

Annual Report

January 2016 to December 2016

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Executive Summary

Since 1980, Nijera Kori is working with rural poor to empower them to develop their own organizations as a vehicle to establish their rights and control over the institutions and resources that are meant to serve them. Nijera Kori is unique among Bangladeshi NGOs given its focus on rights-based approach to development concentrating on social mobilisation in contrast to service-delivery based development approach. To that end, Nijera Kori primarily works with the disadvantaged, exploited and deprived communities in Bangladesh use tools such as conscientisation, capacity building, advocacy and social mobilisation for their empowerment and ensuring equity and justice.

These goals are achieved through Nijera Kori's foundational commitments to social mobilisation, facilitated through a democratic management structure. Nijera Kori emphasises on raising awareness, supporting development of autonomous organisations of the poor, establishing the norms of gender equality at all levels through dedicated education programme all contributing to enhance the capacity of the poor to unite, analyse their problems/situations and demand their lawful rights. Nijera Kori is currently working in 14 districts, covering 31 upazilas, 147 unions and 1,168 villages. There are in total 10,633 landless groups with a membership of 216,181 (W:120,631 and M:95,550) representing 97,340 families. Of the total number of members organised, more than half are women.

Context and challenges

In the last working year, organisations such as Nijera Kori had to face some special challenges while conducting their activities. These challenges range from the legal to those involved in working in the field.

Firstly, the Foreign Donations (Voluntary Activities) Regulation Act 2016 states makes it problematic for Nijera Kori landless groups to voice their demands. Section 14 of the law states that any “inimical” or “derogatory” remarks made by such organisations against the constitution, the parliament and other governmental bodies would be considered an offense. Many of the demands by the landless organisation against corruption and for accountability may be deemed “inimical” and “derogatory.”

Secondly, due to the amendment to the Local Government Ordinance 2015, the Union Parishad Chairmen candidates will be now nominated by political parties. As a result, the lowest structure of democratic governance has become part of party politics. This severely curtails the scope for democratic participation and representation for Nijera Kori working areas.

Thirdly, during project preparation, the violence that characterises religious fundamentalism today was not clear. The main target of fundamentalism today is the youth and they are the ones being influenced heavily. As a result, they are making decisions regarding the family's practice of religion, about women's clothing and so on.

Fourthly, the prevalence of violence against women is gradually increasing. Victims are not able to file cases due to pressure of influential people. Even if they do file a case, justice remains uncertain. On the other hand, the new amendment to the child marriage prevention law was

approved in 2016, keeping intact a provision for such marriages under special circumstances. Due to this law, there is now an opportunity for many instances of violence against women to be given legal sanction. On the other hand, the *shalish* (alternative dispute resolution) system of villages is now under control of political leaders, due to their power and wealth. As a result, there are new challenges for the common people in making complaints and receiving justice.

Besides these, the structural causes of impunity when it comes to human rights abuses of minority communities persist. In order to prevent land grabbing, 12 years ago, the government constituted two committees to investigate and monitor cases related to land grabbing. But, according to officials, though several meetings have been held since the formation of the National and District level committees, no effective steps were taken. As a result, various cases of attacks, threats, murder, evictions for unplanned development and other types of human rights abuses against minorities continue.

Planned activities:

The can be broadly analysed through four categories. These are **Organisation and Mobilisation building**: Formation of organisations of the target groups and the strengthening of these organisations, through regular discussions, meetings, collective actions and addressing plan of action to overcome and realise their rights is a key input towards the realisation of their rights. In total, 121 groups were formed against the target of 156 which is 77%. In terms of gender distribution formation of women's group is 91%, while for men this is 61%. At present, the total number of landless groups is 10,633 (W: 6,144 and M: 4,489).

A total of 101,181 (W: 63,386 and M:37,795) meetings were organised against the target of 109,467 (W:67,520 and M:41,947). The rate of achievement is 92% and out of total, 57% group meetings were initiated by the landless groups. In addition to regular group meetings 6,125 (W:3,773 and M:2,352) annual group meetings were held against the target 6,451 (W:3,871 and M:2,580). The rate of achievement is 95%. In these meetings the members review their activities to identify their weaknesses also elect their leaders to institutionalise the culture of democracy.

The landless committees regularly review and monitor their activities, and guide their members to take play active role for the development of collective leadership and monitoring progress. Though there is no plan, as per need 2 landless area committees were formed. At present a total of 356 landless committees at various levels have been active through mobilisation, coordination. A total of 3,405 committee meetings were held against the target 3,453 at village, union, upazila and area level committee. Rate of achievement is 99% for village, 117%; union, 77% for upazila, and 75% for area committees. In addition to regular committee meeting, 1,479 representative and joint were held against target 1,382 which is 93%. In these meetings, representative from different groups, different villages have collectively reviewed their achievements and formulated plan of action to facilitate collective mobilisation for establishing their rights.

Holding of regular group meetings, participating in workshops, trainings and collective mobilisations all contributes to enhance members level of understanding and awareness. Thus, 102 groups (W: 60 and M: 42) were promoted from the primary to secondary level against target 113(W: 68 and M: 45). The rate of achievement is 90% (W: 88% and M: 93%). On the other hand promotions of groups from secondary level to third level was 13 (W: 7 and M: 6) against the

target of 21 (W:13 and M:8). The rate of achievement is 61% (W: 54% and M: 75%). At present there were 6,504 (W: 3,909 and M: 2,581) groups at primary level; 3,601 (W: 1,925 and M: 1,676) groups at secondary level and 542 (W: 310 and M: 232) groups at the tertiary level.

Group savings are collected to support organisational activities and undertake joint economic activities. The rate of contribution is decided by consensus. The groups take full responsibility for managing the accounts, but Nijera Kori staff assists with book keeping. In the reporting period, savings mobilised amounts to Taka 15,969,176. Groups also distributed Taka 10,871,514 among the members to address their personal needs (production and consumption).

Additionally 339 (W: 196 and M:143) groups started collective economic activities with own savings. At present 5,691 (W: 2,732 and M: 2,959) groups were involved in collective economic activities. Groups invested Taka 73,823,786 for various collective economic activities, which gave them a 9,037,746 12% return on investment. As a result of economic activities the collective activities generated work for 7,574 (W: 2,693 and M: 4,881) members for a period of 6 months, meaning 1,363,320 labour days.

Knowledge and capacity building training:

The awareness and basic knowledge gained in the trainings and workshops were deepened by a comprehensive capacity building programme using participatory approach. The programme explored trainings and workshops opportunities both of rights holders aiming to increase awareness of constitutional and legal instruments and processes for ensuring citizen's rights, including gender equality, government procedures, constitutional guarantees and other relevant laws and legal obligations of the State such as use of RTI.

A total of 863 (W: 485 and M: 378) members participated in different trainings against target 2,200 (W: 1,130 and M: 1,070). The rate of achievement is (W: 43% and M: 35%). Out of 657 (W: 485 and M: 378) members participated in core trainings and 206 (W: 115 and M:91) Note that, core training comprising four stages aiming to building understanding about social, economic, cultural and political knowledge as well as organisation and other trainings are issue based capacity building. At the same time 2,404 members (W: 1,492 and M: 912) participated in these follow-up trainings against target 2,550 (:1,340 and M: 1,210). The rate of achievement in terms of participation is 94%. In addition to that, a series of thematic workshops were organised. A total of 2,728 members (W: 1,625 and M: 1,103) participated in these workshops which is 74% against plan. It is to be noted that, as strategic reason due to such seasonal migration, some 36% workshops were held for these landless people when they returned home. In both trainings and workshops, rate of participation of women 5,995 (W: 3,602 and M: 2,393), was high in 20%, which is a clear sign of their interest in acquiring knowledge and taking leadership in initiating social change.

Nijera Kori believes that cultural activities are an integral part of social mobilisation. The program is designed to develop human qualities, increase social consciousness. The program also enables people to conceptualise social injustices and depict them through stories and play to bring changes in the attitudes, overcoming superstition, dependency and ignorance. To enhance awareness and skills 77 (W: 29 and M: 48) members participate in basic level cultural trainings against plan 80 (W: 28 and M:52). In addition to that, 98 (W: 34 and M: 64) cultural group members participated in the day long cultural workshops against plan 100 (W: 33 and M: 67). During trainings and workshops, the participants composed 47 new dramas on different issues. Cultural groups performed 488 drams against plan 480. In addition to that, 7 'Cultural

Long March' were organised on different themes. In the Cultural Long March the troupes make door to door visits in the village and also perform in the *haat* (bazaar) in their area. Through this process Cultural Long March had positive impact in generating public opinion.

Note that, landless cultural groups were invited by 11 upazila level government administrations for performing drama and songs in national and international day celebration events. This means in 35% working upazilas the landless cultural groups received this recognition. It is to be noted that, 46 (W:14 and M:32) members performed for the first time in the drama and peoples song events that were held in public space such as local markets and school grounds. In addition to that, 204 children (girls-41 and boys-163) also participated for the first time in cultural activities. The participation of women and girls in the cultural activities is an indication of women's freedom, empowerment and decision-making.

Mobilisation, accountability and justice:

Landless members submitted 86 Right to Information (RTI) applications to collect information on different matters. 35 of them were women applicants. Through these applications, they received the required information in 75 instances. In addition to that, members submitted 2 appeal applications and 2 complaints to the Right to Information Commission. In both cases hearing sessions were held and the judgment was passed in favour of the landless.

