 54 cultural groups. Activities of the cultural groups mainly consisted of holding meetings, discussions on specific cultural issues, performing drama and organising musical festivals. Detailed achievements of each activity against planned target are reported in **Table 4**.

In the reporting period one basic cultural training with 18 participants (w-5 and m-13) and 28 day-long drama-based workshops with 493 participants were organised. During the training workshops, the participants composed 30 new dramas covering issues such as women's right (16); rights of agricultural workers (7); against fundamentalism (3); rights to Khasland and water bodies (4). In addition, ten 2-3 days-long "Cultural Long March" were organised.

<b>Description</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>%</b>
Meetings of cultural group	573	553	97
Cultural discussion	58	54	93
Drama performance	361	416	115
Padajatra/Drama festival	10	10	100
Cultural function by children	102	123	121
Cultural workshop	29	28	97
Cultural training	1	1	100
<i>(P=Plan, A=Achievement)</i>			

It is worth noting that this year 13 women members performed for the first time in the drama and musical events that were held in public space such as local markets and school grounds. The participation of women members in the cultural activities is an indication of women's freedom, empowerment and decision-making.

Children's cultural groups comprised of the children of the landless group members staged 123 dramas, which is 15% more than the last year. Gradually the children's cultural group is becoming stronger and popular in all the activity areas of Nijera Kori. The children teams are the new generation activists who are expected to carry forward the work towards its desired goals.

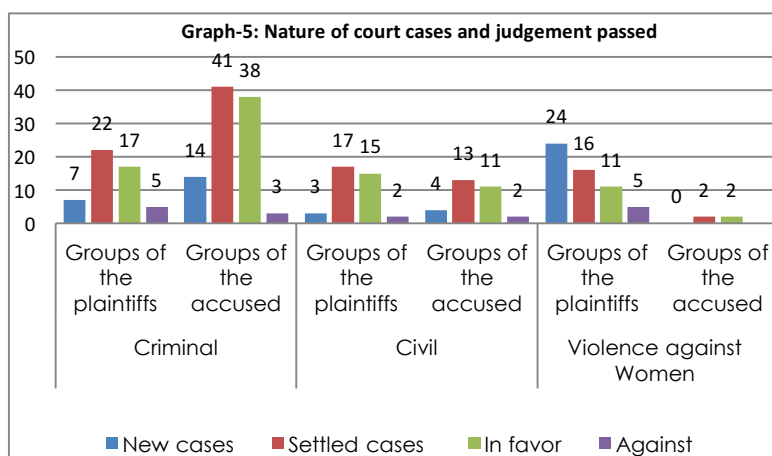
### 3.6 Empowerment support initiative

#### 3.6.1 Legal aid support activities

During the reporting period, the landless groups had to face 52 new legal cases. Of them, 34 cases were filed by the landless groups while for 18 cases they had to appear in the court as defendant where cases were lodged by the rich power holders. The highest number of new court cases is reported in Khulna division, while in Chittagong division maximum numbers of cases have been resolved.

The landless group filed more cases this year compared to last year. Out of 34 cases lodged by the landless groups, 24 were seeking justice on account of violence against women. This figure is 71% higher than the previous year. The increased numbers of court cases are for a number of factors. Firstly, the landless groups got the strength to challenge the oppressors, and on the other hand, the fact that the rich and elite uses repression on women as a weapon to silence the groups. Independent of the reasons, the increased number of court cases in itself is a bad marker of social progress. On the other hand, for 111 cases, judgements have been received. This gives a 19% increase over last year. In 94 of these 111 cases, judgements were in favour of the landless groups, which is 85% of total judgements passed.

The highest number of cases resolved were of criminal cases, second highest are of civil nature and the lowest are regarding violence against women. In case of 17 cases where the verdicts went against the landless group, the groups have appealed for review of 5 cases and for the rest, preparations for submitting appeal are underway. Details nature of cases and judges have presented in **Graph-5**.



The court cases cost a huge sum of money. The landless groups had to spend Taka 790,230 from their savings to support legal cases. This cost could have been much higher if not for the well-wishing lawyers providing legal support to the landless groups with minimal legal fees.

At the end of the reporting period, the number of court cases the landless groups are fighting stands to 690. Nijera Kori is providing legal assistance in 217 cases for which the landless groups could not mobilise resources.

### 3.6.2 Right to Information Act and its use by the landless groups

Enactment of Right to Information Act (referred to as RTI hereafter) in Bangladesh is one of the major legal interventions in terms of strengthening the governance structure upholding the democratic value system of the country. The RTI was enacted in 2009. The Act makes provisions for ensuring free flow of information and people's right to information.

The freedom of thought, conscience and speech is recognised in the constitution as a fundamental right and the right to information is an alienable part of it. Since all powers of the Republic belong to the people, it is necessary to ensure right to information for their empowerment. The right to information shall ensure that transparency and accountability in all public, autonomous and statutory organisations and in private organisations run on government or foreign funding shall increase, corruption shall decrease and good governance shall be established. It is expedient and necessary to make provisions for ensuring transparency and accountability. Nijera Kori firmly believes that RTI is a very important mechanism available to the citizens to demand accountability from the state and ensure that the community's voice is heard for the effective implementation of the state policies.

Description	No. of RTI Applications		Total	Information Received		Total	On process	Rejected by Concerned Authorities
	April-14 to March-15	Pending Application Apr' 13 to Mar' 14		April-14 to March-15	From Pending Application			
Primary applications	142	6	148	130	3	133	12	3
Appeal applications	11	6	16	2	10	12	2	2
Complain application	4	3	7	6	1	7	0	0

- Members of the landless group submitted 142 RTI applications to obtain information on government services and development projects in the reporting period. A total of 6 primary applications were pending in the administrative process last year. Therefore, the total number of primary RTI applications in March 2015, was 148.
- In 133 cases, the landless group members have received the information from the government and the development project authority. The application for information can be categorised as: safety-net programme-39; Khasland-25; local infrastructure development-52; education-7; health service-11; agricultural service-5; and Blue Gold project-3.
- In the reporting period, the information officer at the local level rejected 3 RTI primary applications. Therefore, the landless group members submitted a total of 11 RTI appeal applications to the district level appeal authority along with 8 from the previous year. Up to March 2015 the total number of RTI appeal applications was 16. In the reporting period, through appeal, a total of 12 landless group members received information against their applications regarding Khasland and water bodies. It is to be noted that, in the reporting period RTI 2 appeal applications about Blue Gold project were rejected by the district level appeal authority.
- As most of the landless are traditional farmers, and the responsibility of water management of the Blue Gold project will be given to the local powerful people who are involved and biased towards the shrimp cultivators, the landless members are frightened that the project will affect them negatively. Therefore, landless members who are residents of the area submitted applications asking for information on the policy of the water management of the project, about the number of polders and villages under the project area, what kind of agricultural inputs will be distributed and the policy to use the inputs in agriculture, since the Blue Gold project has initiated. In such circumstances, first, they applied for information to the Upazila Executive Officer at Subornochar upazila, Noakhali. But the upazila office did not provide information within the mentioned time frame. Later, they applied to the District Commissioner. The district level appeal authority rejected a total of RTI 2 appeal applications for information on the Blue Gold Project. Therefore, the landless group members submitted RTI 4 complain application to the Right to Information Commission along with 2 from the past year. Up to March 2015, the total RTI complain applications is 7. In the reporting period, RTI 7 hearing sessions were held. The judgment for all of the hearings came out in favour of the applicants i.e. the landless members.

### **3.6.3 Watch Committee and its activities**

Nijera Kori believes that the poor and the ethnic minorities are being deprived of their constitutional and human rights. Lack of information, among others, is one of the major causes of this deprivation. Therefore, Nijera Kori considers it of crucial importance to build effective information dissemination and monitoring systems at the grass-root level to make people more aware of their rights and entitlements, and thereby mobilise their participation in building institutions to establish transparency, accountability and partnership in society.

The Watch Committee is formed at the union level with 30 members. In each union watch sub-committee, there are five members. The convenor of each sub-committee is a general member of the landless union level committee and reports back to the landless union committee about progress at scheduled monthly meetings. Decisions, if needed to be taken, are taken here involving the organisations of the landless. The other five members are selected from general members of the landless groups in the area who are willing and able to contribute their time voluntarily and have the capacity to undertake necessary actions on the issue. The Sub-Committees are formed to cover **(1)** Education **(2)** Health **(3)** Access to Natural Resources (*land and water*) **(4)** Local Development and Good Governance **(5)** Fundamentalism, which includes religious intolerance and bigotry and **(6)** Gender Equality. **Box-1:** presented details coverage of Watch Committee.

SL	Box-1: Areas/Location of watch committees
1	Paiska union- Dhaka division, Tangail district, Dhanbariupazila- Dhanbari area;
2	Sahas union- Khulna division, Khulna district, Dumuriaupazila- Paikgacha area;
3	Char Jubelee union- Chittagong division, Noakhali district, Subarna Char upazila- Char Jabbar area;
4	Saghata union-Rajshahi division, Gaibandha district, Saghataupazila- Gaibandha area.
5	Mahammad union- Chittagong division, Comilla district, Daudkhandiupazila- Comilla area;
6	Pairabandha union-Rajshahi division, Rangpur district, Mithapukurupazila, Pairabandha area.

## Achievements

During the reporting period one new Watch Committee was formed in Pairabandha union in Mithapukur upazila, under the Rangpur district.

## Key achievement of sub committees described below

As a result of Watch Committee monitoring and actions, there have been some achievements (*only in watch committee areas*)

### Local governance

- As result of collective initiative of watch committees, 111 excluded and most vulnerable families have received Social Safety Net cards.
- The sub-committees communicated with the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) and submitted memorandum to Deputy Commissioner and member of Parliament to ensure re-construction work of road and embankment of about 2.5 kilometers. In addition to that, installation of 9 ring for removing water from the agricultural land. As result around 3,500 households have benefited.
- The sub-committees communicated with the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) to ensure safe drinking water in the *char* regions. As a result, the government installed 12 new tube wells in the *char* areas for safe drinking water.
- The sub-committees communicated with the LGED Department to protect river erosion by piling and use of concrete block in Munshirhar, Saghata area.
- A total of 4 (w-2 and m-2) have been included in the committee of Local Government Strengthen Programme.



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

- f) The sub-committees found out illegally grabbed Khasland and open (river) bodies in different working areas. The landless organisation worked relentlessly to generate public opinion to recover those natural resources.
- g) The sub-committees had collected 736 (w-42 and-694) false applications for Khasland distribution. They submitted the false landless application list to the Deputy Commissioner along with mass signatures for conciliations from the government list.
- h) In the reporting period, the sub-committees established one seed bank and 53 members used seed from the seed bank. In addition to that, 130 members' families saved 7 types of traditional vegetable seeds in their house. As they used their own seeds, they have saved Tk. 52,000 (667 USD).

### **Education**

- a) In the reporting period, a total of 30 (girls-18 and boys-12) were re-enrolled in the primary school. Now those who dropped out are continuing their education now.
- b) Sub-committees identified irregularities in government fees for examination, distribution of books by the government, certificate and scholarships for the students in 13 primary and secondary schools. The sub-committee members have submitted the government circular about the amount for exam fees, exerted collective pressure upon the school management committees collectively to stop those irregularities. As a result, 3,149 students are getting the above mentioned government support. In addition to that, they also recovered and saved Tk. 1,100,000 (14,103 USD).
- c) Members of the sub-committees communicated with the school management committee and have organised 37 meetings; as a result, the school management ensured their attendance of teachers on time and the quality of education.
- d) Shalmara schools in Mithapur upazila did not comply with the government rule to assemble and hoist flag. They started the practice under collective pressure.

### **Fundamentalism**

- a) As a result of regular monitoring and initiative of sub-committees, 45 students rejected madrasa education and were admitted in the general education.
- b) The committees have successfully stopped activities of 7 Talim Kendros (*Informal Islamic Teaching centres*) conducted in different areas.
- c) 36 member families stopped contributing paddy to mosques (*Islamic prayer centre*).

### **Health**

- a) A total of 4 (w-3 and m-1) people have been nominated as members of the Community Clinic Management Committee.
- b) The committees successfully prevented 8 women from using Norplant as a contraceptive method.
- c) Around 174 landless families installed and used health friendly latrines.

- d) A total of 56 expecting mothers were admitted to hospitals during child births along with regular check-ups in the pre-delivery phase. Thus they saved Taka 51,345 (658 USD).
- e) A total of 748 landless members received proper treatment and free of cost medicine in government hospitals.

## Gender

- a) A total number of 17 child marriages were prevented by exerting collective pressure.
- b) Giving and taking of dowry was stopped in 11 marriages by exerting pressure.
- c) Approximately 122 male members have been participating in the regular domestic household work. In addition to that, landless members were made careful in terms of ensuring health, medical treatment and nutrition of women.
- d) In addition to that, the sub-committees regularly monitored the issue of violence against women. As a result, violence against women was reduced in watch committee areas, particularly within landless group members' families. As a result, 139 cases of domestic violence have been stopped.

### 3.6.4 Educational activities run by the landless organisation

Due to lack of awareness and absence of public schools in many remote areas, children of the poor families mostly start working from a very early age. The phenomenon is particularly dominant in the *char* areas. The landless groups for sometime were demanding to the government to establish schools closer to their homes, and were also active to make the parents aware of the importance of education and motivate them to send their children to schools. In several working areas of Nijera Kori, where the government response is yet to come, the landless organisations have taken the initiative to establish schools with their own resources.

## Achievements

The landless organisations conduct their education programmes through 30 primary schools, 4 junior high schools and 1 high school in Charjabbar. **Table-6**, shows the number of students enrolled-4,531 (Girl students-2,448 and Boy students-2,083)-in the reporting period. Girl's student's enrolment is 8% greater than male students. The rising enrolment of female students, particularly in the secondary and high schools in the remote areas, shows the positive impact of consciousness-raising on the necessity of and right to women's

Description	Number of students		
	Girls	Boys	Total
Primary	9,701	8,782	<b>18,483</b>
Junior high schools	712	724	<b>1,436</b>
High schools	583	511	<b>1094</b>
Total	<b>11,619</b>	<b>10,017</b>	<b>21,013</b>
<b>Total No. of students with stipend</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>623</b>

education within the landless organisation.

In the reporting period, 623 (Girl students–293 and Boy students-330) new students received government education grants of taka 100 per month (given three times in a year). The landless groups also gave Taka 117,994 from their savings as scholarship for 301 students to purchase books and other academic materials. This amount is 116% higher than last year.

On the other hand, a total of 315 students (Girl students-141 and Boy students-174) dropped-out from schools in the reporting period, as these students had to join their parents to work away from home and support their families.

The landless organisations monitor students' attendance in the schools on a regular basis. If a student stop coming to school or his/her absence from school is prolonged, the landless group members along with the school teachers organise home visits to know the situation, and if needed, to pursue the parents to send back their children to school. Assemblies are held in every school; most schools also organise sports, discussion meetings and cultural functions.