As a result of effective use of RTI (Right to Information), safety-net card distribution lists were reviewed and 97 (W: 51 and M: 46) members were enrolled while ineligible names were deleted from the list. Two water bodies were also made available for common use by the initiative of Upazila Executive Officer at Paikgacha in Khulna district. Also two school management committees were suspended due to violation of election process, therefore formation of ad-hoc committee for arranging formal election. Note that, 3 landless members have been included in the ad-hoc committee in Khanshama and Raygonj working areas. Finally, practice of graft in distribution of student stipends and birth registration cards in Rowmari and Kumarkhali working areas was stopped. These show that through using RTI, the landless organisation improved transparency, accountability at the Union Council, Local Institutions and Government Administration at Upazila level. It indicates promotion of democratic practice at the local level.

On the other hand, landless organisation organised 1,349 collective mobilisations. Of these 932 addressing violence against women, 18 resisting fundamentalism, 206 for establishing rights of the landless over local resources, and 193 addressing local-level corruption and irregularities.

For ensuring justice 32 new legal cases were filed. Among these cases, 8 were filed by the local powerful groups and the rest 24 were filed by the groups. Of the cases filed by the landless groups, 18 cases are concerning violence against women. Against illegal occupation of Khasland by *jotdars*, the landless groups filed 4 cases. On the other hand, the local powerful group filed 6 criminal cases against the landless members and 2 civil cases, whereas landless members filed 2 cases for self-protection. The landless groups are trying to use legal means to establish justice in society and eventually establishing their own rights, while the local powerful group are filing cases only to harass the landless members with the intention of denial of justice. On the other hand, 72 cases have been resolved, of which judgement against 69 (i.e., 96%) cases were in favour of the groups. Among the settled 72 cases, 39 cases were lodged by the local influential groups against landless members and for 36 cases the groups received verdict in their favour.

Advocacy and Alliances: In order to ensure maximum results and wider dissemination towards networking and alliance building for advocacy. The programme built supportive coalitions with civil society groups on specific issues, participated in policy-making processes in an advisory capacity, and organised local level consultations to influence public policy.

Landless organisations held 7,834 dialogue meetings concerning local issues with local civic bodies and local government administration. These dialogue meetings were held 2,590 times at the initiative of the government administration and local institutions and 5,244 times at the initiative of the landless groups. These meetings are positive steps towards from bottom level and initiated by landless organisation to resolve local problems, collecting information, ensuring accountability and establishing rights, and above all recognition of the landless group as a legitimate and strong organisation.

Nijera Kori participated in joint 6 fact findings teams along with 6 other likeminded organisations. Based on the findings jointly organised press conference, press release, advocacy through media, demanding justice etc. resulted in judiciary investigation on the attacks on Hindu minorities of Nasirnagar, and the Indigenous people (Santal) in Gobindaganj Upazila.

On the reporting Nijera Kori has participated in different events of One Billion Rising “Solidarity Against the Exploitation of Women”. Specially, on 14 February Nijera Kori celebrate One Billion Rising Day (OBR) at 31 working areas through rally, gathering discussion meeting and cultural events. Besides, landless organization collected more than 60 thousand signatures.

Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) had globally started Certification approval through Shrimp Farm Audits aiming to only provide a ‘greenwash’ to the industry, thus making it an acceptable industry. This year “Bureau Veritas” audit announced for ‘Kuliarchar Shrimp Farm’ in Cox’s Bazar. Nijera Kori conducted a people-centred monitoring and review audit process at the field level of the appointed auditors of ASC. By being present and having gone to the field where the so called certified farm was ‘located’, Nijera Kori and local activists challenged the ASC auditors and prepared a report. As a result, the certification process was suspended. The key achievement was that Nijera Kori’s people-centred monitoring and review audit process was accepted internationally and is at present being considered to be put in practice in Ecuador, Honduras, and Indonesia as and when such audits are proposed.

Finally, The University of Texas proposed a qualitative research on “Women’s Empowerment in Nutrition Index” covering Bangladesh and India. On principle Nijera Kori has agreed to take part in the community-based research. In the reporting period, Nijera Kori facilitated training with landless group members to develop skills as community-based researchers along with 7 representatives from the Indian partner organisation, Collaborative Research and Dissemination (CORD). Testimony collection was completed and transcription process is ongoing.

Analysis of achievement

Due to the above, the significant qualitative and quantitative changes that have taken place in the working areas of Nijera Kori are reported under three broad themes:

1. Enhancing Governance and accountability
2. Improving Economic situation
3. Ensuring Gender Equality

Enhancing Governance and accountability

Improving Economic situation

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 3271.73 Khasland. Also 206 collective public demonstrations/marches were organised under the leadership of the landless organisations. Landless cultural groups performed for generation public opinion. Additionally, 1,641 dialogues with relevant authorities and submission of memorandum were organised. Also 6 fact finding teams and press conferences were organised. 12 RTI application were submitted and asked information. All these actions contributed to create a positive enabling environment for the landless people to demand their rights over the Khasland.

As result, in the reporting period, the landless groups secured ownership over 3,271.73 acres, registered it in favour of 3,156 landless families, and took physical possession over 516 acres pending registration. The groups also recovered 129 acres of water bodies from illegal occupation of powerful elites and made these water bodies open to all as common resources.

On the other hand, the landless organisation successfully recovered 11.90 acre of private agricultural land, which were illegally occupied by powerful individuals. Among the recovered land, 7 acres were under occupation of shrimp-lords, and the rest were farmland. Additionally, one acre of agricultural land is owned by a marginal farmer.

As a result of this movement for establishing land and water-rights, it can be stated that 3,390 landless families are benefited in terms of food security, and have access to or regained ownership of natural resources. This has also created possibilities for these households to contribute more in sustaining the organisations that gave them these opportunities. The landless group members cultivated rice, pulse and vegetables in the Khasland. They harvested enough food for consumption and also sold some of the excess production for extra income.

Recovery of water bodies created alternative source of income for landless families through fishing and vegetable cultivation during dry season. There are solid evidences of enhanced food security, additional earning opportunities leading to economic empowerment for landless families as a result of their access to natural resources such as Khasland and water bodies.

Ensuring Gender Equality

In the reporting period 15,563 landless male members reported on their participation in domestic work including: helping with cooking (5%); washing (6%); cleaning the house (6%); taking care of children (14%); collecting of fire wood (17%) and taking care of livestock (52%). However out of total male members (95,550) 16% of male members have performed domestic chore. In addition to that, 196,214 landless member household 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 positive change of the societal norms.

In the election of the landless committee's open seats (posts for which both women and men members are eligible to contest), 1,122 women members contested against 1,517 male members in 1,063 open post, and 577 women were elected. The rate of women's success in the election to the committee is 38%. Also, 656 women are represented in 305 different level committees.

Landless organisation were organised 932 collective mobilisation on issue of violence against women. Among these, in 907 of the mobilisation (97%), the landless organisations were successful in materialising their demands. It is worth noting that out of the total 932 movements, 344 movements were initially started by male groups. As result, stopped 28 harassment of girls; 303 case of domestic violence were stopped; 79 maintenance allowance were recovered; 126 child marriages were stopped; 66 Bigamy/Polygamy were stopped; 76 irrational divorces were prevented; 145 dowry marriages were avoided. This is a positive indication to break in the culture of silence is a positive change.

Landless organisations devoted specific attention to ensuring justice and the establishment of the right to inheritance of property. Through 279 collective 109 women got the title of 41.76 acres of land which was till then under the possession of their male family members.

In the reporting period, 1,512 shalish related to women's right and violence against women were organised, 1,438 cases were resolved in favour of the women. 14,487 women and 24,368 men attended for monitoring, while 1,546 women and 3,345 men participated as judges in shalish processes. This data indicates increased active participation of women in the decision making process at the community level.

As result of trainings, workshops and cultural activities 7,312 women members newly started working as labourers in agricultural and other economic sector. Of these women, 2,903 (40%) are either single or from women-headed families – the most vulnerable in society.

On the other hand, 675 women newly started businesses in their local markets (haat), while others also established small shops. All of these significantly contribute in improving their economic position in the society.

Finally, 35 women landless members were selected for the Joyeeta award. This recognition of landless women members by the family, society and the government is an extremely positive step towards women's empowerment and encourages more women to take part in the development process.

Analysis of Value for Money

During the reporting period, programme been received Taka 70,040,797 and expenditure was Taka 67,956,306 for the period of January 2016 to December 2016. As per the cost and benefits analysis, during the reporting period the programme has created economic value of Taka 3,122,810,525. On the basis of the cost and benefits analysis the ratio is (Programme expenditure Taka. 67,956,306/economic value Taka. 3,122,810,525) = **Taka 1: Taka 46**. Note that one Taka generated Tk. **46**. In addition to that, landless organisation spent a total of Taka 2,192,424 in programme implementation and support.

Finally, in the reporting period a total of 180,976 persons have been benefited at the output and outcome level. Each of the beneficiaries on average economically benefited Taka **17,255** (Taka. 3,122,810,525/individual member 180,976)

Out of total landless members, 137,715 (on average 64%) members in December 2016 have been directly involved in building beneficiary group savings. In addition to that, they have been benefited through their economic activities by their own initiative, received safety-net, student stipend, recovered corruption amounts from government, and non-government projects, recovered dowry and inheritance property etc.

Statement of Financial Accounts

During the reporting period January 2016–December 2016 Nijera Kori received financial assistance totalling Taka 58,229,280 from different partner organisations. Others and own sources Taka 11,811,517. Total Taka 70,040,797. The total spending for the reporting period is Taka 67,956,306. Details are in audited financial report.

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 terms, 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 organisation 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 organisation 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 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 realising this goal, Nijera Kori follows a number of principles that Nijera Kori adheres to, and they are:

Nijera Kori emphasises on social mobilisation: 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, 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 analyse 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 organisational capacity so that they are able to claim and/or establish their rights through building their own organisations rather than depending on the agency such as Nijera Kori to act on their behalf.

Nijera Kori does 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 programmes 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 organisation and remains central to Nijera Kori's understanding of poverty and social injustice. Nijera Kori recognises 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 labour 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 organisational autonomy remains with the people. Nijera Kori emphasises on promoting autonomous nature and structure of the working people's organisations 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 organisation. 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 organisation that they facilitate to develop. Nijera Kori strongly believes that democratic management is the key to successfully establish the rights of the poor

1.4 Organisational 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. The General Body, made up of 39 members, is responsible for overall governance and elects a Governing Body, every two years. The role of the Governing Body which meets 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 Coordinator who is responsible for co-ordinating the overall programmes and management of Nijera Kori on regular basis.

Nijera Kori's organisational structure and culture demonstrate the basic organisational principles to which it is committed. Therefore, for linking the grassroots, 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 *anchal* (area) and 31 *upa-kendra* (sub-centre). In its headquarters, there is a central team which is made up of the co-ordinator, 3 central organisers 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 office, reporting and monitoring team, administrative and other support staff. Field level responsibility for these functions are decentralised to the divisional and anchal teams. (see organogram annex- A)

Programmatic Decision-making and reporting:

Democratic decision-making, based on documentation, feed-back and deliberation, is a central organisational 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-related. 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 synthesised 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 organisational culture. It will also help the readers to understand Nijera Kori's organisational strategy.

- Staff at the 31 different sub-centre meet 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 co-ordinator, 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 organisation 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.
- A 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 synthesises the quarterly reports of each division and hence provides an overview of the organisation'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 co-ordinator, the divisional organiser and divisional trainer. The entire bodies of staff elect the central organisers and the central trainers. The only non-elected members in the decision-making structure is the co-ordinator 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.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Description of the programme

2.1 Programme title “Ensuring Democracy, Accountability and Rights for the Poorest”

2.2 The development goal of the proposed programme

The development goal of the proposed programme is to contribute to the establishment of an inclusive and empowered society in Bangladesh through enhanced participation of poorest and socially excluded groups along with indigenous peoples in development, democratic governance and protection of natural resources.

2.3 Proposed Outcome of the programme

Outcome 1: Rights of the landless, ethnic minority and excluded people are established in the proposed areas through strengthened organisation and mobilisation capacities;

Outcome 2: Elected representatives and Government officials become more accountable and pro-poor in their actions and the landless groups have more representation in the local government and/or local level institutions and access to their services;

Outcome 3: Gender equality at family and community level is improved through increased awareness, motivation and advocacy action.

2.4 Who 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 depend on selling of labour as their main source of livelihood. They include wage labourers, 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 labour power to meet their basic needs. However, due to existing structure and organisation of the labour market the poor as a labour-seller have very little or no bargaining power. They must therefore accept wages for their labour, 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 legitimatise 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 recognised rights, while absence of their own organisation prevents them from claiming and establishing these rights. An additional set of cultural norms and practice further undermines the position of women.

Total number of direct target population is 216,181 (W:102,631 and M:95,550). In addition to that, a total number of other individual of landless members households approx 529,875 (W:264,590 and M:265,282) will benefited indirectly from the programme (each families is comprised of 4.3 members, source BBS 2014).

2.5 Programme 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 secondly, 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 programme will be implemented in 1,168 villages in Dinajpur, Sirajganj, Natore, Bogra, Rangpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Comilla, Noakhali, Lakshmipur, Chittagong, Khulna, Kustia, & Tangail districts.

2.6 Nijera Kori's understanding and approach to development

The can be broadly analysed through four categories. These are **Mobilisation and collective capabilities:** Mobilisation of marginalised and socially excluded women and men. Formation of organisations of the target groups and the strengthening of these organisations, through regular discussions, meetings, trainings, workshops, collective actions and addressing measures to overcome and realise their rights is a key input towards the realisation of their needs. Deepening organisation and developing network between organisations as well as supportive groups is a key strategy in developing a broader alliance to strengthen and expand mobilisation, monitoring and collective actions. **Awareness and capacity building training:** The awareness and basic knowledge gained in the trainings and workshops were deepened by a comprehensive capacity building programme using participatory approach. The programme explored trainings and workshops opportunities both of rights holders and duty bearers, aiming to increase awareness of constitutional and legal instruments and processes for ensuring citizen's rights, including gender equality, government procedures, constitutional guarantees and other relevant laws and legal obligations of the State such as use of RTI. **Voice Raising and empowerment:** Gender is an important central theme in the programme in terms of ensuring equality between women and men at individual, family, community and national levels. The programme works to promote increased access and ensure meaningful roles for women in all organisational tiers and leadership, both within the organisations as well as all other local and elected bodies. Increased acceptance and actions of men towards women in leadership roles within the personal and organisational sphere and taking up of women's issues as being central is also an important aspect of this programme and an outcome. **Advocacy and Alliances:** In order to ensure maximum results and wider dissemination towards networking and alliance building for advocacy. The programme built supportive coalitions with civil society groups on specific issues, participated in policy-making processes in an advisory capacity, and organised local level consultations to influence public policy. The nature of awareness building and mobilisation activities encourages others to claim their rights. Thus, every stage of the programme activities included different public opinion and action for achieving outcomes. In addition to that, different networks, like-minded organisations such as "One billion rising Bangladesh", SANGAT, a regional feminist network, Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD), Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA), Transparency Internal Bangladesh (TIB), Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) as well as citizens' organisations in the project.

CHAPTER THREE

2.2 Qualitative achievement against outcome

The key outcomes of Nijera Kori's programme during January to December 2016 can be categorised under four key areas:

2.1 Raising awareness and developing collective capabilities

Access to government services

Mobilisation against corruption

2.2 Enhancing Governance and accountability

Representation in local level institutions

2.3 Improving Economic situation

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

2.4 Ensuring Gender Equality

Establishment of women's rights and empowerment

2.1 Raising awareness and developing collective capabilities

2.1.1 Access to Government Services and Strengthening Wage Bargaining Capacities

Recent study titled "Upazila and Union Parishad Governance: A Study on Institutional Relationships and Linkages" by BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD). The study has found that members of the UP as well as the local citizens tend to perceive the UNO selected representatives as selected by the MP. In reality, in many cases, the UNO is heavily influenced by the ruling party MP in selecting the members of the safety-net Committees. The effect of the bureaucrats and the political pressure from the MP at the UP level should also be taken into consideration. The de facto coalition of the MP and the UNO seriously hinders the governance process of the UPs. The influence of the MP on the Committees deters effective representation, and executive safeguards are compromised. Also, the rent-seeking behaviour of the lower level bureaucrats at the UP level needs to be assessed.

However, despite these challenges, during the reporting period, The government has allocated Tk 452.30 billion under the social safety-net programmes this fiscal year. The allocation is 2.31 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) and 13.28 per cent of the overall budget allocation. We have to ensure that the poor people get maximum benefit from this fund.

The existing safety-net programmes in Bangladesh are marred by fragmentation, weak targeting and inefficiency, the World Bank (WB) said in its Bangladesh Social Protection and Labour Review Report in October 2016. The findings of this report such as at the local level, more than half of the cards that were allocated for taking the benefits of the social safety net programmes, have allegedly been distributed through recourse to bribery. Those bribing the Union Parishad (UP) members can never reach the target group of people for whom the benefits are intended. Also report raised the question about card distribution,

What is happening in rural areas is that the people there tend to sell their votes to the local leaders in UP elections and buy 'cards' for taking the advantage of safety-net programmes from those who are elected. In such a way, the extreme poor - the intended targeted ones for such programmes- are deprived, as the card-buyers are not exactly such ones. This is why the safety-net programmes are not reaching the target group.

Studies have shown that the average benefit of social safety-net programmes in Bangladesh is falling, in real terms, in many cases. There has been considerable leakage of allocated funds and 27 per cent of the beneficiaries have thus been found to be the non-poor. The effectiveness of the social safety-net, analysts do also agree, are undermined by weak targeting, inefficiency and fragmentation, and these have to be addressed, before further expanding their coverage.

The WB, in its report, advised the government to merge its overlapping social safety-net programmes, introduce a unified target, improve administrative efficiency and enhance monitoring so that the benefits do reach those who need them the most.