As a result of such active monitoring by both landless members and teachers, a qualitative change of school performance has been noticed. This is clearly reflected in the results. In Primary School Certificate (PCS) examination, 90% students have passed and were promoted to the Junior School Certificate (JSC) level. Also, 94% JSC students successfully passed and were promoted to the secondary education level from schools run by the landless organisation.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### **Outcome**

The key outcomes of Nijera Kori's work during 2014-15 can be categorised under four key areas:

#### **1) Social action**

Access to government services

Fighting against corruption

#### **2) Governance and accountability issues**

Representation in local level institutions

#### **3) Economic action**

Establishing rights over natural resource such as Khasland and open water bodies

#### **4) Gender issues**

Establishment of women's rights and empowerment

## 4.1 Social Action

### 4.1.1 Access to Government Services and wage bargaining

According to the Bangladesh Economic Review, 2014, 31.5 percent of the people are living below poverty. To lift them out of poverty and address their vulnerabilities, the Bangladesh government along with regular public services including education and health has undertaken several programs under a package called the "Social Safety Net Program (SSNP)". The government allocated Taka 253,713.5 million, around 11.5% of the total budget, for the SSNP in fiscal year 2014-15. In total there are about 145 programmes under 5 types of social safety net programmes. Available information shows this programmes include (i) food aid programme, (ii) cash support programme, (iii) special programme for poverty reduction, (iv) self-employment programme through micro-credit, and (v) some specific special programme for poverty alleviation. A set of criteria is used to select households to be enrolled under the SSNP. Among others, these include those who are landless or own less than 10 decimal of land; whose daily income is less than Taka 30 per head; whose debt amount is Taka 2,500 more than their savings as per financial profile; and families with destitute women and illiterate family members. However, often, due to corruption, political influence, poor monitoring and lack of co-ordination, the selection process gets distorted and the actual targeted families are denied access to the SSNP. It is reported that the poor and ultra-poor people are not getting the full benefits of the SSNP (The Financial Express, 18 June 2015). Poor people's access to these services is minimal and they are deprived of the benefits of these services. Access to safety-net and other government services could make a positive contribution in improving the quality of poor peoples' lives.

Nijera Kori, believes that enhanced access to social services could offer significant relief to the misery of the poor, and therefore provides assistance to the landless people to make them aware of their entitlements and strengthen their capacities to access the government services and establish their fundamental rights. In this pursuit, over the reporting period, Nijera Kori organised and supported a series of trainings, workshops, cultural programs and the monitoring of the SSNP by the Watch Committee of the Landless Groups. These programs significantly contributed in increasing transparency and accountability in the implementation of the SSNP. The landless organisation, in view of the RTI (Right to Information) Act, submitted 118 applications asking for detailed information regarding the selection of beneficiaries. The groups organised 250 protests and mass demonstrations against corruption and mismanagement of the SSNP. Due to such protests and demonstrations, the Union Parishad officials and other concerned authorities invited the landless group for dialogues and for submission of alternative list of beneficiaries to be included in the SSNP.

As presented in **Table-7**, during the reporting period, a total 81,229 (women: 26,070 and men: 55,158) were enrolled under the various SSNP. Of them 36,532 members received their social safety net benefit cards due to the groups' collective pressure. Of them 1,517

Description	Total Card	Women	Men	Disable	Single Women
Rajshahi	49,870	12,990	36,880	376	553
Dhaka	2,765	914	1,850	32	182
Chittagong	20,981	8902	12,078	175	568
Khulna	7,614	3,264	4,350	83	215
<b>Total</b>	<b>81,229</b>	<b>26,070</b>	<b>55,158</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>1,517</b>
<b>BDT</b>	186,294,800	41,215,725	145,079,075	1,584,450	4,126,075
<b>USD</b>	2,388,395	528,407	1,859,988	20,313	52,898

are single women and 665 people with disability. Furthermore, due to protest and demonstrations by the landless groups, 12,313 poor families who are not members of the landless groups were registered under the programme and another 36,532 ineligible names were deleted from the list of safety-net programme. This twin success gave the groups a huge moral boost and the enrolled families minimum food security for a limited period, as reflected in one single woman's words:

*"I am Shomola Begum from Gala village. I am a single woman with a family of five members. I work as a day labourer to support my family. As a day labourer, my employment is uncertain and wages are low. When I have no paid job, my family starves or survives through harvest of food from the nature. We have no access to credit or financial assistance from any source. But due to the movement of the landless group, this year I received a Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) card for two years, which ensures me 30kg rice per month. Now, at least, I can feed my children even when I do not find paid job"*

The economic value of the goods and services that is received by the beneficiaries under the SSNP is equivalent to Taka 41,215,725. Additionally, access to services and opportunities to participate in the local development activities empowered the landless group members. The above evidences clearly demonstrate the economic value of awareness building and mobilisation activities.

Across the various working divisions of Nijera Kori there, is a high degree of variance in terms of member enrolment under the SSNP. Highest number of beneficiaries is reported in the Rajshahi division, followed by Chittagong division (see Table-7 above). The reasons for the high degree of variance is because geographical coverage of Nijera Kori's work in Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions are larger compared to the other divisions. In Rajshahi, Nijera Kori covers 13 upazilas and are working with 4,722 groups with 95,960 members. Additionally, both Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions are considered more disaster prone, with many char areas that mostly inhabited by the poor.

#### **4.1.2 Fighting Against Corruption**

In Bangladesh corruption is reported as an endemic problem. According to a report of Transparency International Bangladesh, on average, 42.1% of households stated that they had to pay bribe for receiving different services of the government. The highest incidence of corruption is reported in the education sector, where 72.2% households who interacted with educational institutions for the education of family members had to pay bribes. The issue of corruption has recently been acknowledged by the government; The Finance Minister Mr. A M A Muhit stated that corruption is responsible for 2-3% of GDP loss (BdNews24.com, 9 July 2015).

The poor are the casualties of this vicious cycle of corruption. The poor's inability to pay the required bribes lead to denial of access to services, which means deprivation from government food-support, access to medical services and education. Often the desperate families sell their assets such as cows, goats, poultry and furniture to get access to these services, and in the process their economic position gradually deteriorates further.

To redress the current situation, during the reporting period, the landless organisations mobilised communities to create public opinion in establishing their rights and access to various government services. The landless organisations organised 205 collective actions, which include street protest, dialogue with concerned authorities, signature campaigning, submission of memorandum, and demonstrations by forming human chains demanding end of corruption and irregularities in the implementation of various government social welfare programs and development projects. By virtue of these public actions and close monitoring of the program delivery by the Landless Watch Committees, the groups succeeded in stopping various irregularities and corruptions in three areas, those of health, education and local *shalish* (*Alternative Dispute Resolution*). As a result, the landless members were able to ensure access to services without un-due expenditure. These successes significantly contributed in improving their economic condition. Some key success data are reported in **Table-8** below.

Due to these initiatives, the landless members benefited in two ways. Firstly, they have received government service without paying bribe, and secondly, they have successfully recovered embezzled funds from various social services.

Division and description	Saved from prevention of corruption in education sector and student stipend		Increased wages		Saved from prevention of corruption in development project as wages	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
	Rajshahi	2,079	1,776	1299	731	477
Dhaka	76	70	0	0	120	125
Chittagong	1,528	1,210	10	5	325	632
Khulna	1,015	764	0	0	50	50
Beneficiary families	4,698	3,820	1,309	736	972	2,115
<b>Total BDT</b>	<b>11,885,817</b>	<b>9,093,448</b>	<b>7,286,600</b>	<b>366,500</b>	<b>571,821</b>	<b>875,829</b>
<b>USD</b>	<b>152,382</b>	<b>116,583</b>	<b>93,418</b>	<b>4,699</b>	<b>7,331</b>	<b>11,229</b>

During the reporting period, the landless groups, through their actions against corruption, were able to save Taka 22,426,915 and also increase their wages by Taka 7,653,100 due to better implementation of development projects. This success was shared by 13,650 landless members, which means, for each member, the economic gain is nearly Taka 2,204. Establishment of their rightful claims empowered the landless groups to continue raising their voices, undertake collective actions against irregularities and corruptions, and establish a more transparent and accountable society.

## 4.2 Governance and accountability issues

### 4.2.1 Governance, Accountability and Representation in Local Bodies/Committees

Presently, at the local level development administration, the Members of the Parliament (MPs) have an oversight role, but often this role extends beyond 'oversight' and almost all of the local committees are constituted in consultation with the MPs and/or individuals with strong political connections. Therefore, actual community representation is under challenge. This weakness is recognised and currently being addressed in the Seventh Fifth Year Plan of Bangladesh. It is anticipated that the plan will propose a fresh approach to decentralisation and local governance structure of Bangladesh.



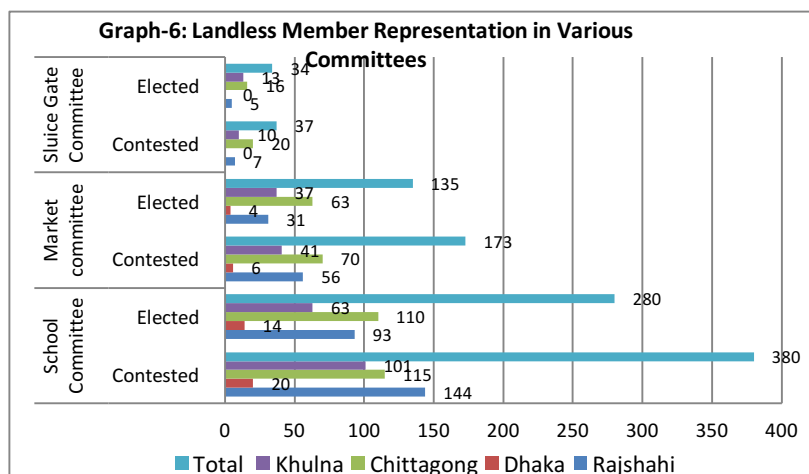
There are a number of policy documents pertaining to the constitution of local government institutions and other relevant committees with representation of the people. For example, school committees are formed in accordance to 2009 notification of the Ministry of Education; market committee, per Hat-Bazar Nitimala, 2011; sluice/water management committees as per the Participatory Water Management Rules, 2014 of the Ministry of Water Resources. These Committees are mostly composed of 12-13 members who are elected annually.

Engagement in these committees offers excellent opportunities to the landless organisations to establish their leadership and get trained in democratic participatory decision making processes. In view of this, during the reporting period, the landless organisation participated in the election of the local government institutions and other relevant committees such as school, market, sluice gate committees. Nijera Kori provided training and organised workshops to make the landless members aware of the existing policies and regulations for governing local government institutions and relevant committees and their functions. The landless cultural team played an important role in creating a strong public opinion for a transparent election system. The landless organisation in consultation with their local allies selected their candidates and participated in the election of different committees. A short account of these is presented below.

#### 4.2.2 Participation in Election of Various Local Committees

During the reporting period, a total of 590 group members (170 women, of whom 23 were single women, and 420 men) contested against the local powerful elite in the election of the school, market and sluice gate management committees (see **Annex Table 18.**) Of the 590 candidates from the landless groups, 449 got elected. Among the candidates who got elected 113 were women (8 single women), and 336 men. This gives a success rate of 76%; for women the, rate being 66.5% and for men, 80%.

Again, as reported in Graph 6, the electoral success of landless groups in terms of their representations in local committees varies. The highest success rate, of 79%, is recorded for the Sluice Gate Management Committee, followed by the Market Committee (78%), and then the School Committee 73.7%.



It is also evident from the data (see **Graph-6**) that in the School Committee election, the highest number of members who participated in Rajshahi division, the second highest in Chittagong division, the third, in Khulna, and lastly, Dhaka division.

The rate of those elected in Rajshahi was 65%; Dhaka, 70%; Chittagong, 96%; and Khulna, 62%. On the other hand, in the

Market Management Committee election, the highest number of members participated in Chittagong, second in Rajshahi, third in Khulna, and the lowest in Dhaka.

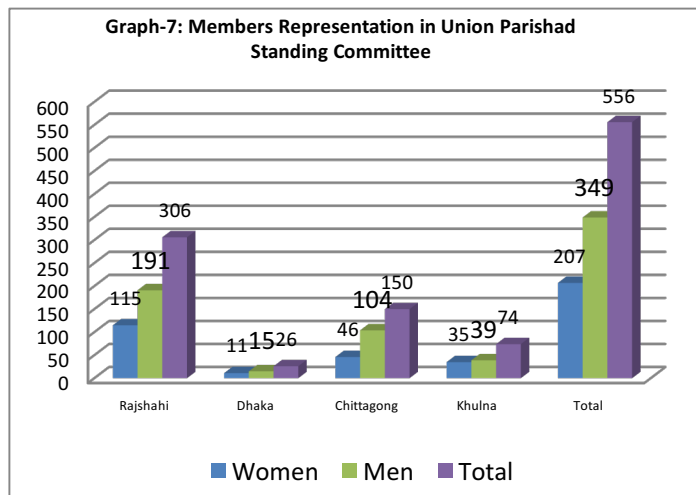
The rate of elected in Rajshahi was 55%; Dhaka, 67%; Chittagong, 90%; and Khulna, 90%. Finally, in the Sluice Gate Management Committee election, the highest number of members participated in Chittagong, second in Khulna and third in Rajshahi. The rate of elected in Rajshahi was 71%; Chittagong, 80%; and Khulna, 81%. It is to be noted that, 4 (women: 1 and men: 3) landless members were nominated in the Sugarcane Sale Centre Management Committee in Natore district.

#### 4.2.3 Representation in UP Standing Committee through Nomination as Members

An effective local governance mechanism plays a critical role in ensuring improved service delivery to citizens. The Union Parishad (UP) is the lowest level of local government institution. Recently the government decided to establish various standing committees (SCs) to enhance the UPs service delivery capacities, and to ensure transparency and people's participation in decision making. In the UP, there are 13 Standing Committees, all of them selected for one year. The Standing Committee composed of 5-7 members, is lead by an elected Councillor. The Standing Committee is empowered to co-opt additional members, but such members do not have voting rights. The SC meets once every two months, but emergency meetings can be arranged any time. The core functions of the SC consist of monitoring the activities of service providers and solicit feedback from the general masses to assess their needs and priorities; give planning support to the service delivery providers and monitor the implementation process, and provide regular reports to the UP about the activities of the committee (cf. *Local Government Division (2012), Union Parishad Operation Manual*).

But in reality, often representation of local communities in the UP Standing Committee is decided by the influence of power, which excludes the poor. The landless organisations closely monitor the functioning of the SCs and organises public advocacy to promote transparency through signature campaigning and submission of memorandum to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (Upazila Executive Officer) on the roles and functioning of the different UP Standing Committees. As a result of this, during the reporting period, the Upazila administration has taken initiatives to reorganise several Standing Committees and included the landless members in the UP Standing Committees.