In this pursuit, over the reporting period, Nijera Kori organised and supported a series of trainings, workshops, cultural programs and started 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 31 applications asking for detailed information regarding the selection of beneficiaries. The groups organised 193 collective mobilisation, memorandum submission with mass signature against corruption and mismanagement of the SSNP. Due to such collective mobilisation and demonstrations, using RTI application etc 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-1**, during the reporting period, as result of collective demand a total 96,036 members (W: 43,661 and M: 52,375) were enrolled under

Description	Total Card	Women	Men	People with Disable	Women headed household and Single women	Student stipends card
Rajshahi	61,018	27,255	30,242	212	3,310	3,521
Dhaka	4,718	2,368	1,953	148	837	397
Chittagong	30,742	9,997	17,041	73	948	3,704
Khulna	10,236	4,041	3,139	134	643	3,056
Total	106,714	43,661	52,375	567	5,738	10,678
BDT	1,051,132,900	430,060,850	621,072,050	0	0	12,813,600

the various SSNP. Of them 22,347 members received their social safety net benefit cards due to the groups' collective pressure which is 23%. Of them 5,738 are women headed household and single women and 567 people with disability. Furthermore, due to protests and demonstrations by the landless groups, 13,842 poor families who are not members of the landless groups were also registered under the programme and another 27,478 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 were assured of food security for a limited period. In addition to that, a total of 10,678 (girls-6,126 and boys-4,552) were enrolled and received student stipend.

The economic value of the goods and services that is received by the beneficiaries under the SSNP including student stipend is equivalent to Taka 1,063,946,500. 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-1 above). The reasons for the high degree of variance is due to extent of geographical coverage of Nijera Kori's work in Rajshahi and

Chittagong divisions, which is larger compared to the other divisions. In Rajshahi, Nijera Kori covers 13 upazilas and working with 4,781 groups with 96,666 members. Additionally, both Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions are considered disaster prone, with many char areas that mostly inhabited by poor.

2.1.2 Mobilisation Against Corruption

More and more we see powers, responsibilities and budgets devolved from the central government down to the local level. From social welfare to commercial licensing, health and education, local governments are playing a greater role designing policies and delivering key public services. Although decentralisation processes can help strengthen accountability by bringing government closer to the people, decentralisation can also present corruption risks since corruption is a problem at all levels of government. Local officials may have greater vested interests based on family, friendship and business ties that can influence decision-making. Wages at the local level can be low in comparison to the national level and institutions designed to hold local public officials to account are not always adequate.

It is at the local level where citizens and the public sector interact most regularly and directly – be it registering for school, attending a health clinic or applying for social housing. So when corruption occurs locally, the impact on citizens' lives can be the most damaging, with the poorest being hit the hardest.

Bangladesh has climbed two steps up, from 13th most corrupt country in 2015 to 15th in 2016 in World Corruption Perception Index (CPI), as reflected in the just released report of Transparency International (TI) entitled "Vicious Circle of Corruption and Inequality Must be Tackled". This year (2016), Bangladesh ranked 15th most corrupt country out of 176 countries, a marginal improvement from the identity as the most corrupted country over the years.

TIB has called upon the government to ensure transparency and accountability, maintain equity in resource allocation and enhance capacity of the local government institutions (LGIs) implementing climate finance projects in Bangladesh. TIB again said strong political will is imperative to control corruption in the country.

The Bengali translation of corruption is *durniti*, which literally means ill practice. The popular definition of corruption is 'the use of public power for personal gain'. The country was incurring a yearly loss of 2-3% in its GDP growth due to corruption, the chief of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) during celebration of International Anti Corruption Day on 9 December 2016 reminds us of our pledge against corruption in the future.

In these contexts 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 193 collective actions, which include street protest, landless organisation submitted 93 applications asking for detailed information regarding the issues. 2,548 dialogue with concerned authorities, elected bodies, 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 six working 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-2** below.

Division and description	Prevention of corruption in education, health sector and recover fund		Increased wages		Prevention of corruption in development project recover fund	Total
	Education	Health	Women	Men	wages	
Rajshahi	437,600	3,379,843	449,200	445,840	2,594,251	7,306,734
Dhaka	181,750	296,724	90,500	104,571	0	673,545
Chittagong	85,350	2,701,539	2,232,300	3,272,500	1,157,810	9,449,499
Khulna	258,400	1,765,740	90,000	55,200	200,000	2,369,340
Beneficiary	5,124	117,619	9,060	4,185	24,073	160,061
Total BDT	963,100	8,143,846	2,862,000	3,878,111	3,952,061	19,799,118

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

period, the landless groups, through their actions against corruption, were able to stooped bribe and save Taka 13,059,007 and also increase their wages by Taka 6,740,111 due to better implementation of development projects. This success was shared by 160,061 landless members, which means, for each member, the economic gain is nearly Taka 124. 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.

2.1.3 Ensuring access to information through using RTI:

In the reporting period, landless members submitted 86 Right to Information (RTI) applications to collect information on different matters. 35 of them were women applicants. Through these applications, they received the required information in 75 instances. In addition to that, 1 landless member received through 3 appeal applications to higher authorities. Additionally, the landless groups submitted 2 complaints to the Right to Information Commission. In both cases hearing sessions were held and the judgment was passed in favour of the landless.

As a result of effective use of RTI, safety-net card distribution lists were reviewed. 297 (W: 151 and M: 146) members were enrolled while ineligible names were deleted from the list. Two water bodies were also made available for common use by the initiative of Upazila Executive Officer at Paikgacha in Khulna district. In addition to that, two school management committees were suspended due to violation of election process (5 members from the same family) and formation of ad-hoc committee. In formation of ad-hoc committee landless organoisation were more active for selection of members thus, resulted, 3 landless members have been included in the ad-hoc committee in Khanshama and Raygonj working areas. 13 landless members were included in Community Clinic Management Committee in Sandwip upazila. Practice of bribe in distribution of student stipends and birth registration cards in Rowmari and Kumarkhali working areas was stopped and 6 women got free benefits of surgery for childbirth in Kumarkhali. 24 applications by landless members for khasland distributions were accepted. Ensure facility for using Government ambulance free of cost in Saghata. 41 landless members were received government agricultural and tailoring training and got spray machine and sewing machine. These show that through using RTI, the landless organisation improved transparency, accountability at the Union Council, Local Institutions and Government Administration at Upazila level. It indicates promotion of democratic practice at the local level. Increased number of excluded women and men now has access to Government services.

2.2 Governance and accountability issues

2.2.1 Governance, Accountability and Representation in Local Bodies/Committees

According to the governance structure of Bangladesh, Local Government is one of the most essential institutions of democracy. On 30th December 2015, the Government of Bangladesh has reviewed the Local Government (Amended) Act, 2009. The amendments aimed to replace the existing non-partisan elections of the local government with partisan ones. Unfortunately, this was done without any dialogue between the government and the stakeholders. Consequently, eyebrows have been raised about the real motives of the government. Our question is: why was it carried out so hastily? Was it to improve the performance of the system or an attempt to bring the local government system firmly under the party in power?

One of the key components of Representation of People's Order (RPO) is that the political parties follow its own constitutions, as well as the RPO to promote the practice of democracy within the parties. But through the amendment, the existing local government bodies will be captured by means of partisan elections. The ruling party can avail the opportunity to control all political institutions. This would be absolutely threatening for a democratic practice. It is also feared that it will increase the criminalisation in politics. Politicians, local government experts and other civil society members say that the new system of partisan Union Parishads (UP) polls might destroy the value system cherished so long at the local level. As observed in the past, chairmen and members were elected at Union Parishads on the basis of their family background and reputation for social works. They belonged to no party but were elected through votes in cognisance of their social works in the locality. In a dialogue, "Political Parties and Democracy in Bangladesh", organised by Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), former adviser to the caretaker government M Hafizuddin Khan said "with the partisan elections, the local Government would become even weaker than what it was before as violence would intensify over holding of its leadership in the days to come." (The Daily Observer, 17 May, 2016) In addition to that, in the same dialogue the Water Resources Minister Anisul Islam Mahmud, said, "The political parties have become the parties of one-man show. This has worsened the problems."

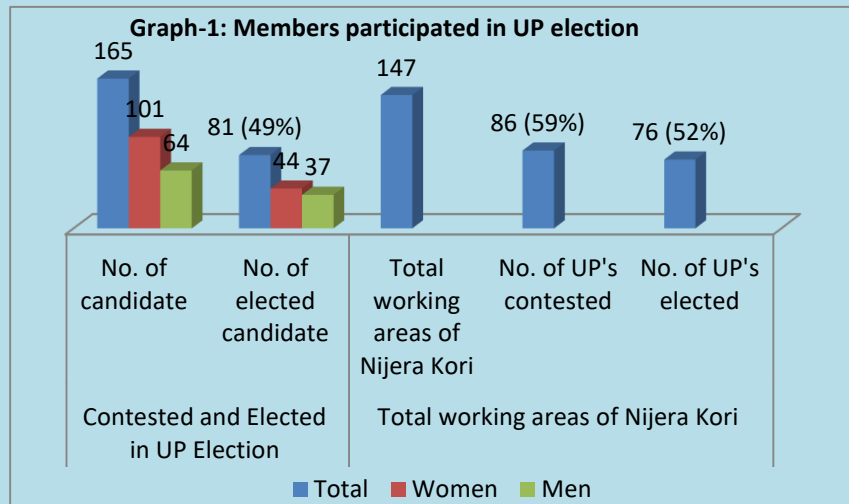
"Was it to improve the performance of the system or an attempt to decisively bring the local government system under the supreme control of party in power?" was the concern expressed by landless people. The authorities have to understand that when local government will be subsumed by the 'party-archy,' it will affect the local government system. Besides this, extreme polarisation will also affect the local decision-making process. Already, member candidates are indirectly developing collaboration with chairman candidates as political panels for contesting in the election. Thus, the whole election will be controlled by the political parties. However, during the reporting period, elections were held in 4,085 UP out of 4,555 Union Parishad. At the end of this, the Election Commission announced that among chairman seats, the ruling party, Awami League (AL), won 2,479, Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) in 372, other parties in 28, and independent candidates 880. It is to be noted that almost all of the independent candidates belonged to AL. It is in this political context that the landless organisation contested against political power and influence in the Union Parishad elections and other local committees.