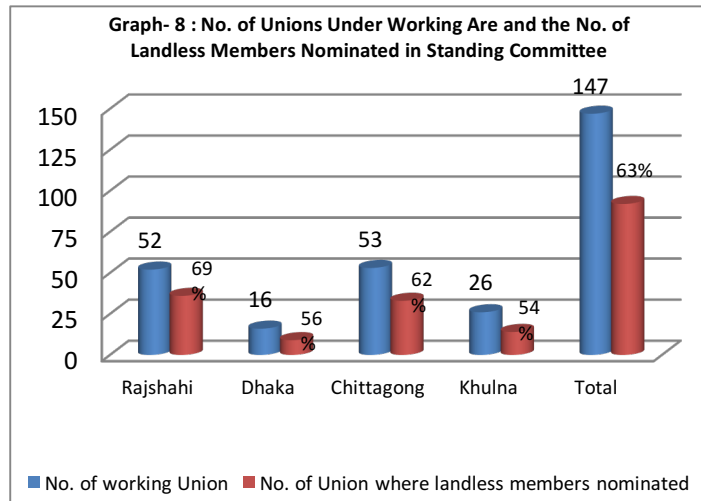
Due to the re-organisation of the UP Standing Committees, 556 landless members (207 women and 349 men) were nominated in 92 Union Parishad Standing Committees.



This makes the women's participation rate 37% (see Graph 7). Out of a total of 207 nominated women, 21 are single women. The highest numbers of landless members nominated in the UP Standing Committees were in the Rajshahi division - amounting for 55% of the total nominated members. The second highest is reported in Chittagong division, 27% of the total, followed by Khulna division with 13% and Dhaka division with 5%.

When the data on the landless member representation in the UP SC is compared with the total working area of Nijera Kori, it appears that the landless groups succeeded in securing positions in the SC in 63% (92 out of 147) of the Unions under the working area (see **Graph-8**).

The participation of landless members per working division stands at 69% in Rajshahi division; 62% in Chittagong; 56% in Dhaka division; and 54% in Khulna division. The data clearly demonstrate the dynamic changes that are taking place in the management of the local government institutions, the acceptance of the leadership of landless groups, and their empowerment. This representation of the landless organisations in the local power structure has restored some degree of balance in the distribution of power. The representation of landless members also created an avenue through which the landless organisation can fight against corruption, the irregularities of government administration, and the traditional political and social power structure. Due to this change, the landless organisation can now articulate their opinions in the committees and also claim their rights. This marks an important indicator of the landless organisations' power, and the move towards transparency and accountability in running the affairs of the local government institutions.



#### 4.2.4 Participation in Shalish as Judge and Observer

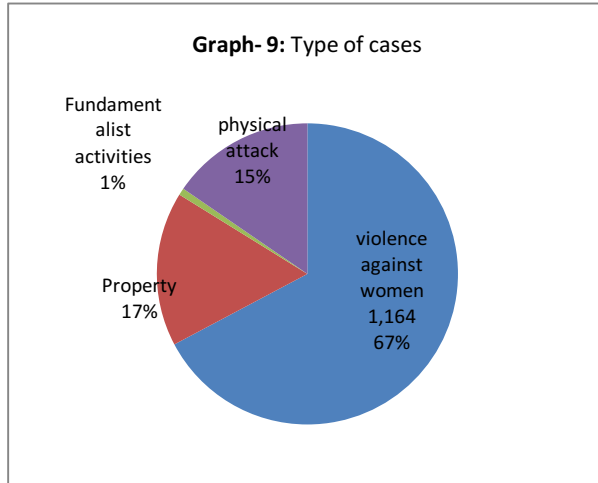
The *shalish* (*Alternative Dispute Resolution*) plays a very important role in resolving small-scale civil and criminal disputes and has now emerged as a social institution. Though *shalish* is recognised by the state as a mediation body, it has no legal standing, and its verdict with reference to criminal cases, marriage, and dowry disputes are not acknowledged by the Court of Law. Generally, a *shalish* is conducted by local leaders who command respect. But since 1990, *shalish* has been dominated and/or controlled by the local politically powerful groups. Consequently, in many cases the victims did not get justice.

According to a TIB report, about 51% of households covered under its study reported that they experienced irregularities during *shalish* administered by the Union Parishad. In another study, 70% of respondents stated that this local dispute resolution process is unable to ensure a level playing ground for both parties involved in the judiciary process, while 30% opined that it has a positive or strong role. (*The Role of Union Parishad in Rural Dispute Resolution in Bangladesh: An Evaluation in the Light of People's Perception*). The studies noted above suggest that the victims did not get justice from the *shalish*.

In view of the above, to ensure justice, the landless organisations are increasingly becoming more active within their working areas and started monitoring the *shalish* process and its outcomes. The landless members participate as observers in the *shalish*, and when they notice irregularities or nepotism they create collective pressure on the judges.

In cases where criminal offences are negotiated through *shalish*, the landless groups intervene, call for the community's participation to stop *shalish*, and take the matter to a formal court for ensuring justice. In several instances, the landless group members are also invited to join the *shalish* as judges along with the powerful people.

In the reporting period, landless group members participated in 1,731 *shalish* for resolution of different issues. Of the total 1,731, in 77% or 1,333 *shalish*, the landless group members played the role of judges along with the local leaders, while the other 23% were conducted solely by the members. In the 1,731 *shalish* in which the landless group members participated as judges, 67% of cases were regarding violence against women; 17% concerning land property disputes; 16% about illegal physical attacks; and 1% on fundamentalist activities (see **Graph-9**).

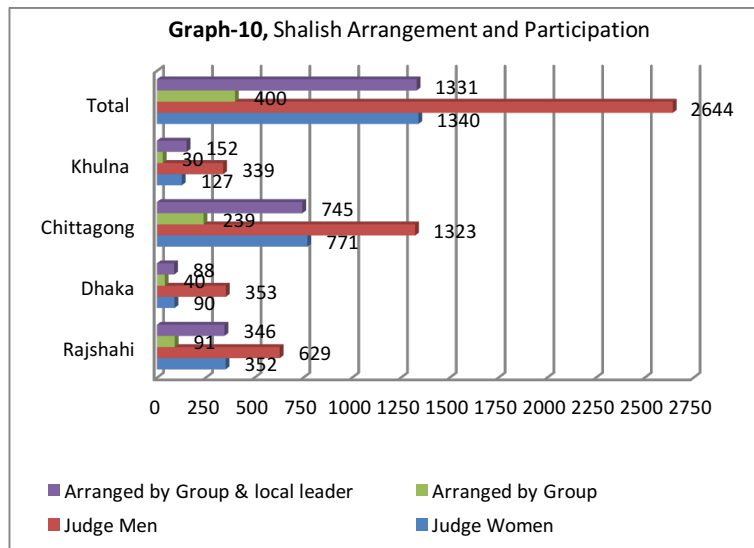


of cases were regarding violence against women; 17% concerning land property disputes; 16% about illegal physical attacks; and 1% on fundamentalist activities (see **Graph-9**).

In addition to their role as judges, the landless members played an important role in monitoring the cases. As reported in the annex **Table-19**, during the reporting period, 25,528 members (women: 9,652 and men: 15,876) were involved in monitoring and they were present as observers during the *shalish*. Participation of landless members as observers

by division are as follows: Chittagong, 51%; Rajshahi, 36%; Khulna, 10%; and Dhaka, 3%. Due to active engagement of the landless members in the *shalish*, 53 criminal cases were not entertained by the *shalish* but referred to a formal Court of Law.

A total 3,984 members (women: 1,340 and men: 2,644) participated as judges in *shalish*. Participation of landless members as judges by division is- Chittagong, 53%; Rajshahi, 25%, Khulna, 12%; and Dhaka, 11% (see **Graph-10**). As a result of participation of landless group members, 1,520 cases were successfully settled in favour of the real victim. Through the *shalish*, the landless organisation could recover Taka 3,889,003; mainly on account of dowry payment; cost of family maintenance treatment cost; and wage compensation.



## 4.3 Economic Action

### 4.3.1 Access to Natural Resources (Khasland and Open Water Bodies Owned by the Government)

In Bangladesh, 47% of the labour force depends on agriculture for their primary livelihood (Bangladesh Economic Review, 2014). Thus, for rural population, access to land and open water bodies is of crucial importance to ensure employment and living. However, Bangladesh is a land-scarce country, and a large number of people have no ownership or access of land which they could cultivate. According to the national Agriculture Census of 2008 conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 58.55% of the total 28,695,000 households were landless, and this number is gradually increasing.

The landless families can only have access to land through tenancy market or distribution program of the government owned Khasland. According to available statistics, there are 2.5 million acres of Khasland and 0.8 million acres of government owned water bodies. The government of Bangladesh have formulated several policies to distribute Khasland and water bodies to the landless poor. However, due to lack of effective policy enforcement, landless households' access to natural resources remains limited. According to a study, of the total 830,356 acres of Khasland and water bodies available, only 5% have been distributed among the poor (Barakat, 2004, p. 3). Again, when the poor receive Khasland under the government redistribution program, they can hardly retain control over the land. Thus, ensuring poor people's access to natural resources remains a major policy challenge for the government.

In this backdrop, Nijera Kori is extending its services to the landless organisations to establish their rights over Khasland. During the reporting period, Nijera Kori conducted trainings and workshops to raise awareness and mobilise support for implementation of the laws in establishing rights of the landless people over the Khasland. Such programs also contributed in developing alliances with organisations and professional groups at the local, regional and national levels in support of the landless people's demand for Khasland.

These greatly helped in launching strong collective movements. In the reporting period, 240 collective public demonstrations/marches were organised under the leadership of the landless organisations. The landless cultural groups performed during these marches. Additionally, 2,018 dialogues with relevant authorities and submission of memorandum were organised. The Right to Information Act and support from the media was sought for collecting information. All these actions contributed to create a positive enabling environment for the landless people to demand their rights over the Khasland. However, due to unwarranted political instability created by the opposition on the question of the 5<sup>th</sup> January parliamentary election, the process slowed down and the movement could not realise the results expected. In the section below some key outcomes of the movements are noted.

The landless members, through the movement, succeeded in obtaining information and eventually clearly demarcating 873 acres of Khasland. Of this amount, in the reporting period, the landless groups secured ownership over 43 acres, registered it in favour of 225 landless families, and took physical possession over the rest of the 830 acres pending registration. The groups also recovered 262 acres of water bodies from illegal occupation of powerful elites and made these water bodies open to all as common property resources (for details, see **Table-9**).

	<b>Khas Land and Water Bodies (Acres)</b>							<b>Economic Value</b>		
	Reg. of Khas land	Posse. of Khas land	Poss. of W.B	Rec. land from Shrimp Farm	Rec. land of Farmers from illegal Occupiers	Rec. Inheritance Property in favour of women	Total	Bene. Household	BDT	USD
Rajshahi	6	10	16		10	3	45	559	31,962,000	415,091
Dhaka					2	1	3	3	1,710,000	22,208
Chittagong	33	790	7		14	2	846	1809	350,107,000	4,546,844
Khulna	4	30	239	10	3	1	287	2602	54,529,900	708,181
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1,181</b>	<b>4,973</b>	<b>438,308,900</b>	<b>5,692,323</b>
Reg-Registration, Posse- Possession, Rec- Recovering, Bene-Beneficiary, EV- Economic Value, WB- Water Bodies										

Additionally, the landless organisation successfully recovered 46 acres of private agricultural land and water bodies, which were illegally occupied by individuals of vested groups. Among the recovered land, 10 acres were under occupation of shrimp-lords, and the rest were farmland. 29 acres of agricultural land recovered belongs to marginal farmers and 7 acres of land were inherited by women, but was under occupation of the male members of their families.

The economic value of these resources is equal to Taka 438,308,900. This gives the landless members some degree of empowerment in economic terms, opening up possibilities for them to use the land resources to ensure employment and earn extra income. From the data presented in **Table-9**, it is evident that the success was highest in Chittagong division. The division being the coastal belt of Bangladesh with large tracts of Khas char land – the success was expected. On the other hand, the coastal belt of Khulna division, where commercial shrimp farming is in practice, and the illegal occupation of marginal and small farmers' land is a common story, recovery of land from illegal occupation remains an issue to protest against and organise movements for recovery.

As a result, of this movement for establishing land-rights, it can be stated that 4,973 landless families are benefited in terms of food security, and have access to or are regaining ownership of natural resources. This has also created possibilities for these households to contribute more in sustaining the organisations that gave them these opportunities.

#### **4.3.2 Sustainable Economic Empowerment through Utilisation of Natural Resources**

Through collective farming, landless families have secured control over possession on Khasland and water bodies and in turn increased their food security. In the reporting period, the landless group members cultivated rice, pulse and vegetables in the Khasland. They obtained necessary food for consumption and sold the excess amount of the production for extra income. As a result of successful recovery of open water bodies, not only the landless members but also the community were able to start fishing. This is a strong indication of increase food security and opportunity to extra income for landless families. This has been the direct result of these landless farmers being able to utilise the opportunities when they were able to achieve better access to natural resources (both Khasland and open water bodies).



*When I was a young school student, I used to catch fish from the Maravadra River. Then it was illegally grabbed. All of the communities lost access to open water bodies. As individuals, no one could claim their rights. The landless organisation recovered the Maravadra because they were organized. Now, around 3,000 families are able catch fish and meet their family needs.*

*Mostain Gazee, Nokhathi, Dumuria*

Recovery of water bodies is an alternative source of income for landless families through fishing and vegetable cultivation in dry season. After meeting their own consumption needs, they sell the remaining fish and vegetables in the market. All of these activities significantly contributes to the sustainable economic empowerment through the gradual increase of income of the landless members and make them able to re-cultivate the land for agricultural production.

**Table-10** shows that the economic value of agriculture produce such as paddy, pulse and vegetables is equal to Tk.

Description	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Khulna	Chittagong	Total
Paddy production	7,895	0	658	34,389	42,942
Pulse production	1,550	0	46	293	1,889
Fish production	155	0	0	286	441
Vegetables production (taka)	50,745,660	184,750	2,600,960	14,141,880	67,673,250
Beneficiary families	17,984	232	10,977	10,790	39,983
Economic Value BDT	59,453,660	304,750	4,742,840	10,977	100,259,960
USD	772,125	3,958	61,595	39,983	1,302,077

100,259,960. This way, a total of 39,983 families were benefited by using Khasland and water bodies collectively and achieved economic empowerment. They also spent a smaller amount of money on buying food for their families since they could fulfil their daily food requirements with their own production. This indicates a sustainable economic empowerment and reduce their vulnerability induced by resource scarcity.

#### 4.4 Gender issues

##### 4.4.1 Women's Empowerment and Establishment of Women's Rights

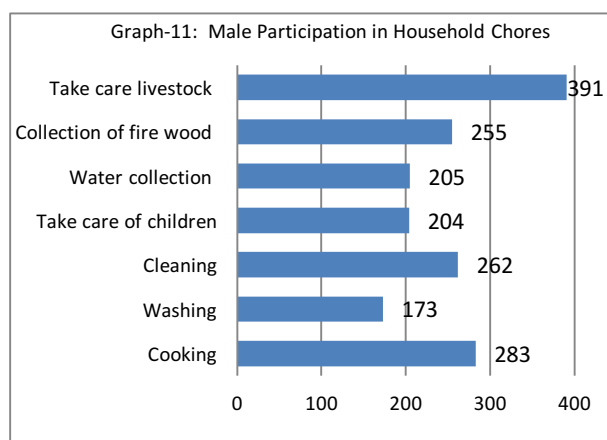
In Bangladesh there are a number of special legislations to address domestic violence against women, but implementation of these legislations is weak. According to a survey conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) in 2013, 87% of married women experienced violence from their husbands. A study conducted by the Bangladesh National Human Rights Commission noted that 62% of women were beaten by their husbands and family members, and of them only 18% had availed of the justice system, while 30% did not take any legal step since violence is considered a family matter. The national survey on child marriage conducted by Plan Bangladesh and ICDDR-B in 2013 shows that Bangladesh has one of the highest rates of child marriages in the world. According to this survey, 66% of girls get married before the age of 18, and over one third of the girls are married before the age of 15. The study also noted that progress towards elimination of child marriage is slow.