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 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. Despite this above mentioned challenges the outcome is presented below.

2.2.2 Participation in Election of Union Parishad

Graph-1: show that, during the reporting period 165 (W:101 and M:64) landless members



contested in Union Parishad (UP) election against political power groups. Out of 81 (W:44 and M:37) were elected. The graph also shows that, rate elected members women are 17% more than (W:54% and M:46%) male members. One of women members was elected as vice chairmen. It is to be noted that, at present Nijera Kori's working UP are 147, among them

landless members contested in 44% working UP and also elected in 27% of working UP. This rate is significantly indicates presence of strong landless organisation around half of working UP. It is to be noted that, out of total elected members 76% are re-elected. One landless member contested as chairman but he lost only 4 votes against political candidate. On the other hand landless organisation supported 5 well-wishers and out of 5 candidates 3 were elected as chairman. These data indicate that, gradually increased power sharing within society and between power holder and landless organisation. This is a significant achievement in order to acceptance, quality and accountable leadership of landless organisation.

Box 1:

Once a victim of poverty and deprivation, today, Marium is a leader of social change

Marium was born in a rural part of Payrabondho village of Rangpur district, where even a few years back, women used to be married off to trees. There, the life of a woman is one of deprivation and oppression. When she was married, she was not even old enough to understand marriage. Her husband, a day labourer, earned little. So her life continued in poverty, hunger and neglect. If her husband found any work, they would have something to eat. Otherwise, she would have to go hungry or be subject to violence. For Marium, this was life.

One day, Marium decided to join the landless organisation. Gradually, she came to understand the causes of discrimination, unequal power relations and deprivation in society. She dreamt of change. She spread her dream of changing the discrimination and deprivation of society among other deprived and oppressed men and women in the village. They started following her. Her identity started to change – from

a poor woman, she became a leader for change in society. Marium came to stand for the power of thousands of men and women. This, of course, threatened the existing powerful elites of the society.

A clash for power emerged. Landless men and women started to claim their demands in decision making. They demanded the establishment of justice. This was anathema to the powerful and the fundamentalist quarters. Marium had to face many attempts of attacks and harassment. Her leadership, acceptance and dream for change became an alternative power in society. The powerful and fundamentalists had to repeatedly bow to her leadership. The clash for power continued.

It was jointly decided by the landless members that Marium would contest the Union Parishad elections in 1997. She had no posters, money or scope to treat people with tea and snacks. All she had were the processions by the people. She was elected as a member of the Payrabondho Union Parishad. From the beginning, as a representative, she acted as the voice of the landless: she took up their demands in the Union Parishad. Her power resided in the voice of the thousands. With this, she faced the battle for power with the local powerful elites.

To the landless organisation, her accountability, transparency and leadership gained her dignity in the society. In every election, the other members would change. But Marium was elected as a member thrice in a row. Today, she is not only a member of the Union Parishad, but a leader of the poor and deprived men and women.

In 2016, her husband died on the day of the election. Marium still won, proving that with the support of the landless men and women, one need not resort to abuse of power, illegal votes or collusion with the administration. What is needed is transparency of work, accountability to the public, and responsibility towards the general people. From being born a poor, deprived and illiterate woman, Marium became a symbol and leader for change in her society.

2.2.2 Participation in Election of Various Local Committees

Since Independence, private enterprises continue to run in the private sector. However, the government would give allowances of a few institutions to a maximum of Tk 75. Since 1980, the educational institutions are affiliated to Monthly Pay Order (MPO). Since then, the government has paid 50 percent of the basic salary. Since then, it has continued to grow. The government is giving 100 percent salaries since 2004. And in 1977, the private secondary school management committee rules were formulated to run private educational institutions. In 2009 the Governing Body (GB) and managing committee regulations were amended. According to section 5 of the Governing Body and Managing Committee Regulations, 2009, an MP can be the head of the managing committees up to four private schools and colleges, and section 50 empower them to form a special committee in private educational institutions.

As a result of Writ Petition challenge these two sections, The High Court declared two sections of the Governing Body and Managing Committee Regulations, 2009 as illegal as those allow MPs to lead the managing committees or governing bodies of private schools and colleges.

However, As per the HC order, no Member of Parliament will be allowed to hold the post of chairman of the managing committee or the governing body of any private school and college..

Despite this High court verdict, the local parliament members could have been the Governing Body of four educational institutions (GB) and the School Board of Directors (SMC). But the court's judgment to cancel the scope of the Member of Parliament (MPs) is canceled. Although the MPs are forced to leave, they are now running their educational institutions, their wives, sons and daughters. Apart from this, local powerful political leaders are being president of many educational institutions; especially the leaders of the ruling political parties. As a result, those who have the opportunity to play a role in the development of the educational institutions are not getting the opportunity. Even if the directive of the court is said to be announced, the post of president is stuck as before. Presidents are elected without election. Despite this undemocratic control by political powerful groups, the landless women and men members have contest in Governing Body Election of schools.

Table 10 shows that, during the reporting period, a total of 450 group members (W:149 and M:301) contested against the local powerful elite in the election of the school, market and sluice gate management committees (see Annex Table-18.) Of the 450 candidates from the landless groups, 285 got elected. Among the candidates who got elected 90 were women and 195 men. This gives a success rate of 63%. Among elected members for women the rate being 60% and men, 65%.

Again, as reported in annex table (annex table 18-A), the electoral success of landless groups in terms of their representations in local committees varies.

Name of committee	Gender	Election process				Nomination process		
		School	Market	Sluice Gate	Total	Policing	Community clinic	Total
Contested Candidate	Women	139	3	7	149	0	0	0
	Men	171	107	23	301	0	0	0
	Total	310	110	30	450	0	0	0
No. of elected bodies		274	50	11	335	0	0	0
Elected/ Nominated Members	Women	86	2	2	90	5	17	22
	Men	102	79	14	195	5	19	24
	Total	188	81	16	285	10	36	46
No. of elected bodies		133	43	10	186	7	23	30

In above table 10 shows that during the reporting period, newly a total 34 landless members (W:10 and M:24) were nominated in various local bodies. Policing committee (10) and Community clinic management committee (24) members selected by elected representative and government administration. This is an positive indication of acceptance of strong landless leadership and ensure representation in monitoring and decision making process.

Finally, during the reporting period 23 (W:1 and M:22) landless members were included in *Jongi* (religious extremist force) Protection Committee. It is to be noted that, formation of *Jongi* (militant force) Protection Committee is under process of being formed through the initiative of the Government. Nomination of landless members in this committee shows the recognition of landless group actions and activities against fundamentalism. This portrays the dynamic changes of the landless group acceptance, empowerment and leadership in society.

2.2.3 Representation in the Union Parishad Standing Committee

According to research titled "Improving Services: The Role of Union Parishad Standing Committees" March, 2015 findings that, as per the union parishad act 2009, each UP is supposed to form at least 13 standing committees on different issues like education, health, family planning, social welfare and disaster management, and agriculture, fisheries and livestock.

The committees, comprising elected representatives from the Union Parishads, civil society members, socially respected persons and women representatives of that locality, are entitled to assist the UP for ensuring better services and resolving different problems. However, these committees are not active in about 90 percent of the Union Parishad because the elected chairmen and other members are not properly aware and interested about its functions and jurisdictions,

The recent study "Union Parishad Governance: A Study on Institutional Relationships and Linkages" July 2016 conducted by BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD) found that, the effect of the bureaucrats and the political pressure from the MP at the UP level should also be taken into consideration. The de facto coalition of the MP and the UNO seriously hinders the governance process of the UPs. The influence of the MP on the Committees deters effective representation, and executive safeguards are compromised. Also, the rent-seeking behaviour of the lower level bureaucrats at the UP level needs to be assessed. 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, 139 landless members (W:64 and M:75) were nominated in 116 Union Parishad Standing Committees. This makes the women's participation rate 46% (**see Table-18 in annex**). 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 in 79% Union Parishad (116 out of 147) the landless groups succeeded in securing their positions in the SC (see table 18 in annex).

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.

2.2.3 Participation in Shalish as Judge and Observer

Samaj is the unique social organization in peasant society of Bangladesh. The role of Samaj was much more effective then compared the present. In course of time, belief and dependency among the Samaj members have decreased. The relationship within the Samaj structure now is just like between patron and client. At present many young people in the village, especially the political ones have connection with outside political power groups. So the young ones show more power and control Samaj and traditional shalish system. Bangladesh Village: A Study of Peasant Power and Politics December 2014.

Millions of Bangladeshis, each year, continue to pursue justice using traditional methods of mediation and dispute resolution. The most common of these is shalish, the system by which arguments are discussed and resolved by community members. While many shalish yield fair and just results accepted by all, many others result in illegal and abusive settlements distorted by class, gender, and religious bias.