Nijera Kori and the landless organisation recognise that gender inequalities are socially constructed and that in a context like that of Bangladesh, women's empowerment requires transformation of current political and social relations, and control over economic resources. Nijera Kori's work therefore focuses to enhance women's dignity and to improve their access to

and control over resources. The impact of Nijera Kori's work is assessed based on four indicators as discussed in the sections below.

#### 4.4.2 Changes Within the Household

Gender relations within the household is an important aspect to consider in order to change the patriarchal social values and norms. In this context, Nijera Kori and the landless organisation encourage women and men to work together, and carry out a structured program of sensitising men's groups alongside women's group. This has created some space for women to establish better rights within the home. In many cases, women reported positive changes in their relationships with husbands in terms of increased mutual respect, caring and co-operation and a decline in domestic violence, and spoke of better participation in the household decision making process.



According to our data (see **Graph-11**), 1,773 landless male members reported on their participation in domestic work including; cleaning the house, taking care of children, and helping with cooking and washing. 1,860 landless member families reported that presently family decisions are taken through mutual discussions between the men and women. This indicates an increasing level of respect and acceptance of women in the society. This is a much desired healthy change of the societal norms.

#### 4.4.3 Women Leadership Within Landless Organisation

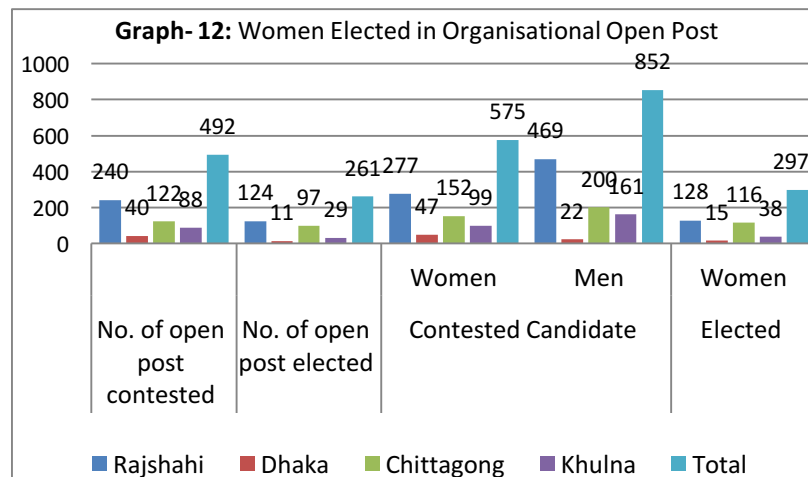
Nijera Kori and the landless organisations recognise that developing collective leadership of women and men within the organisation is a challenge which needs to be addressed seriously. Participation of women in mobilisation, meetings and all other activities demonstrate active participation of women, but their voice is still not heard as expected and their leadership is undermined. Therefore, to encourage women's leadership, landless organisations and Nijera Kori adopted a two-pronged strategy. Firstly, in both female and male group meetings, women's issues were given high priority in the discussions. Secondly, trainings and workshops on leadership development were organised particularly on women issues. Issues and concepts such as gender, patriarchy, women's right, violence against women etc. were included in the cultural activities and legal trainings.

Furthermore, in the membership of committees at various levels (village, union, upazila, anchal etc.) 50% seats are kept reserved for women, but to be elected by both female and male members' votes. For the rest of the seats, women members are encouraged to contest as well.

During the reporting period, in the election of the committee's open seats (posts for which both women and men members are eligible to contest), 575 women members contested against 852

male members, and 297 women were elected in 297 open posts. The rate of women's success in the election to the committee is 52%.

Data presented in **Graph-12** also shows that the highest number of women's participation in the election and success was in Rajshahi division, followed by Chittagong division.



and success was in Rajshahi division, followed by Chittagong division. The higher rates of women's participation in the election is a testimony of value changes within the landless organisation in terms of acceptance of women's leadership. This is another milestone of enhanced women's leadership. It is worth noting that among the elected women members, 11 are from the indigenous communities.

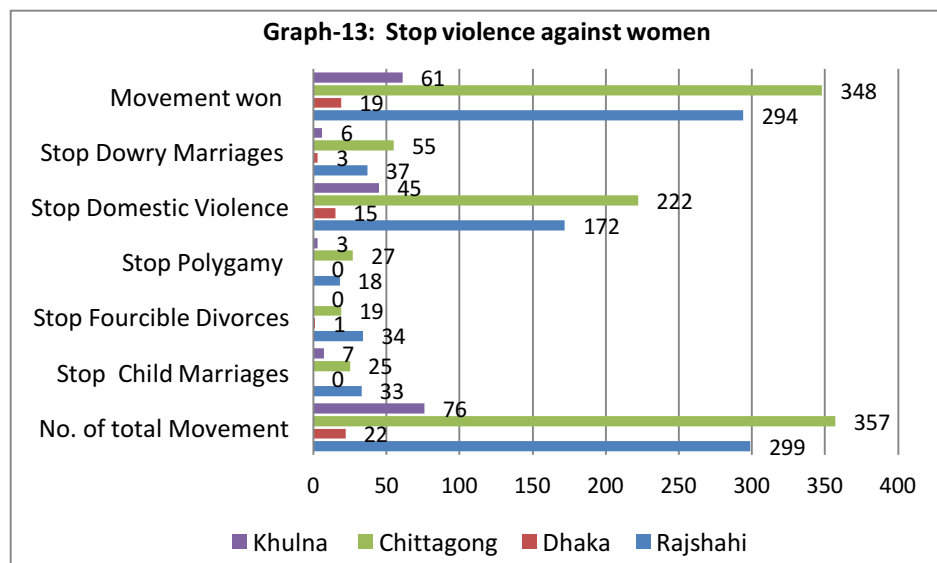
Acceptance of ethnic minorities in the leadership position is another signal of positive change. Interestingly in some cases, established male committee members have been defeated by the emerging women leaders due to their commitment to the organisation as explained by Shikha Rani below.

*I am Shikha Rani. I was a general member of the landless group. This year (2014-2015), I contested for the post of Secretary of Shibpur Village Committee against Abdul Latif, who was the incumbent Secretary of the committee. There was very strong competition in the election. But, I was elected as the Secretary of the village committee. This was possible due to my active involvement in different mobilisation programs of the organisation and my positive image as a committed member.*

#### 4.4.4 Raising Collective Voice and Encouraging Participation of Men in Movements to Stop Violence Against Women

The landless organisation, through regular group meetings, monitor incidents of violence against women within the landless groups and the society. Furthermore, the landless 'Watch Subcommittee on Gender' carries out its own monitoring within the working area. The cultural activities play a crucial role to address the issue of violence against women. Consequently, more and more women now raise their voices against violence. This break in the culture of silence is a positive change. In the reporting period, the landless group has actively resisted violence against women in two ways – firstly, by organising collective mobilisation to stop violence on women; and secondly, by monitoring and participating in the *shalish* to ensure justice and establish women's rights through legal actions.

Analysis of data presented in the **Annex Table-22** shows that, in the reporting period, a total of 754 movements on violence against women were organised collectively. This is 6% more than the previous year. Among these, in 722 of the movements (95%), the landless organisations were successful in achieving their demands. It is worth noting that out of the total 754 movements, 251



movements were initially started by male landless groups.

Due to these movements (as illustrated in **Graph-13**), 65 child marriages were stopped; 101 dowry marriages were avoided; 54 irrational divorces were prevented; 48 polygamy issues brought to justice; and 621 case of domestic violence were stopped.

Nayan Miya narrates what impacts the landless organisations have had on the violence against women.

*I am Nayan Miya, married with two children. Since my marriage, I have beaten my wife almost daily. My wife at one point complained to the landless organisation about my behaviour and I was asked by the landless group to appear before the shalish. I was advised to change my behaviour. I listened to the judgement, but continued to the habit of beating as I did not see anything wrong in doing so. After a period, I was convinced by the landless leader Monowara Begum to join the landless group. Upon joining the group, due to group counselling and group discussions, I realised beating of wife is an inhuman activity and does not bolster my male status. I stopped beating my wife and now our family relation is much better than before. We now take our food together with our children. They are also very happy and I see the smile on their face. I feel guilty for my past behaviour*

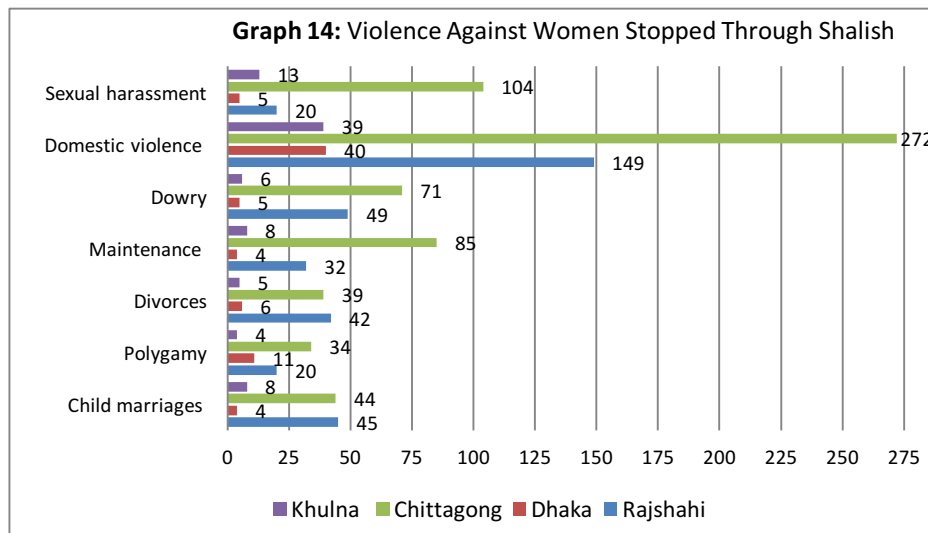
*Nayan Miya, age 45 of Nurpur village*

#### 4.4.5 Ensuring Justice and Access to Inheritance Property

Unequal social and economic structures (based on class and gender) is one of the major obstacles towards ensuring women's right and empowerment. On the other hand, political use of religion also often undermines women's rights. Therefore, violation of women's rights in rural Bangladesh seems to be on the increasing trend. To redress this, Nijera Kori and the landless organisation emphasise on the power of collective mobilisation describes above. In the reporting period, the landless organisations devoted specific attention to ensuring justice and the establishment of the right inheritance of property. A total of 36 collective mobilisations were organised for realising inheritance property rights. As result of these, 29 women got the title of 6.31 acres of land which was till then under the possession of their male family members.

Additionally, during the reporting period, the landless organisation has conducted 1,731 *shalish*, (*Alternative Dispute Resolution*) of which 1,164 were related to women's rights and violence on women.

**Graph-14** shows the types of cases addressed during the reporting period. 11% of them are on issues of dowry; 8% related to divorces; 6% on polygamy; 9% related to child marriages; 43% on domestic violence; 11% on the claiming of maintenance allowances; and 12% on sexual harassment. Of the 1,164 *shalish* related to women's right and violence against women, 1,025 cases were resolved in favour of the women.



cases were resolved in favour of the women.

Further 37 *shalishes* 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 *shalish* system. Out of these, 23 cases were

filed in a formal court. The rate of legal action taken by the landless groups is 62%. Due to the support and co-operation given by the landless groups, women victims were able to file cases against the culprits in the formal court and thus, were able to access justice.

**Table:11: Recovery Amount from Shalish and Value of Inheritance**

Description	Taka	USD	Beneficiary
Recover treatment cost, dowry and maintenance allowances	3,046,000	39,051	1,164
Value of inheritance property	3,155,000	40,449	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,201,000</b>	<b>79,500</b>	<b>1,193</b>

**Table 11:** shows that, the economic value of inheritance property recovered due to proper justice is equivalent to Taka 6,201,000. This shows the economic value of awareness

building and mobilisation activities.

#### **4.4.6 State Recognition of Contribution Made by Women Landless Members and Recognition of Leadership**

The 'Joyeeta Onneshone Bangladesh' is a national program initiated by the Women Affairs Department of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Government of Bangladesh. The program gives awards to five women in five categories from each of the seven administrative divisions of Bangladesh. The five categories are: successful mothers; education and service; overcoming repression; role in social development; and becoming economically self-reliant. Joyeeta Onneshone Bangladesh, has had a tremendous impact on the society. Grassroots women have responded well to the initiative, and the program is considered as a positive indicator of women's empowerment. Recognition via the Joyeeta award further encourages women to face various challenges more confidently and become role models for the society.

In the reporting period, 7 women landless members were selected for the Joyeeta award. Two of them were recognised in the category for development in society; one in the successful mother category; two for economic success; one for erasing the trauma of violence against women and starting a new life; and finally one in the education and service category. All of them were honoured by the government through official ceremony. This recognition of landless women members by the family, society and the government is extremely positive and encourages more women to take part in the development process. One of the Joyeeta, Basona Khatun, narrates her feelings:

*"My name is Basona Khatun. My parents died when I was a child. I grew-up with my aunt. I worked as a domestic servant from a young age. In 1996 when, I had just reached puberty my employer Kayum started to abuse me and I was forced into a physical relation. I became pregnant. When I broke this news to my employer and also to my aunt, they refused to take any responsibility. I took shelter in an abandoned land that was used as a graveyard before, and sought help from the landless groups. I filed a case in the court with the support of the group. Thanks to the court's intervention, my employer was obliged to marry me. After marriage, he used to beat me and finally had planned to kill me. I asked for separation and joined the landless group. With the help of the landless group I started a small business as a vendor. This became my new profession and means of livelihood. It was not easy, I continue my struggle for survival, and am committed to support my daughter's education. Time has passed, my daughter, Tamanna is now a student of Bachelor of Arts. In 2014 the landless group proposed my name for the Joyeeta award under the 'overcoming repression' category. I was selected as Joyeeta at the upazila and district level. My struggle and leadership is now recognised by the government. The strength that helped me overcome my struggles and helped my success is the landless organisation."*



## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5.1 Administration and Finance

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 (*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, Upazilla and area 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 become part of the decision making process, by participating in these meetings. Later on, they share experiences in Nijera Kori's internal meetings/forums as per the 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.

#### 5.1.1 Staff strength

**a)** A total of 23 (w-10 and men-13) employee joined the organisation in the reporting period. On the other hand, a total number of 118 employees (w-40 and m-78) left the organisation. The total number of staff working in Nijera Kori in March 2015 was 261(w-100 and m-161). It should be mentioned that 65 employees (w-10 and m-55) are performing their duties as service staff.