In 2015, the minister of law, justice, and parliamentary affairs set an ambitious goal of 90% of disputes in Bangladesh to be resolved out of court, noting a backlog of more than three million cases in the formal court system (government efforts since have reduced this figure, but it remains too high). At the same time, he emphasised that informal justice proceedings at the community level must be consistent with the laws of the land, sensitive to women and free of bias against the poor. Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST). But the question is that, at present dispute resolution system highly control by the political leaders. Thus access to traditional is system under challenge and poorest and excluded peoples have limited access and opportunity for getting justice.

In view to ensure justice, the landless organisations are increasingly becoming 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/nepotism they create collective pressure on the judges.

Nasima's protest against dowry changed her life

Nasima Begum and Hamidul were from adjacent Unions. They were married mid-2014, and the dowry was set at Tk. 20,000. At the time of the marriage, Nasima's father paid the full amount to Hamidul. But, within six months of the marriage, he started demanding another 20,000 saying that he was going to start a business. Nasima's husband and parents-in-law started inhumanely torturing her for the money. She kept quiet and bore the violence for a long time. Meanwhile, a child was born to them. But, even this did not change Hamidul's behaviour towards her. He said that Nasima would not be allowed to go to her parents' house till the money was paid. As days passed, the violence increased as well. Nasima decided to leave for her father's house, which further angered Hamidul. The same night, he went to his father in law's house to bring back Nasima. When Nasima refused to go back, he started beating her again.

Seeing this, Nasima's father informed the landless leader Jasim Uddin. Jasim Uddin along with a few others promptly arrived at Nasima's house. Hamidul immediately started thinking he had made a mistake, and started asking for forgiveness. The landless leaders asked Hamidul to stay the night at Nasima's place, and informed his father to come the next day. In the morning, Hamidul's father and other relatives showed up at Nasima's house in Ghuridaha union of Saghata upazila. The landless organisation organised a *shalish* with three arbitrators from each family. They listened to both sides. Then the landless organisation asked the jury from Hamidul's side for their opinion. They said what Hamidul did was a crime, and in supporting this, his father has been guilty too. The jury unanimously decided that dowry was a criminal offense, and violence due to dowry was an ever greater crime. Hamidul and his father asked forgiveness from everyone present. Besides, Hamidul's father also promised to help Nasima start a business with Tk. 10,000.

Nasima returned back to her in-laws' house and joined the local landless organisation. With the money from her father-in-law, she started rearing poultry. The landless organisation regularly extended their support. At the same time, there has been a change in Hamidul's behaviour. Previously, he never spent time with his child. Now, whenever he gets the time, he takes him out. He used to spend all his time gossiping around in the marketplace. Now he regularly goes to work. Nasima's scope for expressing her opinions in the family has increased significantly as well.

Division and issues	No. of shalish	Arranged by		Result			On process	Recover Tk. as punishment
		Group	Group and local leader	Settled	Stopped	Cases		
Rajshahi	445	425	20	404	6	2	4	1,641,600
Dhaka	138	104	34	130	3	1	2	750,000
Chittagong	1,316	1,052	264	1,275	12	4	8	2,165,901
Khulna	141	127	14	113	16	3	13	473,500
Total	2,040	1,708	332	1,922	37	10	27	5,031,001

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. Consequently, in several instances, the landless group members were invited to join the *shalish* as judges along with the powerful people. In the reporting period, landless group members participated in 2,040 *shalish* for resolution of different issues. Of the total in 16% or 332 *shalish*, the landless group members played the role of judges along with the local leaders, while the other 82% were conducted solely by the members (See Table-4 in above).

In the reporting period, landless group members participated in 2,040 *shalish* for resolution of different issues. Of the total in 16% or 332 *shalish*, the landless group members played the role of

judges along with the local leaders, while the other 82% were conducted solely by the members (See Table-4 in above). Out of total *shalish* in which the landless group members participated as judges, 74% of cases were regarding violence against women; 14% concerning land property disputes; 12% about injustice and oppression; and very few on fundamentalist activities. In addition to their role as judges, the landless members played an important role in monitoring the cases.

As reported in the Table-5, in the reporting period, 24,368 members (W: 9,881 and M: 14,487) 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, 53%; Rajshahi, 36%; Khulna, 7%;

Division	Observer			Judge		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
Rajshahi	4,173	4,509	8,682	308	556	864
Dhaka	294	589	883	108	304	412
Chittagong	4,702	8,339	13,041	979	2,219	3,198
Khulna	712	1,050	1,762	151	275	426
Total	9,881	14,487	24,368	1,546	3,354	4,900

and Dhaka, 4%. Due to active engagement of the landless members in the *shalish*, 37 criminal cases were not entertained by the *shalish* but referred to a formal Court of Law. Also table 12 shows that, a total 4,900 members (W: 1,546 and M: 3,354) participated as judges in *shalish*.

Participation of landless members as judges by division is: Chittagong, 65%; Rajshahi, 18%, Khulna, 9%; and Dhaka, 8% (see Table-5). As a result of participation of landless group members, 1,922 cases were successfully settled in favour of the real victim. Through the *shalish*, the landless organisation could recover Taka 5,031,001; mainly on account of dowry payment; cost of family maintenance treatment cost; and wage compensation.

2.3 Improving Economic Stuation

2.3.1 Access to Natural Resources (Khasland Water Bodies Owned by the Government)

According to an article published in New Age on 15 July, 2016, "A high-powered national executive committee and its district chapters formed 12 years ago to check land grabbing by influential groups and individuals failed to deliver." The 12-member national executive committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary was formed in 2004 and assigned "to receive complaints and monitor investigations into land grabbing incidents. The land ministry secretary was made the member secretary of the national committee while the attorney general and secretaries of the ministries of home, forests and environment, housing and public works, information, law and the Prime Minister's Office, the inspector general of police, the solicitor of law ministry and a land law expert were its members."

At the same time, five-member district level committees were also formed, led by deputy commissioners "to take measures to check land grabbing as well as to [take] action against individuals and groups found involved with land grabbing." The national committee was also tasked to recommend department and legal actions against the government officials involved in land grabbing.

However, since the time of the articles, according to officials, only a few meetings were held since national and district levels committees were formed. No effective action was taken to check land grabbing. The grabbing of government khas land and minority properties continued unabated.

A senior official quoted in the report blamed the deputy commissioners and other senior government officials for making this committees, formed to protect land belonging to the government as well as private citizens, ineffective.

In Bangladesh, the process of redistributing state-owned land, commonly named as *khas* land, to landless people started in the 1980s and is laid out in several policy documents. Since in the context of the country, land is not only a resource of livelihood, but a symbol of social status and security, access to land can make a significant change in the lives of poor households. In a country where approximately 25% of the population live below the poverty line and more than 10% are still considered as extreme poor, the distribution of *khas* land could have a serious impact for the poor and for society as a whole (General Economics Division (GED), 2015a).

This can have the double benefit of generating new income opportunities leading to poverty reduction and to agricultural growth. In their report for the preparation of the 7th Five Year Plan (SFYP), Sen and Ali underlined analytical relevance and potential of the *khas* land distribution as a powerful tool to reduce the poverty situation of landless and near landless.

But the government has formulated some the contradictory policies and plans which are affecting land rights of the landless peoples. The government is creating a 'land bank' of 100,000 acres comprised of *khas* land and Char land to help domestic and foreign investors set up their factories without any hassle in Bangladesh, said the principal secretary to the Prime Minister. He mentioned that the 100,000 acres would include the special economic zones that the government plans to set up. The Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority is working to build 77 zones over the next 10 to 15 years. According to the latest assessment of the land ministry, there are a total of 18,43, 704.80 acres of *khas* land in the country. Of this, the government can rent out 3 49,630 acres of agricultural *khas* land and 1, 07,933 acres of non-agricultural *khas* land.

On the other hand, Bangladesh has long faced a severe challenge on regarding possession of land, with thousands of people losing their homes and their lands due to floods and other natural calamities. In this context the Government of Bangladesh initiated plans to construct 2,500 cluster villages across the country to ensure housing for all.

It is a challenge for the government to continue both industrialisation and protect agricultural lands. The recent trend has been a new wave of corporate land grabbing and control, as can be seen from the creation of a land bank and construction of cluster villages instead of distribution of agricultural land. Several studies recommended that distribution of *khas* land has a potential of reducing inequalities in the society and can contribute to poverty reduction as well as a pro-poor economic growth in the rural areas. In addition, granting equal land rights for women can increase their confidence and their bargaining power (Sourav, 2015). The distribution of *khas* land therefore helps reduce the gender gap as well.

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 advocacy and alliances with other 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, 206 collective public demonstrations/marches were organised under the leadership of the landless organisations. The landless cultural groups performed during these marches. Additionally, 1,641 dialogues with relevant authorities and submission of memorandum were organised. Also 6 fact

finding teams and press conferences were organised. 12 RTI application were submitted and asked 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 5th 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 demarcating 3,787.73 acres of Khasland. Of this amount, in the reporting period, the landless groups secured ownership over 3,271.73 acres, registered it in favour of 3,156 landless families, and took physical possession over 516 acres pending registration. The groups also recovered 129 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-6**) in the below.