#### 5.1.2 Statement of Financial Accounts

During the reporting April 2014 - March 2015 Nijera Kori received financial assistance totaling BDT 48,079,979.00 from different partner organisations. The total amount of the money spent during the reporting period was BDT 62,784,656.00.

## 5.2 Annexes

### Case study-1

#### Space for women as traders in the village market

##### Context

Noai and darun Mollick are two adjacent villages in the Deluti union under Paikgacha upazila. In the middle of these two villages in 2013 a weekly “Noai-Darun Mollick Milonia Hat” has been established. The hat sits on every Monday. In the rural Bangladesh such hats are normally the place for men both as buyers and sellers. But in the case of Noai-Darun Mollick Milonia Hat few women decided to participate in the hat as buyers and sellers, but they were denied permission by the market committee citing “social norms and values” as the deciding principles of participation.

##### Women pursued their rights

The women were persistent to establish their rights, and discussed the issues in their group meetings. Nijera Kori staff declared their support to the groups' cause and facilitated. Discussions on women's roles in production, decision-making over selling of assets, access to the market, control over finance and related other topics. Given the fact that the two villages are large in area and population size, they acknowledged that the religious leaders and influential rich could pose challenges to their demand. In anticipation of this on 23 April, 2014 the group leaders organized a representative meeting and decided to form a coordination committee of 11 members (6 women and 5 men) to represent the groups in negotiating their position with the market committee and the village leaders. This committee had a meeting with the market management committee. The market committee repeated the same old arguments and made reference to social norm, women's dignity, religion and reiterated their decisions on non-participation of the women in the market. .

##### Women decided to go for defiance and challenge the market committee.

On the last Monday of May, 2014, the women came to the market to sell their vegetables. They were not bared from joining but were teased by people from both the villages. A group of businessmen mostly whole seller who acts as a middlemen through collecting vegetables from door to door to sell in the market, started to mislead people about the participation of women in the market citing the religious barrier, social value and chances to increase of insecurity of women if they participate in activities outside their home. These business men basically are also afraid to lose their monopoly access in the market. Some of the landless farmers cultivated their land as share croppers. The land owners threatened the landless members to surrender the land. On the other hand, influential social leader Zihad Mia told two female sellers Sunita and Sandharani that, “there is no norm in society for women to go to market. Society will not accept this norm. Hence, stop your business and sit at home”. Hearing of this, the husbands and children of Ranuka Mandal, Anowara, Sharifa Begum, Noorjahan, Mahmuda and Shakhina forbade them from going to market.

In these situation women sellers' coordinating committee discussed the matter with the chairman of Deluti Union Parishad. He assured the women sellers his full support. To tackle the situation a dialogue opinion sharing meeting was arranged on 11 June. It was attended by Union Parishad, Market Committee, teachers, assistant agriculture officer and women sellers coordinating committee members. In this meeting, a few proposals were adopted unanimously. Within the next two weeks Deluti Union Parishad *haat* and the committee would work together to create an atmosphere for the women sellers.

For this purpose a few steps would be undertaken, such as ensuring congenial atmosphere and discipline in the market, ensuring respect, security to women and assigning a separate place for women. Despite this agreement, still a separate place for women sellers has not been available as yet. Women sellers sit with men to sell their produce.

### **Result**

Following the reconciliation meeting, 6 women started to join the market with their product. Gradually more women joined as a seller in the market. . In the activity year, the number women seller has increased from 6 to 30. More women now interested to enter in the market with their product. Participation of women reduces their entire economic dependency on their husband and they become able to share household expenses with their husband. Along with economic empowerment, as a result of getting access into the market, women who are known as a seller, their participation in decision making process and acceptance as a women leader in family and social level has established.

***“Now I can decide what food we eat, often buy food by my own income, me and my husband together decides about education of our children, even in the salish or any other social event, participants ask me to express my opinion, they count my word”-Rita Rani Mondal, seller of organic agriculture product.***

However, it is found that the number of organic vegetable buyers is less than hybrid product. Moreover, womens are compelled to sell their vegetables at a lower price as hybrid vegetable price is lower than organic vegetable. Furthermore, the backward geographical location make more difficulties to sell their product in due price as Deluti Union which is known as polder 22 is isolated by the river surrounded by all sides. As transport condition is not good, they cannot sell their organic paddy, vegetables, pulses and fruits in the market outside their local market. Currently, ensure due price of their product is the only struggle of women seller.

### **Case study-2**

#### **Access to Water-bodies- Integral to the Lives and Livelihoods of the Landless**

##### **Water-bodies and the life and livelihood of ordinary people:**

The main river in Khulna is Bhadra. Presently a small portion of the River is known as Morabhadra. Twenty one kilometers of the Morabhadra River flow through Bhandpara and Shahash, located in Dumuria Upazilla. Catching fish in the river has been one of the main sources of livelihood for the local people. In twenty-two villages in that area, fishermen and landless people depend mainly on Morabhadra River for their livelihoods. They also depend on this river for transportation.

**Morabhadra did not die in a day:**

Per law, access to rivers is free for all as it is a natural asset. The law has ensured the right to access to rivers for all citizens. In violation of these laws, this portion of Bhadra has been illegally occupied for a long time for commercial cultivation of shrimp. This encroachment has caused this river to gradually lose its flow. As a result, it has largely dried up down to a small stream, for this reason people call this portion of the River Morabhadra.

**New technique to occupy the river:**

The local influential people have successfully occupied the river. Though they were businessmen, officials and politicians; they showed their occupation as fishermen and registered in the cooperative office as "Nolghona Fishermen Cooperative Society Ltd". They successfully acquired registration papers, despite the illegality of their project, from the cooperative office. Accordingly, they were able to corrupt government officials to alter official documents, changing the Morabhadra from a river to a closed water body. In July 2014, the local influential people secured their lease of the Morabhadra River from the Government.

**Through embankment, the river has been turned into a pond:**

These influential people, by dividing nearly two kilometers of river bank covering 9 villages into small portions and by erecting crisscross screens, have turned the Morabhadra into fish cultivation fields. As a result, the people of the area have been deprived from catching fish in the river though it was their sole occupation. About 3,000 families' livelihood has currently become uncertain. They have been forced to seek alternate livelihoods; many former fishermen have been pressured into work as rickshaw pullers in Khulna town. Women have to fetch water for their daily use from a distant place, compounding their insecurity. There have already been many reported instances of women's persecution in the shrimp cultivation areas.

**Landless organization became active against these irregularities:**

After taking the opinions of landless members from all the villages, a strategy for activity and its actual implementation was determined. To cancel the lease of the open river a memorandum with more than two hundred signatures was submitted to the district administrator. On 29<sup>th</sup> August, when the Minister visited the area, nearly one hundred landless people met him and demanded access to Morabhadra River. The honorable Minister gave assurance to take necessary action.

Despite these promises, no follow-up action was taken. The lease owners exerted influence from the background, putting pressure on local administration and a certain high official to ensure no action was taken against their illegal exploitation of this resource.

In response, the landless people drummed up public support in the locality to cancel the lease. On 12<sup>th</sup> September, the landless organization organized an opinion-sharing meeting with local people, including locally elected representatives and professionals. After taking everybody's opinion a 15 member committee was formed: "Movement For Opening Morabhadra Committee". The landless organization continued to organize meetings and gatherings to press their demand. At one point in each village a strong opinion was created for cancelling the lease. The committee met the State Minister and demanded cancellation of the lease. They forced him to take a stand on this controversial issue.

### **Public pressure drives a compromise with the administration:**

The lease owners made attempts to intimidate and harass the landless members. They even influenced the administration and arranged security for Morabhadra project by employing 60-70 persons as private security force.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> September, the District Administrator sat with the landless organization to discuss the cancellation of the lease of the Morabhadra. He assured that by 27<sup>th</sup> September a decision would be taken about the lease. On the demand of the landless organization, the Upazilla Nirbahi Officer (UNO) was scheduled to come to the locality in the evening to announce the district administration decision to the general public. But when the District Administrator failed to come to a decision by the deadline he had set, the landless organization's leaders again met him on 28<sup>th</sup> September. He said that, later on, he would convey his decision through the UNO. In response, cultural activities were arranged by the landless group to sustain public opinion in favor of cancellation of the lease. At one point, nearly 90% of the people of the locality expressed their opinion in favor of the cancellation of the lease. They were making preparations to break the illegal crisscross screen. In this situation the UNO and official from Dumuria came to Noakati Bazar and sought time from the landless organization. And people pressurized them to go back and make their decision. At last, the committee decided to release the Morabhadra from illegal occupation. On 19<sup>th</sup> October under the leadership of landless group the crisscross fences were removed. Morabhadra became open for all.

### **Changes in life and livelihood and food security:**

Positive changes have come in the life of nearly 3,000 people. They can catch fish in the river and use the water for other purposes. They are now assured of nutrition. Currently, on average 6.53 tons of fish are being harvested and sold. This has contributed to their food security.

Nearly, 2,100 families are cultivating crops and vegetables by irrigating water from the River. As a result, each family is getting their crops and vegetables for the year, and each family, in addition to fulfilling their yearly requirements of vegetables, are earning, on average, 700 taka annually by selling fish. Additionally, as families are being provided with water from the river, they no longer have to travel to faraway places to collect water. Their livelihoods are more secure, as access to the river helps them save time and labor. Transportation as well has improved, and they are saving in time and expense.

It can be said that due to the mobilization of landless organization 3,000 poor families have been assured of life, livelihood, food security and nutrition. The encroachment of the means of their livelihoods has been protected, and their life has become normal.

### **Case study-3**

#### **Rape disguised as medical treatment - Protest by landless group: Legal action**

**Village:** Doyarampur; **Union:** Jagannathpur; **Upazila:** Kumarkhali; **District:** Kustia

#### **Background**

Shahjahan his wife and two children are resident of Doyarampur village of Jagannathpur Union under Kumarkhali Upazila. Shahjahan nor his wife are member of landless group.

Shahjahan is a day labourer, but often cannot find any remunerative employment, consequently starve with his family. In this financial circumstances Shahjahan's wife Nasima Begum became pregnant. Nasima Begum proposed to Shahjahan that given their financial condition, aborting the child would be the best solution. Shahjahan initially rejected this proposal, but later agreed. By then Nasima's pregnancy became three months old. From Doyarampur village the nearest hospital is about 8 kilometres away. Nasima was not sure how to approach the doctor there and take the journey as well,

### **Rapist doctor**

Being uncertain, Nasima decided to seek advice from the local doctor Zhantu Sheikh who runs a clinic in Hashimpur Bazar which is about to 1 km away from Nasima's house. On 3rd August 2014, Nasima went to Zhantu Sheikh on her own for medical advice. Zhantu doctor told Nasima that she would need an anaesthesia, as the abortion needs to be carried out in a state of senselessness. Nasima Begum agreed to this suggestion without realizing the consequence, as Nasima was desperate to complete the procedure. Zhantu doctor took advantage of her innocence and trust. He made her senseless with injection and in that state raped her. When Nasima gained her senses and realized that she was raped. Doctor Zhantu Sheikh fled away after rape before the victim gained sense.

Upon return to home, she shared this incident with her husband and few family members. Some of the family members went to the police station to file a case, but the police refused to register the case. As doctor is financially and politically powerful in the area, he tried to influence legal procedure to be delayed and it is not unusual that in this patriarchal society the all state administrative and legal system mostly favour men rather women. Therefore, same happen with Nasima. As legal procedure takes time, as time passes, the physical evidences of rape will be elapses in the medical exam. In the meantime the powerful people of the locality started to create pressure on Nasima Begum not to file any case. On 5 August 2014, the local influential political leaders came to Nasima Begum's house and proposed for a covert deal. Nasima Begum refused. At this stage the leaders forcibly gave her Taka 25,000 and forcibly took her signature. Nasima Begum felt humiliated and committed suicide in shame.

### **Combined demand for justice**

The whole village came to know that Nasima Begum committed suicide to show her disgust and protest against injustice. The landless leaders called a meeting to decide their course of action. They decided to mobilize public opinion by publicizing the tragic event and file a case against the rapist doctor Zhantu. They organized a protest procession and barricaded the police station to demand justice. They also contacted the local Mahila Parishad and the Press Club for their solidarity support. On 8<sup>th</sup> August, they landless group, Mahlia Parishad and the Press Club members jointly led a protest procession to the Upazila sadar and organized a human chain followed by a protest meeting. At the end of the meeting they submitted a memorandum to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer demanding justice.

### **Result**

Due to this collective pressure the police accepted the case against Zhantu Sheikh. Currently, Zhantu Sheikh is under arrest and he is in the police custody. The case against him is ongoing in the judicial system.



**Demand for increasing the wage of the women labourer**

**Village:** Tatonpara; **Union:** Bagatipara; **Upazila:** Bagatipara; **District:** Natore

**Background**

Tatonpara village of Bagatipara union in Natore District is located adjacent to the Natore sugar mill. . In this paddy and sugar cane are the main crops, But according to government law, land adjacent to sugar mill is marked as sugar cane zone, and landowners are thus obliged to grow sugarcane in their field, and sale their product to the mill. Farmers are not allowed to make molasses at home. This also puts extra constraints to laborers in finding employment. Due to these the labouring poor for their livelihoods seek employment in making bidi (local cigarette) knowing fully the associated health as Jahanara one worker of the bidi industry commented "making bidi is a very hazardous job for health. Even then, out of helplessness we have to do the job. Previously we used to make molasses at home. Now because of the mill we cannot do this anymore, hence we work here. Without this income, living becomes harder", hazards of tobacco.

**Laborer-agent-wage**

In Bagatipara upazila there are two bidi factories owned by Selim and Monmahan. These two get their bidi made through agents. Aijan and Sharifa are two of such agents, who employ 47 women to do the job. 30 women workers make the outer casing with tobacco leaves and 17 women labourers fill them with shredded tobacco leaves. Wages are fixed by the owner of the bidi factory and the agents. The workers have no say in this regard. A female worker can fill tobacco leave inside about 1000 bidi per hour. They get taka 21 per hour for filling 1000 bidi. On an average every female worker can make 10,000 bidi per day. Their average income is 210 per worker per day which is low as per their opinion. For filling one thousand bidis a worker gets take 21, which in their opinion is low. The workers were demanding to increase wage, but did not succeed. Having failed to establish their demand, incidentally, one of the worker Royjan during her visit to a nearby village Dholaura for family reasons came to learn that in Dholaura village the female bidi workers get taka 23 for filling thousand bidi.

**Combined demand for increasing the wage**

When Royjan returned home she shared this with fellow workers and the members of the landless group. On 9 October, nearly a hundred landless members went to Selim bidi factory to enquire about the reasons for discrimination in wage payment. The landless members waited for more than 4 hours but could not manage to meet the factory owner. Later on, when the agents Aijan and Sharifa came to Tatonpara village, the female and male members of landless group barricaded them, and demanded taka 23 per thousand bidis as this was paid in Dholaura village. The agents, as expected refused to pay attention to this demand of wage increase. The village committee of the landless group advised the female workers to go on strike. Subsequently, from 12 October 2014, the female workers went on strike to get their claim of wage increase established. Members of the landless groups expressed their solidarity with the female bidi workers. Due to this combined movement the agents and few other representatives of the factory owners agreed to discuss the matter with the village committee of the landless

group. On 18 October 2014, the meeting was held and the factory owner agreed to pay the women workers taka 23.00 for filling a thousand bidi as they demanded.

### **Result**

Their income has increased bidi taka 21 to taka 23 for per thousand per hour. Therefore, every female worker receives average taka 230 per day as new wage rate. Only 17 women worker who engaged in fill up tobacco leave received this new wage. Other 30 women worker who are only involve to make outer casing received as per previous payment rate.

***“We have increased the wage through movement. We would not spend any money before for treatment. Now we are saving money. We can go to doctor for treatment” Royzan, Tetonpara village, Leader, Landless Organization.***

## Annex table from - 1 to 23

**Table – 01: Geographical Location of Programmes of Nijera Kori**

Sl. No	Division	District	Upazila	Area	Sub-center	Total up to March 2014		Expansion in 2014-15		Total up to March 2015		Village Coverage		
						U	V	U	V	U	V	Up to March 2014	New 2014-15	Up to March 2015
1	Chittagong	Comilla	Chandina	Comilla	3	24	109	0	1	24	110	21	0	21
			Daudkandi											
			Debidwar											
			Muradnagar											
		Noakhali	Sudharam	Charjabbar	5	9	45	0	0	9	45	6	0	6
			Companigonj											
			Kabirhat											
Lakshmipur	Ramgoti	Ramgoti	1	6	28	0	0	6	28	5	0	5		
Chittagong	Sandwip	Sandwip	2	14	28	0	0	14	28	-	0	0		
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32</b>
2	Dhaka	Tangail	Tangail Sadar	Tangail	1	11	72	0	0	4	22	5	0	5
			Madhupur	Madhupur	2	12	127	0	0	12	127	20	0	20
				Dhanbari										
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>
3	Khulna	Kushtia	Kumarkhali	Kumarkhali	1	7	51	0	0	7	51	14	0	14
			khoksa											
		Khulna	Paikgacha	Paikgacha	6	18	168	1	3	19	171	39	2	41
			Dumuria											
			Batiaghata											
Dakope														
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>55</b>
4	Rajshahi	Sirajgonj	Raygonj	Raygonj	2	5	82	0	0	5	82	13	0	13
			Bogra											
		Rangpur	Rangpur Sadar	Rangpur	2	9	81	0	0	9	81	24	0	24
			Mithapukur											
		Dinajpur	Khanshama	Dinajpur	1	4	22	0	0	4	22	5	0	5
		Kurigram	Rowmari	Rowmari	1	8	84	0	0	8	84	21	0	21
			Rajibpur											
		Gaibandha	Saghata	Gaibandha	2	23	195	0	0	16	147	64	0	64
			Sadullapur											
		Rangpur	Pirgonj											
Natore	Bagatipara	Bagatipara	1	10	170	0	0	10	170	42	0	42		
	Lalpur													
	Natore Sadar													
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>169</b>

Total	4	14	31	14	30	160	1,262	1	4	147	1,168	279	2	281
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Table-2: Formation of Landless Group

Description	Up to March 2014			Plan			Achievement			Total up to March 2015		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	2,577	2,087	4,664	42	30	72	38	20	58	2,615	2,107	4,722
Dhaka	414	311	725	20	28	48	8	7	15	422	318	740
Chittagong	2095	1493	3,588	52	55	107	53	34	87	2,148	1,527	3,675
Khulna	782	451	1,233	12	14	26	18	10	28	800	461	1,261
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,868</b>	<b>4,342</b>	<b>10,210</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>5,985</b>	<b>4,413</b>	<b>10,398</b>

Table-3: Group Members

Description	Up to March 2014			Plan			Achievement			Total up to March 2015		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	50,652	44,160	94,812	755	568	1323	708	386	1094	51,360	44,546	95,906
Dhaka	7,944	7,154	15,098	398	560	958	173	130	303	8,117	7,284	15,401
Khulna	15395	9328	24,723	236	235	471	326	184	510	15,721	9,512	25,233
Chittagong	41,343	32,100	73,443	1140	1020	2160	1038	673	1711	42,381	32,773	75,154
<b>Total</b>	<b>115,334</b>	<b>92,742</b>	<b>208,076</b>	<b>2,529</b>	<b>2,383</b>	<b>4,912</b>	<b>2,245</b>	<b>1,373</b>	<b>3,618</b>	<b>117,579</b>	<b>94,115</b>	<b>211,694</b>

Table: 04, A-Group Meeting, Attended by Staff, Group Annual General Meeting

Description	Plan for Group Meeting									Achievement of landless groups Meeting								
	Attended by Staff			Meeting Initiated by Group			Total plan		Total	Meeting Attended by Staff			Meeting Initiated by Group			Total Achievement		Total
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M		W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	
Rajshahi	12,704	5,728	18,432	24,666	22,890	47,556	37,370	28,618	65,988	14,222	4,981	19,203	21,209	17,658	38,867	35,431	22,639	<b>58,070</b>
Dhaka	3,784	3,130	6,914	4,044	4,344	8,388	7,828	7,474	15,302	2,218	1,131	3,349	2,183	1,468	3,651	4,401	2,599	<b>7,000</b>
Chittagong	16,796	8,217	25,013	10,187	8,235	18,422	26,983	16,452	43,435	13,748	5,388	19,136	9,650	7,532	17,182	23,398	12,920	<b>36,318</b>
Khulna	13,290	7,325	20,615	5,678	6,177	11,855	18,968	13,502	32,470	8,285	4,501	12,786	4,335	5,428	9,763	12,620	9,929	<b>22,549</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,574</b>	<b>24,400</b>	<b>70,974</b>	<b>44,575</b>	<b>41,646</b>	<b>86,221</b>	<b>91,149</b>	<b>66,046</b>	<b>157,195</b>	<b>38,473</b>	<b>16,001</b>	<b>54,474</b>	<b>37,377</b>	<b>32,086</b>	<b>69,463</b>	<b>75,850</b>	<b>48,087</b>	<b>123,937</b>

Table: 05, B- Representative and Joint Group meeting and Annual Group Meeting

Description	Representative Meeting		Joint Group Meeting		Annual group Meeting Plan			Achievement		
	Plan	Achievement	Plan	Achievement	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total
Rajshahi	252	221	358	390	1,864	1,440	3,304	1,600	1,162	<b>2,762</b>
Dhaka	40	52	10	18	250	217	467	163	96	<b>259</b>
Chittagong	269	319	54	90	1,745	1,181	2,926	1,633	1,027	<b>2,660</b>
Khulna	86	120	76	156	706	401	1,107	475	295	<b>770</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>4,565</b>	<b>3,239</b>	<b>7,804</b>	<b>3,871</b>	<b>2,580</b>	<b>6,451</b>

Table: 06, Description of Workshops

Description of workshops	Rajshahi						Dhaka						Chittagong						Khulna						Total							
	Plan for Participants			Achievement			Plan for Participants			Achievement			Plan for Participants			Achievement			Plan for Participants			Achievement			Plan for Participants			Achievement				
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M
Strategic planning	262	263	525	278	277	555	78	72	150	74	64	138	237	188	425	279	198	477	192	183	375	204	199	403	769	706	1,475	835	738	1,573		
Climate change & impact on livelihood	100	100	200	84	46	130	51	49	100	46	35	81	56	44	100	84	40	124	77	73	150	84	76	160	284	266	550	298	197	495		
Collective production & management	112	113	225	117	136	253	51	49	100	61	49	110	207	193	400	225	161	386	78	72	150	89	61	150	448	427	875	492	407	899		
Re-productive health	77	48	125	108	26	134	39	36	75	45	36	81	50	25	75	72	6	78	33	17	50	41	22	63	199	126	325	266	90	356		
Patriarchy	127	123	250	126	104	230	26	24	50	30	23	53	48	27	75	59	37	96	12	13	25	14	13	27	213	187	400	229	177	406		
Globalisation & impact on livelihood	229	221	450	164	125	289	38	37	75	37	33	70	105	95	200	108	74	182	89	86	175	101	97	198	461	439	900	410	329	739		
Gender	153	147	300	172	140	312	51	49	100	25	21	46	177	148	325	166	66	232	115	110	225	45	30	75	496	454	950	408	257	665		
Food Sovereignty	127	123	250	118	89	207	50	50	100	39	40	79	173	152	325	246	108	354	91	84	175	101	47	148	441	409	850	504	284	788		
Fundamentalism & impact on livelihood	175	175	350	152	120	272	26	24	50	26	24	50	138	112	250	161	70	231	48	52	100	61	56	117	387	363	750	400	270	670		
Leadership Development	115	110	225	116	94	210	50	50	100	37	40	77	95	80	175	112	58	170	39	36	75	32	18	50	299	276	575	297	210	507		
Leadership Development for women	25		25	25		25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	0	25	25	0	25		
Land rights of indigenous people	65	60	125	63	63	126	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	65	60	125	63	63	126		
Land and Women	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	88	87	175	85	91	176	0	0	0	0	0	0	88	87	175	85	91	176		
Watch Committee workshop	30	30	60	30	30	60	30	30	60	30	30	60	30	30	60	30	30	60	30	30	60	30	30	60	120	120	235	120	120	180		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,597</b>	<b>1,513</b>	<b>3,110</b>	<b>1,553</b>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>2,803</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>1,181</b>	<b>2,585</b>	<b>1,627</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>804</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>1,555</b>	<b>802</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>1,451</b>	<b>4,295</b>	<b>3,920</b>	<b>8,210</b>	<b>4,432</b>	<b>3,233</b>	<b>7,665</b>		

Table: 07, Formation of structural committee, Committee Meeting and Group Convention

Division	Total No. of Committee up to March 2015				Committee Meetings								Group Convention							
	Village	Union	Upazilla	Area	Plan				Achievement				Plan				Achievement			
					Name of the Committee				Name of the Committee				Name of the Committee				Name of the Committee			
					Village	Union	Upazilla	Area	Village	Union	Upazilla	Area	Village	Union	Upazilla	Area	Village	Union	Upazilla	Area
Rajshahi	167	11	1	6	1,535	131	12	64	1,445	129	12	61	153	10	1	4	128	10	0	4
Dhaka	28	6	1	1	283	61	11	11	237	57	12	11	26	3	1	1	20	2	0	1
Chittagong	58	3	1	13	656	34	12	148	658	35	11	146	51	2	1	12	50	2	0	12
Khulna	49	3	0	8	595	35	0	93	513	36	0	90	49	2		7	45	2	0	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>3,069</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>2,853</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23</b>

Table: 08, Group Saving

Division	Total up to March 2014			Plan			Implementation			Distribution			Total up to March 2015		
	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total
Rajshahi	14,937,972	11,190,037	26,128,009	4,627,286	5,656,432	10,283,718	4,260,103	5,256,020	9,516,123	2,215,854	1,297,327	3,513,181	16,982,221	15,148,730	<b>32,130,951</b>
Dhaka	727,217	981,038	1,708,255	749,928	600,946	1,350,874	613,885	382,104	995,989	255,079	678,493	933,572	1,086,023	684,649	<b>1,770,672</b>
Chittagong	18,210,988	14,589,565	32,800,552	6,139,817	4,994,226	11,134,043	5,898,267	4,187,056	10,085,323	2,564,377	888,959	3,453,336	21,544,878	17,887,662	<b>39,432,539</b>
Khulna	8,796,511	4,371,888	13,168,398	1,930,047	1,801,725	3,731,772	1,721,486	1,716,227	3,437,713	1,417,776	530,336	1,948,112	9,100,221	5,557,779	<b>14,657,999</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>42,672,687</b>	<b>31,132,527</b>	<b>73,805,214</b>	<b>13,447,078</b>	<b>13,053,329</b>	<b>26,500,407</b>	<b>12,493,741</b>	<b>11,541,407</b>	<b>24,035,148</b>	<b>6,453,086</b>	<b>3,395,115</b>	<b>9,848,201</b>	<b>48,713,342</b>	<b>39,278,819</b>	<b>87,992,161</b>

Table: 09, Bank Account and Position of group saving

Description	Up to March 2014			Plan			Increases in 2014-15			Total up to March 2015		
	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total
<b>Rajshahi</b>	654	321	975	26	7	33	40	5	45	694	326	1020
<b>Dhaka</b>	229	193	422	24	24	48	19	8	27	248	201	449
<b>Chittagong</b>	590	322	912	8	3	11	4	1	5	594	323	917
<b>Khulna</b>	529	150	679	16	7	23	24	6	30	553	156	709
<b>Total</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>986</b>	<b>2988</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>2089</b>	<b>1006</b>	<b>3095</b>

Table: 10, Groups Trainings

Description of Trainings	Rajshahi						Dhaka						Chittagong						Khulna						Total						
	Plan			Achievement			Plan			Achievement			Plan			Achievement			Plan			Achievement			Plan			Achievement			
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	
Basic	175	125	300	75	73	148	100	75	175	98	49	147	160	120	280	70	90	160	91	92	183	75	79	154	526	412	938	318	291	609	
Advance	40	48	88	28	22	50	39	34	73	26	23	49	43	42	85	26	24	50	39	35	74	29	21	50	161	159	320	109	90	199	
Higher selection	25	25	50	0	0	0	25	0	25	24	0	24	25	0	25	25	0	25	0	25	25	0	0	0	75	50	125	49	0	49	
Total Core	240	198	438	103	95	198	164	109	273	148	72	220	228	162	390	121	114	235	130	152	282	104	100	204	762	621	1383	476	381	857	
Land and Women	13	12	25			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	51	49	100	53	47	100	13	12	25	15	10	25	77	73	150	68	57	125	
Citizen right and constitutional guarantees	19	19	38	7	6	13	13	12	25	14	11	25	50	50	100	40	35	75	6	6	12	7	5	12	88	87	175	68	57	125	
Re productive health rights	12	13	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	14	9	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	25	50	14	9	23
Gender training	37	38	75	28	22	50	12	13	25	11	9	20	50	75	125	0	0	0	45	30	75	46	28	74	144	156	300	85	59	144	
Food Sovereignty and Land Use	0		0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23	22	45	35	30	65	26	24	50	28	22	50	49	46	95	63	52	115	
Land reform, Land law and land rights training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	36	34	70	43	27	70	26	24	50	26	24	50	62	58	120	69	51	120	
Leadership Development	24	24	48	17	16	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	25	50			0	13	16	29	12	13	25	62	65	127	29	29	58	
Right to Information	13	12	25	5	6	11	13	12	25	0	0	0	12	13	25	0	0	0	25	25	50	21	15	36	63	62	125	26	21	47	
Organic manner	12	13	25	11	11	22	0	0	0	0	0	0			0			0	12	13	25	11	11	22	24	26	50	22	22	44	
Agricultural and women	25	25	50	5	5	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	25	50			0	25	25	50	6	6	12	75	75	150	11	11	22	
Collective production & management	6	7	13	7	6	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	5	12	7	5	12	13	12	25	14	11	25	
Climate change and food sovereignty	13	12	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	25	50	27	21	48	45	50	95	45	30	75	83	87	170	72	51	123	
Organic Market Management	4	8	12	13	10	23	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	6	7	13	20	15	35	10	15	25	33	25	58	
Agricultural rights training	15	15	30	17	15	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	00	0	0	0	0	18	17	35	19	16	35	33	32	65	36	31	67	
Basic Cultural training	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	13	20	5	13	18	7	13	20	5	13	18	
Sub Total	193	198	391	110	97	207	51	49	100	39	29	68	297	318	615	198	160	358	274	267	541	268	213	481	815	832	1647	615	499	1114	
<b>Total Nijera Kori</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>829</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>1005</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>823</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>1577</b>	<b>1453</b>	<b>3030</b>	<b>1091</b>	<b>1880</b>	<b>1971</b>	