Division	Khasland and Water Bodies (Acres)							Economic Value		
	Reg. of Khas land	Posse. of Khasland	Posse. of W.B leased	Water body opened	Rec. land from Shrimp Farm	Rec. land of Farmers from illegal occupiers	Rec. Inheritance property in favour of women	Total	Bene. Household	BDT
Rajshahi	8.95	0.6	1.57	0	0	3.04	28	42.16	1,044	23,188,000
Dhaka	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	550,000
Chittagong	3,259.68	515.4	2.43	15.60	0	0.86	3.96	3,797.93	3,156	1,709,068,500
Khulna	3.1	0	1	113.4	7	1	8.8	134.3	1,721	73,865,000
Total	3,271.73	516	5	129	7	4.90	41.76	3,975.39	5,922	1,806,671,500

Reg-Registration, Posse- Possession, Rec- Recovering, Bene-Beneficiary, EV- Economic Value, WB- Water Bodies

Additionally, the landless organisation successfully recovered 11.90 acre of private agricultural land and water bodies, which were illegally occupied by powerful individuals. Among the recovered land, 7 acres were under occupation of shrimp-lords, and the rest were farmland. Of the land recovered one acre of agricultural land is owned by a marginal farmer and 41.76 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 1,806,671,500. 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-20 in annex, it is evident that the success was highest in Chittagong division.

The Chittagong division being the coastal belt of Bangladesh has large tracts of Khaschar land, so 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 and water-rights, it can be stated that 3,390 landless families are benefited in terms of food security, and have access to or regained ownership of natural resources. This has also created possibilities for these households to contribute more in sustaining the organisations that gave them these opportunities.

2.3.2 Sustainable Economic Empowerment through Utilisation of Natural Resources

Given the reality on the ground such as considerable landlessness, historical inequities, and widespread land grabbing, the Land Use Policy, 2001 failed as a tool for striking a balance between efficient and equitable utilisation of land resources. Considering the limitations of the existing national land use policy, a revision of the national land policy is desirable during the Seventh Five Year Plan period in order to make it more comprehensive by providing guiding principles on appropriate and sustainable use of specific types of land, sectoral and cross-sectoral land use, and environmental management. But creating a land bank for commercial investment, economic zoning, constructing infrastructure etc. will reduce the access of landless people to access and use the agricultural and non-agricultural land for securing their food and livelihood. In this context, 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 harvested enough food for consumption and also sold some of the excess production for extra income.

Table-7: Agricultural Production and Economic Value January to December 16

Description	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Khulna	Chittagong	Total
Paddy production	5,379	45	28,999	34,465	68,888
Pulse production	50	0	247	297	594
Fish production	1,793	0	1,098	3,924	6,815
Vegetables production (taka)	93,439,420	511,100	9,359,053	14,707,200	118,016,773
Beneficiary families	21,228	438	10,139	12,547	44,352
Economic Value BDT	102,280,660	542,600	29,891,514	4,367,3861	176,388,635

Recovery of water bodies created alternative source of income for landless families through fishing and vegetable cultivation during dry season. In most cases not only the landless members but also the community were able to harvest fish for themselves and also for market.

There are solid evidences of enhanced food security, additional earning opportunities leading to economic empowerment for landless families as a result of their access to natural resources such as Khasland and open water bodies.

Table-7 shows that the economic value of agriculture produce such as paddy, pulse and vegetables is equal to Taka 176,388,635. This benefited 44,352 household. On average each of the families earned Taka 3,977.

2.4 Gender

2.4.1 Women's Empowerment and Establishment of Women's Rights

The Constitution of Bangladesh affirms equal rights for women and men. Bangladesh ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1984. It has since issued guidelines for addressing sexual harassment, as well as promoting gender parity in school enrolment and set quotas for women's representation in Parliament. The National Council for Women and Children Development is chaired by the Honorable Prime Minister. A gender responsive budgeting has been developed, as well as a women development policy. A national action plan to that effect was developed in 2013.

In addition to that, the Government of Bangladesh has taken a number of legal steps against domestic violence, such as enacting the Suppression of Violence against Women and Children Act 2000, the National Human Rights Act, 2009 and the Domestic Violence Act 2010. The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) has formulated a National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and Children (2013-2015). But, the legal process to counter gender based violence is complex due to procedural gaps. There is also a dearth of information on state interventions towards preventing and responding to violence.

In Bangladesh there are a number of special legislations to address domestic violence against women, but implementation of these legislations is weak. According to the Human Development Report 2016 published by UNDP, the position of Bangladesh was 139 (Medium human development category) among 188 countries. Despite a promotion of ranking and several initiatives taken by both government and non-government organisations, violence against women did not decreased in the country.

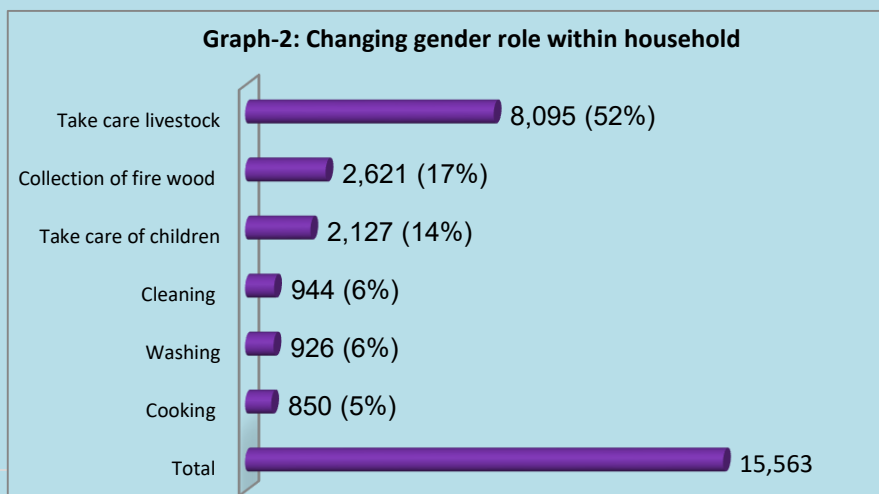
According to Human Rights Situation in Bangladesh 2016 report by Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), though cases were filed against the accused on various occasions for torture, the victims and their families were forced to reconcile due to procrastination of trials.

Violence against women is a manifestation of unequal power relation between women and men leading to discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full-advancement of women. In this context, Nijera Kori and the landless organisation recognise that gender inequalities are socially constructed. So, women's empowerment requires transformation of current political and social relations, and control over economic resources. Nijera Kori's work therefore focuses on enhancing 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.

2.4.2 Changes within the Household

According to a study “Women do unpaid work five times more than men” by Action Aid Bangladesh in 2013, unless and until such realities are recognised and responded with appropriate policies, institutional structures and monetary instruments, it will be impossible for achieving real equality in the society. Women spend five times more time on unpaid household chores than men, an effort that remains unrecognised both at family and national levels,

According to an Action Aid study in 2016 “women spend 5.9 hours a day on care work, with 56 percent of the time on cooking. Household chores, child and elderly care account for the rest.” In contrast, men spend only 1.1 hours on such work. On the other hand, the study shows that the gender gap in care work decreased in 2015 compared to 2013 among respondent households, mainly due to women's increasing mobility, social networking and their participation in income generating activities. Such recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work is essential to increase women's equal participation and control over their incomes, and will contribute to women's social and economic empowerment,



Gender relations within the household are important aspects 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 groups. This has created some space for women to claim their rights within their homes. 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. They spoke of better participation in the household decision making process.

According to our data (see **Graph-2**), 15,563 landless male members reported on their participation in domestic work including: helping with cooking (5%); washing (6%); cleaning the house (6%); taking care of children (14%); collecting of fire wood (17%) and taking care of livestock (52%). It is to be noted that, the highest number of male participation was in taking care of livestock and lowest participation was in washing. Findings indicate an increasing level of respect and acceptance of women in the society. However out of total male members (95,550) 16% of male members have performed domestic chore. In addition to that, 196,214 landless member household 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 positive change of the societal norms.

2.4.3 Women Leadership within Landless Organisation

A woman's domestic decision-making power shapes her public power – can she choose to go out alone, attend public meetings or challenge community norms? Education and employment outside the home can increase women's power and status within the family and community. Indicated that empowerment is understood not only as an extrinsic control over resources (human, Financial, intellectual), but also as a growing intrinsic capability, seen through greater self- confidence and an inner transformation of women's consciousness that enables one to overcome external barriers.

According to the "Global Gender Gap report 2012 by World Economic Forum" Bangladesh has been ranked 8th globally in terms of political empowerment of women due to current government's pro-women policies (Published in 15 November 2015 Financial Express). On the other hand Global Gender Gap Index 2016 prepared by World Economic Forum Bangladesh is ranked 72 among 144 countries in the world. Published 1st November 2016 in The daily Star. However, these are mostly economic perspective. On the other hand according to Human Development Report 2016 published by UNDP, the position of Bangladesh among 188 countries was 139 (Medium human development category). This clearly shows that, though increasing trend of women economic empowerment but in light of human position of ranking is huge gap exists.