Table: 11, Refresher Training and Forum Meeting

Division	Refresher Training								Number of Forum		Forum Meetings	
	Number	Plan			Number	Achievement			Up to March 2014	Up to March 2015	Plan	Achievement
		Participants				Participants						
		Women	Male	Total		Women	Male	Total				
Rajshahi	38	575	375	950	41	614	388	1002	15	15	125	129
Dhaka	12	200	100	300	13	213	117	330	3	3	29	27
Chittagong	19	275	200	475	21	301	211	512	12	0	120	111
Khulna	19	300	175	475	23	313	188	501	10	10	116	96
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>1350</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>2200</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>1441</b>	<b>904</b>	<b>2345</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>363</b>

Table: 12, Cultural Activities

Description	Number of Cultural Group	Cultural Workshop				Cultural Activity											
		Plan		Achievement		Plan						Achievement					
		N	P	N	P	C.G. Meeting	Cultural Discussion	Drama Performance	D.F./Padajatra	People Song	Children C.P	C.G. Meeting	Cultural Discussion	Drama Performance	D.F./Padajatra	People Song	Children Drama
		Rajshahi	20	7	141	7	137	186	17	154	2	90	38	181	21	174	2
Dhaka	9	6	120	8	167	94	14	59	2	55	25	77	10	61	2	32	27
Chittagong	14	12	137	9	90	148	15	93	3	149	31	151	11	103	3	151	36
Khulna	11	4	53	4	99	145	12	55	3	63	8	144	12	78	3	56	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>123</b>

Table: 13, Collective Economic Activities

Description	Agriculture					Fishery				livestock				Small business/rickshaw van				Total						
	Up to March 2014	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chitta	Khulna	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chitta	Khulna	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chitta	Khulna	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chitta	Khulna	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chitta	Khulna	Nijera Kori		
Group	W	276	6	155	33	30	5	10	13	183	2	104	5	735	42	780	18	1224	55	1049	69	2,397		
	M	391	33	140	39	75	17	87	22	117	13	146	3	666	45	970	19	1249	108	1343	83	2,783		
	T	667	39	295	72	105	22	97	35	300	15	250	8	1401	87	1750	37	2473	163	2392	152	5,180		
Member	W	5129	113	3108	624	625	98	213	248	2346	38	2154	81	14817	249	15036	1136	22917	498	20511	2089	46,015		
	M	734	693	562	297	1307	238	290	189	4079	259	2535	56	19066	1190	22637	1192	25186	2380	26024	1734	55,324		
	T	5863	806	3670	921	1932	336	503	437	6425	297	4689	137	33883	1439	37673	2328	48103	2878	46535	3823	101,339		
Employment	W	239	3	29	50	225	3	16	28	93	0	69	1	1059	0	378	61	1616	6	492	140	2,254		
	M	734	1	154	99	335	7	129	180	141	3	120	0	2130	0	485	237	3340	11	888	516	4,755		
	T	973	4	183	149	560	10	145	208	234	3	189	1	3189	0	863	298	4956	17	1380	656	7,009		
Quantity (Acre/No)		278.56	17.28	158.74	99.8	81.87	19.15	166.62	46.08	337	23	445	5	678	87	721	159	1375.43	147.16	1491.36	310.76	3,325		
Investment in Tk		11364548	1535335	3542582	1502050	1043924	134681	1553986	354473	3084688	173210	2098609	68590	18933845	2105857	17669170	2165488	34427005	3949083	24864347	4090601	67,331,036		
<b>Increased 14- 2015</b>																								
Group	W	5		12	1	2	0	0	0	13	0	25	0	61	2	104	9	81	2	141	10	234		
	M	1	1	9	2	1	0	1	1	14	0	16		27	7	67		43	8	93	3	147		
	T	6	1	21	3	3	0	1	1	27	0	41	0	88	9	171	9	124	10	234	13	381		
Member	W	102		243	23	38	0			238	0	501	0	1288	35	1164	172	1666	35	1908	195	3804		
	M	46	18	180	24	25	0	18	25	2	0	313	0	520	139	849		593	157	1360	49	2159		
	T	148	18	423	47	63	0	18	25	240	0	814	0	1808	174	2013	172	2259	192	3268	244	5963		
Employment	W	15		1	0	0	0	0	0	17	0	20	0	51	0	214	7	83	0	235	7	325		
	M	22	10	7	0	0	00	0	5	18	0	15		8	4	152		48	14	174	5	241		
	T	37	10	8	0	0	0	0	5	35	0	35	0	59	4	366	7	131	14	409	12	566		
Quantity (Acre/No)		109.86	18.3	76.36	0.47	0.35		0.1	0.5	27	19	86	7	806	0			943.21	37.3	162.46	7.97	1,150.94		
Investment in Tk		400820	90000	463000	50000	42000	4000	10000	50000	421200	294724	394904	95700	513518	23500	1996050	54900	1377538	412224	2863954	250600	4,904,316		
<b>Decreased 14- 2015</b>																								
Group	W	24		6	2	3	0	0	0	7	0	1	1	33	0	24		67	0	31	3	101		
	M	26	1		3					16	0	1	1	24	0	13	1	66	1	14	5	86		
	T	50	1	6	5	3	0	0	0	23	0	2	2	57	0	37	1	133	1	45	8	187		
Member	W	433		124	38		0	0	0	133	0	20	18	678	0	295		1244	0	439	56	1739		
	M	483	21		58	57	0	0	0	328	0	20	20	60	0	105	20	928	21	125	98	1172		
	T	916	21	124	96	57	0	0	0	461	0	40	38	738	0	400	20	2172	21	564	154	2911		
Employment	W	26		2			0	0		4	0	1	0	34	0	7		64	0	10	0	74		
	M	34				13	0		0	22	0	1	0	16	0	2	1	85	0	3	1	89		
	T	60	0	2	0	13	0	0	0	26	0	2	0	50	0	9	1	149	0	13	1	163		
Quantity (Acre/No)		40.93	0.54	1.89	0.42	4.12	0	0	0	15	0	2	1		0	0		60.05	0.54	3.89	1.42	65.9		
Investment in Tk		142710	98000	220000	90700	17950	0	0	0	332500	0	22000	14850	713629	0	1773000	20000	1206789	98000	2015000	125550	3,445,339		
<b>up to March 2015</b>																								
Group	W	257	6	161	32	29	5	10	13	189	2	128	4	763	44	860	27	1238	57	1159	76	2,530		
	M	366	33	149	38	76	17	88	23	115	13	161	2	669	52	1024	18	1226	115	1422	81	2,844		
	T	623	39	310	70	105	22	98	36	304	15	289	6	1432	96	1884	45	2464	172	2581	157	5,374		
Member	W	4798	113	3227	609	663	98	213	248	2451	38	2635	63	15427	284	15905	1308	23339	533	21980	2228	48,080		
	M	297	690	742	263	1275	238	308	214	3753	259	2828	36	19526	1329	23381	1172	24851	2516	27259	1685	56,311		
	T	5095	803	3969	872	1938	336	521	462	6204	297	5463	99	34953	1613	39286	2480	48190	3049	49239	3913	104,391		
Employment	W	228	3	28	50	225	3	16	28	106	0	88	1	1076	0	585	68	1635	6	717	147	2,505		
	M	722	11	161	99	322	7	129	185	137	3	134	0	2122	4	635	236	3303	25	1059	520	4,907		
	T	950	14	189	149	547	10	145	213	243	3	222	1	3198	4	1220	304	4938	31	1776	667	7,412		
Quantity (Acre/No)		347.49	35.04	233.21	99.85	78.1	19.15	166.72	46.58	349	42	529	11	1484	87	721	159	2258.59	183.92	1649.93	317.31	4,409.75		
Investment in Tk		11622658	1527335	3785582	1461350	1067974	138681	1563986	404473	3173388	467934	2471513	149440	18733734	2129357	17892220	2200388	34597754	4263307	25713301	4215651	68,790,013		
Profit in cash	W	306249		130360	324360	77980				107225	67205			15900	4500	788538	4500	538299	14710	1239972	4500	684559	450795	2,379,826
(April 14-March 2015)	M	539800	90000	46440	84455	530400	17328	434900	290440	122290				2800	5500	482680	21500	620503	34950	1675170	128828	1104643	415345	3,323,986
<b>Total</b>	T	<b>846049</b>	<b>90000</b>	<b>176800</b>	<b>408815</b>	<b>608380</b>	<b>17328</b>	<b>434900</b>	<b>397665</b>	<b>189495</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18700</b>	<b>10000</b>	<b>1271218</b>	<b>26000</b>	<b>1158802</b>	<b>49660</b>	<b>2915142</b>	<b>133328</b>	<b>1789202</b>	<b>866140</b>	<b>5,703,812</b>		

Table: 14- Access to Government Services (Safety net Programme)

Description	Total Card	Krishi Card				VGF Card				VGD Card				Elder Allowances				Widow Allowances			Maternity Allowance			100 Days Employment Generation Programme				Disable Allowance						
		W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	WA	W	D	Total Card	W	D	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	S
Rajshahi	29373	935	28439	182	157	12932	6849	6083	114	192	3779	3779	44	105	151	80	71	5	9	119	119	8	197	197	12	3482	1209	2273	11	90	35	20	15	3
Dhaka	793	221	572	6	47	1169	480	689	7	62	99	99	4	14	39	13	27	1	4	14	14	1	50	50	3	641	83	558	10	55	10	5	5	0
Chittagong	2828	498	2330	74	145	14263	6633	7630	46	182	864	864	38	92	167	78	90	0	5	152	152	1	114	114	9	2583	618	1965	7	144	124	60	64	4
Khulna	1536	150	1386	52	108	4127	1643	2484	12	51	1022	1022	3	0	398	179	219	1	2	93	93	1	40	40	1	408	170	238	15	55	31	8	23	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>34530</b>	<b>1804</b>	<b>32727</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>32491</b>	<b>15605</b>	<b>16886</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>5763</b>	<b>5763</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>755</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>7114</b>	<b>2081</b>	<b>5033</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>7</b>

W-women; M- men; D-Disable; SW- single women

Table: 15, Legal aid Activity

Characteristics of cases	New cases	Rajshahi				New cases	Dhaka				New cases	Chittagong				New cases	Khulna				New cases	Total			
		T	I	Ag	A		T	I	Ag	A		T	I	Ag	A		T	I	Ag	A		T	I	Ag	A
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Criminal</b>	9	8	4	4	0	0	9	7	2	0	4	38	38	0	0	8	8	6	2	0	21	63	55	8	0
Groups of the plaintiffs	4	5	1	4	0	0	5	4	1	0	1	11	11	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	7	22	17	5	0
Groups of the accused	5	3	3	0	0	0	4	3	1	0	3	27	27	0	0	6	7	5	2	0	14	41	38	3	0
<b>Civil</b>	0	3	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	26	25	1	1	5	0	0	0	0	7	30	26	4	1
Groups of the plaintiffs	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	15	14	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	3	17	15	2	1
Groups of the accused	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	11	11	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	4	13	11	2	0
<b>Violence against Women</b>	7	7	6	1	0	4	2	0	2	2	4	9	7	2	1	9	0	0	0	0	24	18	13	5	0
Groups of the plaintiffs	7	7	6	1	0	4	2	0	2	2	4	7	5	2	1	9	0	0	0	0	24	16	11	5	3
Groups of the accused	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0

T= Total, I = In favor, Ag= Against and A= Appeal

Table -16: Level of Group Consciousness

Description	Rajshahi			Dhaka			Chittagong			Khulna			Total		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
<b>Secondary Level</b>															
Up to March'2014	<b>500</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>865</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>1,637</b>	<b>1,730</b>	<b>1,544</b>	<b>3,274</b>
Plan	31	19	50	7	8	15	17	13	30	55	40	95	110	80	190
Achievement	26	18	44	5	6	11	15	9	24	46	33	79	92	66	158
<b>Total up to March' 2015</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>994</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>911</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>1,716</b>	<b>1,822</b>	<b>1,610</b>	<b>3,432</b>
<b>Third Level</b>															
Up to March'2014	<b>96</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>486</b>
Plan	9	6	15			0	6	6	12	15	12	27	30	24	54
Achievement	8	4	12			0	4	4	8	12	8	20	24	16	40
<b>Total up to March' 2015</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>526</b>

Table: 17, Various Activities undertaken from Group Saving and Voluntary Services Provided by Group Members

Description	Organisational activities										Solidarity Activities							Total	Total NK	Beneficiary
	Contribution (In Taka)	Work-shops	Refresher Trainings	Move-ment	Landless group Convention	Cultural Programme	Day Celebration	Conducting Case	Assistance to Family of arrested Member	Total	Medical Support	School Repairing	Educational Support	Contribution in marriage without Dowry	Bridge-Road Repairing	Dredging of Canal	Repairing of House			
Rajshahi	Within Group	21,491	3,174	8,350	45,405	23,520	42,465	97,510	0	241,915	60,655	14,464	14,320	82,070	2,500	4,000	20,950	198,959	440,874	5776
	Outside Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10,150	500	3,300	10,480	6,400	800		31,630	31,630	68
Dhaka	Within Group	3,880	665	2,320	13,580	34,081	5,500	0	0	60,026	8,150	0	6,500	3,000	5,800	7,085	5,300	35,835	95,861	610
	Outside Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,740	0	0	9,300	0	-	-	12,040	12,040	415
Chittangong	Within Group	53,754	17,434	20,850	89,633	41,670	46,650	637,910	1,500	909,401	124,875	24,790	36,170	93,560	146,270	44,370	39,190	509,225	1,418,626	3900
	Outside Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19,350	0	8,000	10,850	0	0	980	39,180	39,180	412
Khulna	Within Group	13,564	4,971	9,100	27,950	31,620	63,345	54,810	17,400	222,760	80,530	0	7,450	15,550	11,200	0	13,900	128,630	351,390	133
	Outside Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,800	0	2,500	2,900	600	0	400	10,200	10,200	59
Total	Within Group	92,689	26,244	40,620	176,568	130,891	157,960	790,230	18,900	1,434,102	274,210	39,254	64,440	194,180	165,770	55,455	79,340	872,649	2,306,751	10,419
	Outside Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	36,040	500	13,800	33,530	7,000	800	1,380	93,050	93,050	954
	<b>Total</b>	<b>92,689</b>	<b>26,244</b>	<b>40,620</b>	<b>176,568</b>	<b>130,891</b>	<b>157,960</b>	<b>790,230</b>	<b>18,900</b>	<b>1,434,102</b>	<b>310,250</b>	<b>39,754</b>	<b>78,240</b>	<b>227,710</b>	<b>172,770</b>	<b>56,255</b>	<b>80,720</b>	<b>965,699</b>	<b>2,399,801</b>	<b>11,373</b>

**Table-18: A, Representation in Different Institutional Committees**

April 2014 to March 2015		Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chittagong	Khulna	TOTAL
Number of School Contested		69	30	37	48	184
Number of School Elected		58	11	36	47	152
School Management Committee (Contested candidate)	Women	48	5	32	41	126
	Single Women	20	0	1	0	21
	Men	76	15	82	60	233
	Total	144	20	115	101	380
School Management Committee (Elected)	Women	31	4	30	26	91
	Single Women	6	0	0	0	6
	Men	56	10	80	37	183
	Total	93	14	110	63	280
Number of Market Contested		25	7	20	11	63
Number of Market Elected		19	6	20	11	56
Market Management Committee (Contested candidate)	Women	1	0	4	12	17
	Single Women	1	0	0	0	1
	Men	54	6	66	29	155
	Total	56	6	70	41	173
Market Management Committee (Elected)	Women	2	0	4	4	10
	Single Women	1	0	0	0	1
	Men	28	4	59	33	124
	Total	31	4	63	37	135
Number of Sluice Gate Management Committee Contested candidate		2	0	7	10	19
Number of Sluice Gate Management Committee Elected		1	0	7	7	15
Sluice Gate Management Committee (Contested candidate)	Women	2	0	1	1	4
	Single Women		0	1	0	1
	Men	5	0	18	9	32
	Total	7	0	20	10	37
Sluice Gate Management Committee (Elected)	Women	2	0	1	1	4
	Single Women		0	1		1
	Men	3	0	14	12	29
	Total	5	0	16	13	34
Total Contested candidate	Women	51	5	37	54	147
	Single Women	21	0	2	0	23
	Men	135	21	166	98	420
	Total	207	26	205	152	590
Total Elected	Women	35	4	35	31	105
	Single Women	7	0	1	0	8
	Men	87	14	153	82	336
	Total	129	18	189	113	449

**Table-18: B, Representation in Different Institutional Committees**

April 2014 to March 2015		Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chittagong	Khulna	TOTAL
Community Health Clinic Management Committee						
Community Health Clinic Management Committee (Nominated)	Women	30	5	20	13	68
	Single Women	2	1	8	1	12
	Men	62	9	35	18	124
	Total	94	15	63	32	204
Sugarcane Management Committee-2 (Nominated)	Women	1	0	0	0	1
	Men	3	0	0	0	3
	Total	4	0	0	0	4
Union Parishad Standing Committee (Nominated)		36	9	33	14	92
Disaster Management Committee (Nominated)	Women	6	0	3	2	11
	Single Women	1		0	0	1
	Men	8	1	55	5	69
	Total	15	1	58	7	81
Law and Order Situation Control Committee(Nominated)	Women	32	0	4	1	37
	Single Women	4	0	0	0	4
	Men	41	1	1	2	45
	Total	77	1	5	3	86
Committee on Stop Violence against Women (Nominated)	Women	7	0	4	4	15
	Men	3	0	0	1	4
	Total	10	0	4	5	19
Agriculture Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	4	1	0	1	6
	Men	25	0	2	3	30
	Total	29	1	2	4	36
Education Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	24	2	3	5	34
	Single Women	3	0	0	0	3
	Men	27	0	3	1	31
	Total	54	2	6	6	68
Rural Development Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	5	1	2	0	8
	Single Women	1	0	0	0	1
	Men	11	0	1	2	14
	Total	17	1	3	2	23
Birth-Death Registration Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	1	0	2	3	6
	Men	1	0	3	1	5
	Total	2	0	5	4	11
Environment and Forest Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	3	1	1	1	6
	Men		1	0	1	2
	Total	3	2	1	2	8
Sanitation and Water Supply Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	1	0	4	2	7
	Men	1	0	1	0	2
	Total	2	0	5	2	9
Vat and Tax Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women		0	2	1	3
	Men	3	0	1	1	5
	Total	3	0	3	2	8
Cultural and Game Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	1	0	0	1	2
	Men	5	0	0	1	6
	Total	6	0	0	2	8
Audit and Financial Management Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women		0	1	0	1
	Men	1	2	1	1	5
	Total	1	2	2	1	6
Finanace and Establishment Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women		1	0	1	2
	Men		1	1	2	4
	Total	0	2	1	3	6
<b>Total Nominated</b>	Women	<b>115</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>207</b>
	Single Women	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>21</b>
	Men	<b>191</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>349</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>577</b>

**Table: 19-Participation in local shalish**

Division and issues	No. of shalish	Observer			Judge			Arranged by		Result			On process	Recover Tk. as punishment
		Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total	Group	Group & local leader	Settled	Stopped	Cases		
<b>Women against: (dowry, divorce, polygamy, rape, physical assault, fundamentalism indictment)</b>														
Rajshahi	361	3514	4231	7745	308	501	809	78	283	301	12	10	38	1,495,000
Dhaka	64	137	323	460	57	186	243	24	40	55	5	4	0	206,000
Chittagong	656	2,853	5,187	8,040	385	1,095	1,480	143	513	599	14	6	37	1,328,000
Khulna	83	392	577	969	71	165	236	9	74	70	6	3	4	17,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,164</b>	<b>6,896</b>	<b>10,318</b>	<b>17,214</b>	<b>821</b>	<b>1,947</b>	<b>2,768</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>1,025</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>3,046,000</b>
<b>Illegal Possession of Property from the Landless</b>														
Rajshahi	16	189	246	435	14	39	53	2	14	14	0	0	2	120,002
Dhaka	15	28	32	60	15	52	67	2	13	13	0	0	2	
Chittagong	218	952	2,002	2,954	384	214	598	55	163	204	5	1	8	35,001
Khulna	38	301	616	917	20	77	97	6	32	30	6	1	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>1,470</b>	<b>2,896</b>	<b>4,366</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>815</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>155,003</b>
<b>Fundamentalist activities</b>														
Rajshahi	6	47	83	130	1	5	6	2	4	3	1	0	2	0
Dhaka	1	1	5	6	2	6	8		1	1	0	0	0	0
Chittagong	6	40	82	122	2	14	16	3	3	6	0	0	0	0
Khulna	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Issue of Injustice and oppression</b>														
Rajshahi	54	414	528	942	29	84	113	9	45	48	1	0	5	28,700
Dhaka	48	46	205	251	16	109	125	14	34	43		0	5	7,000
Chittagong	104	543	1,314	1,857			-	38	66	80	2	1	21	639,000
Khulna	61	195	445	640	36	97	133	15	46	53	1	0	7	13,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>1,198</b>	<b>2,492</b>	<b>3,690</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>688,000</b>
Rajshahi	437	4,164	5,088	9,252	352	629	981	91	346	366	14	10	47	1,643,702
Dhaka	128	212	565	777	90	353	443	40	88	112	5	4	7	213,000
Chittagong	984	4,388	8,585	12,973	771	1,323	2,094	239	745	889	21	8	66	2,002,001
Khulna	182	888	1,638	2,526	127	339	466	30	152	153	13	4	12	30,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,731</b>	<b>9,652</b>	<b>15,876</b>	<b>25,528</b>	<b>1,340</b>	<b>2,644</b>	<b>3,984</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>1,331</b>	<b>1,520</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>3,889,003</b>



**Table: 20- Registration, Lease and Possession of Khasland and Water**

Subject		Khasland (Acre)						Water Body (Acre)			Total (Acre)			
		Land Registered		Land Possession		DCR		Water Body Leased		Amount of water body open	Amount of land	Beneficiary	Amount of water body	Beneficiary
		No of member	Amount of land	No of member	Amount of land	No of group member	Amount of land	No of member	Amount of water body					
Up to March 2014	Rajshahi	7,188	5,372	1,645	434	0	0	17	20.98	138	5,806	8,833	159	6,472
	Dhaka	8	11	24	3	0	0	1	0.91	43.9	14	1,927	45	28,792
	Chittagong	14,196	12,753	3,372	15,294	0	0	21	12.48	134.75	28,047	17,568	147	29,265
	Khulna	1,218	3,356	715	357	0	0	46	42	57.9	3,713	1,933	100	19,753
	<b>Total</b>	<b>22,610</b>	<b>21,492</b>	<b>5,756</b>	<b>16,088</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>37,580</b>	<b>30,261</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>84,282</b>
Increase in April' 2014- March' 2015	Rajshahi	105	6	108	10	2	0.34	0	0	0	16	215	0	0
	Dhaka	0	0	0	0	0	0	550	0	23	0	0	23	550
	Chittagong	111	30	1698	790	0	0	0	0	0	820	1,809	0	0
	Khulna	9	3.25	122	30	19	10	2439	0	239	43	150	239	2,439
	<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>39.25</b>	<b>1928</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>10.34</b>	<b>2989</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>2,174</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>2,989</b>
Total March 2015	Rajshahi	7,293	5,378	1,753	444	2	0	17	21	138	5,822	9,048	159	6,472
	Dhaka	8	11	24	3	0	0	551	1	67	14	32	68	29,342
	Chittagong	14,307	12,783	5,070	16,084	0	0	21	12	135	28,867	19,377	147	29,265
	Khulna	1,227	3,359	837	387	19	10	2,485	42	297	3,756	2,083	339	22,192
	<b>Total</b>	<b>22835</b>	<b>21531.1</b>	<b>7684</b>	<b>16917.65</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>10.34</b>	<b>3074</b>	<b>76.37</b>	<b>636.41</b>	<b>38,459</b>	<b>30,540</b>	<b>713</b>	<b>87,271</b>

**Table: 21, Regaining of Properties of the Landless and Marginal Farmers from Illegal Possessors**

Description		Won in the Movement for Own Land and Quantity of Regained Land		Beneficiary	Won in the Movement against Commercial Shrimp and Quantity of Regained Land			Beneficiary	Recover Inheritance Property		
		No. of Movement	Amount of land (Acre)		No. of Movement	Amount of land (Acre)	Amount of Water Bodies (Acre)		No. of Movement	Amount of land (Acre)	Beneficiary
Up to March 2014	Rajshahi	0	252.26	586	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Dhaka	0	16.68	455	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Chittagong	0	872.56	1019	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Khulna	0	129.11	225	0	1125	1122	7964	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1270.61</b>	<b>2285</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1125</b>	<b>1122</b>	<b>7964</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Increased establishing of rights	Rajshahi	9	9.5	26	0	0	0	0	6	3	6
	Dhaka	4	2.42	6	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
	Chittagong	16	14	39	0	0	0	0	4	2	14
	Khulna	8	3	12	40	10	0	0	5	1	13
	<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>28.92</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>36</b>
Total March 2015	Rajshahi	9	261.76	612	0	0	0	0	6	3	6
	Dhaka	4	19	461	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
	Chittagong	16	887	1,058	0	0	0	0	4	2	14
	Khulna	8	132	237	40	1,135	1,122	7,964	5	1	13
	<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>1299.53</b>	<b>2368</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>1135</b>	<b>1122</b>	<b>7964</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>36</b>

Table: 22- Issue of Social Movement /Struggle

Issue of Social Movement /Struggle	Issue raised by organisation of women/men	Division wise movement/ struggle in 2014-2015					No. of movement won					Ongoing movement March 2015
		Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chittagong	Khulna	Total no. of movement in current year	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chittagong	Khulna	Total No. of movement won	
<b>Movement on stopped Violence against women:</b>	Women	187	19	244	53	<b>503</b>	185	17	235	41	<b>478</b>	25
Violance against women such as dowry, divorce, polygamy, rape, physical assault, kidnapping, fundamentalism and religious indictment	Men	112	3	113	23	<b>251</b>	109	2	113	20	<b>244</b>	7
<b>Fundamentalism</b>	Women	6	1	4	0	<b>11</b>	6	1	4	0	<b>11</b>	0
	Men	13	2	5	2	<b>22</b>	12	1	5	2	<b>20</b>	2
<b>Establishment of rights on local resources:</b>	Women	15	10	49	17	<b>91</b>	9	8	45	11	<b>73</b>	18
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	Men	32	13	65	39	<b>149</b>	33	13	65	31	<b>142</b>	7
<b>Resistance against corruption:</b>	Women	48	4	29	11	<b>92</b>	46	4	28	8	<b>86</b>	6
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	Men	56	12	56	34	<b>158</b>	49	10	56	31	<b>146</b>	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>697</b>	246	30	312	60	<b>648</b>	49
	<b>Men</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>580</b>	203	26	239	84	<b>552</b>	28
	<b>Total</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>1277</b>	449	56	551	144	<b>1200</b>	77

Table: 23, Opinion Sharing, Dialogue Between Landless Group and Government Authority -Elected Bodies on Following Issues

Description	Initiative by Government /Group	Natural Resource (land and water body)	Commercial shrimp Aquaculture	Local Development	Health	Education	Agriculture	Violence on Women	False Cases and Harassment	Fundamentalisms	Law and Order situation	Total
Deputy Commissioner	Govt.	12	0	2	0	0	0	6	2	0	8	30
	Group	45	4	14		2		2	16	0	7	90
Upazilla Land Administration	Govt.	124	2	12	1	2	7		4	0	5	157
	Group	536	2	45			9		21	0	1	614
Education Authority	Govt.			45		241		6	1	0		293
	Group	1		18	21	305		49		0	8	402
Health Authority	Govt.			7	190			6		0		203
	Group	2		50	451	3	9	7	9	0	1	532
Agriculture department	Govt.	0	0	0	0	0	46		0	0		46
	Group	0	0	0	0	0	87		0	0		87
Upazila Administration (UNO)	Govt.	132	4	118	22	46	18	29	18	2	53	442
	Group	353	23	562	41	71	49	47	49	1	41	1,237
Police Administration	Govt.	64	3	55	4	0	178	91	178	7	106	686
	Group	107	3	175	2	0	234	173	234	5	107	1,040
Parliament Member	PM	55	4	65		6	5	12	0	2	15	164
	Group	102	8	144	11	15	21	12	21	4	12	350
Union Perished	UP	122	7	245	12	18	146	92	51	1	68	762
	Group	363	14	800	26	26	28	155	97	4	83	1,596
Total Nijera Kori	Government-Elected Authority	509	20	549	229	313	422	242	254	12	255	2,805
	Group	1509	54	1808	552	422	437	445	447	14	260	5,948
	Total	2018	74	2357	781	735	859	687	701	26	515	8,753
Rajshahi		665	0	795	229	296	405	255	217	7	174	3,043
Dhaka		214	0	254	119	97	59	40	11	2	22	818
Chittagong		906	0	955	320	241	161	327	427	17	236	3,590
Khulna		233	74	353	113	101	234	65	46	0	83	1302
<b>Total</b>		2018	74	2357	781	735	859	687	701	26	515	8,753