According to Hossain (WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT: A TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF BANGLADESH-2015) "Gender Equality" and "Women's Empowerment" have been two of the most pervasive themes in development. Unless women are involved in the decision and policymaking process at all levels of the state, changes in women's political and to some extent social and economic status will continue to be marginal. The term refers to the improvement of women conditions in every sphere of life. However, it indicates over all development of drawback classes of society to bring them in an advanced situation, almost at the same level to make women capable to organize themselves for enhancing their self reliance, affirming their

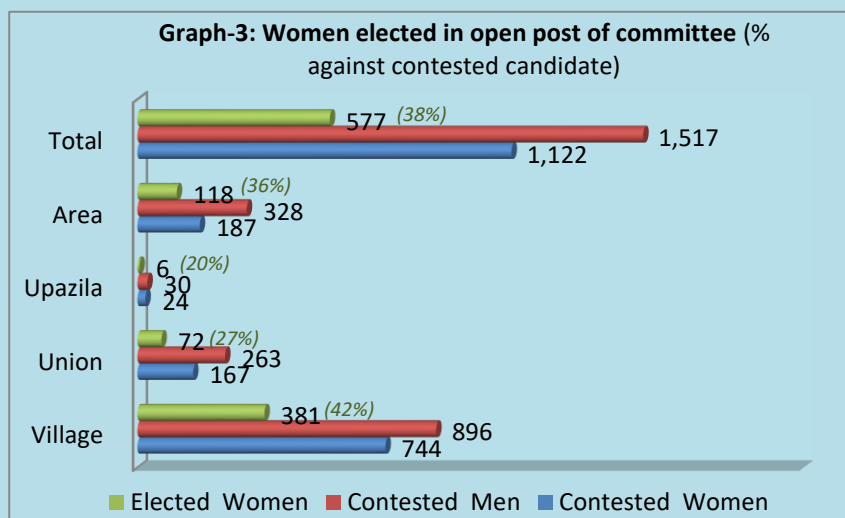
self determining right for comprising choices and charging resources and these capabilities will help to take challenge and to break their own subordination position in the society.

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), 1,122 women members contested against 1,517 male members in 1,063 open post, and 577 women were elected. The rate of women's success in the election to the committee is 38%. Also, 656 women are represented in 305 different level committees.



Data presented in **Graph-3** also shows that the highest number of women's participation in the election as well as success was in Rajshahi division, followed by Chittagong division. The higher rate 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, 8 are from the "excluded or ethnic minority" communities. Acceptance of ethnic minorities in the leadership position is another signal of positive change.

2.4.4 Raising Collective Voice and Encouraging Participation of Men in Movements to Stop Violence against Women

According to the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW), Bangladesh has the fourth-highest rate of child marriage (before age 18) in the world. Bangladesh has the highest rate of marriage of girls under the age of 15 in the world, with 29 percent of girls in Bangladesh married before by age 15, according to a UNICEF study titled “Ending Child Marriage” 2013.

Two percent of girls in Bangladesh are married before the age of 11. Rights based organisations have detailed the damage that early marriage does to the lives of girls and their families in Bangladesh, which include the discontinuation of secondary education, serious health consequences including death as a result of early pregnancy, abandonment, and domestic violence from spouses and in-laws. Therefore, the government proposal to lower the age of marriage for girls in special circumstances sends the opposite message. These organisations fear that this provision in the law will reduce the access to education for girls while increasing social pressure, harassment, and strengthen norms of seeking dowry during marriage.

The government is trying to promote education for girls, but this decision is similar to narrowing the window of opportunity. It is also in contradiction with the government's other initiatives to reduce violence against women. By reducing the marriage age, we are reinforcing the existing norm of devaluation of girls.

Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), in Human Rights Situation in Bangladesh 2016, mentioned that despite protests from various organisations for women empowerment and human rights, the Child Marriage Act, 2016 was passed in the cabinet. According to this law, though the minimum marriageable age for girls was kept 18, the age factor can be relaxed with the consent of the High Court and that of the parents of the child for the “best interest of the people concerned”.

According to Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, a total of 4,896 women and girls were subjected to multiple forms of torture throughout 2016. A BRAC report from March 30, 2016 titled “Our Role in Preventing Violence against Women’ programme” shows that violence against women rose by 74 percent in 2015 compared to the year before. This report also mentioned that according to the Bangladesh Police website, a total of 17,752 cases were filed in 2010 for violence against women and children. The number of such cases was 21,220 in 2015, which is 20 percent more than 2010.

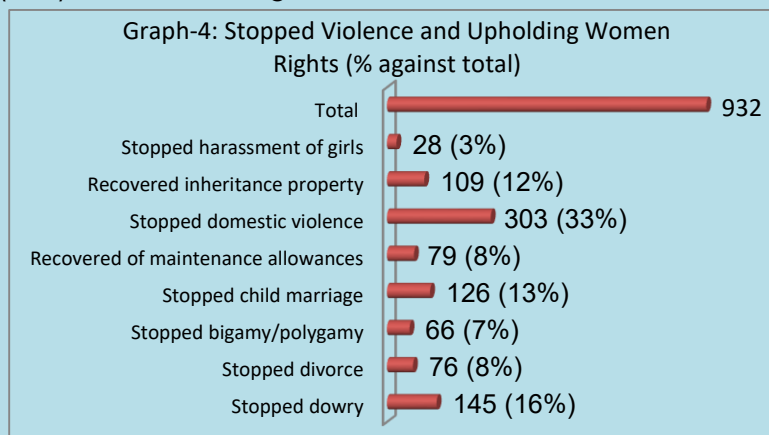
The report also shows poor women are subjected to violence relatively more (54 percent) because of social discrimination. In addition to that, according to the survey on violence against women published by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics in 2015, only 23 percent of women talk about their torture and only 3 percent contact the police or other organisation for legal assistance.

In these contexts, the landless organisation, through regular group meetings, monitor incidents of violence against women within their groups and in the society. Furthermore, the landless ‘Watch Sub-committee 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 against 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 Table-22 (in annex), in the reporting period, 932 movements on violence against women were organised collectively. Among these, in 907 of the movements (97%), the landless organisations were successful in materialising their demands. It is worth noting



that out of the total 932 movements, 344 movements were initially started by male groups.

Due to these movements **Graph-4** shows that, 28 stopped harassment of girls, 109 women successfully recovered 41.76 acres of land from the parents' and husbands' sides where demand were raised 279.

This indicates the establishing of legal rights of women. These permanent assets contribute to improve the economic condition and positions of the women. These permanent assets contribute to improve the economic condition and positions of the women. 303 case of domestic violence were stopped. 79 maintenance allowance were recovered; 126 child marriages were stopped; 66 Bigamy/Polygamy were stopped; 76 irrational divorces were prevented; 145 dowry marriages were avoided;

2.4.5 Ensuring Justice and Access to Inheritance Property

Shalish is an important informal institution in the rural society of Bangladesh. However, increasingly the village shalish has become politically motivated, thus failing to ensure justice in society. Shalish are now

Not marriage, I want education

Munni, aged 13, is currently studying in grade eight of Garakhali High School. Coming from a poor family, she does not have an opportunity for private tuition. Despite this, she stood at the top of her class every year. As a result, Munni is a favourite of her teachers. In April, 2016, without telling Munni, her parents arranged her marriage with Sharafat Ali, aged 19, from Madhupur upazila. Making excuses, her parents stopped her education. In May, 2016, Munni realised that her marriage had been arranged. She protested to her parents and relatives, saying she wanted to continue studying. Instead, everyone was busy preparing for the marriage.

With no other option, Munni sent a letter to Sharifa Begum, landless leader and member of the Paiska Union Parishad, through her younger sister. Sharifa Begum, after discussion with other leaders, talked to Munni's parents on May 4. The landless members stressed that since Munni wanted to continue her education, she should be allowed to. They informed the parents that since Munni's consent was not asked for when arranging the marriage, it was not allowed. They tried explaining to the parents and cited the Child Marriage Restraint Act, telling them that the minimum age of marriage was 18 for girls and 21 for boys. In this case, neither the girl nor the boy was of marriageable age – neither side listened to them, and were adamant on the marriage.

The landless members increased monitoring on Munni's family. They informed the school teachers, students, school committee members, upazila chairmen and Dhanbari Upazila Nirbahi Officer about the situation and demanded their intervention. On 7 May, along with the landless members, representatives from the the local Union Parishad and Upazila Parishad intervened to stop the marriage preparations.

But, the parents decided to secretly marry off Munni on May 9. But, since the landless members had kept up the strict monitoring, they came to hear of the preparations. They immediately informed, the Upazila Parishad chairman and the Dhanbari Upazila Nirbahi Officer. As a result, they arrived at Munni's house with the police. The marriage was stopped. A mobile court magistrate ordered the arrest of the boy's and the girl's fathers. They were sentenced for three months.

This dual prevention of child marriage has positively affected the locality. The legal issues of child marriage were discussed in the presence of many people, and around 100 men and women pledged that they would not arrange child marriages from their children.

From April 10, Munni resumed going to school. Munni and the landless organisation now organise rallies against child marriage in different schools every month. They voice their protests: "Say no to child marriage, we want to study"; "Let us make the decisions for our own lives."

governed by political leaders. Instead of people from the villages, they are being run by people from the city who know very little about the people of the village. They Those are keen about their interests in collusion with local leaders. There is no longer a rural shalish system run by respected older people from the community. They take cash as an arbitrator, and are failing to condemn injustice, which is causing unrest in the society according to a study “Incompatibility in arbitration proceedings and current situation” by Working for National Health Service.

However, there are ample initiatives in both government and non-governmental sectors to facilitate access to justice. In rural Bangladesh, women have historically been excluded from participating in the traditional justice system. They rarely even attended even their own hearings. Women’s leadership in society is under analysed. Despite there being plenty of knowledgeable scholarship and development programmes on gender issues, particularly in relation to women’s empowerment, issues concerning whether/how women become ‘leaders’ and hold decision-making power across different sectors and contexts remain largely unknown (Domingo et al., 2015). All the more worryingly, we know little about how women in leadership positions feel about their roles, and how and for what purpose they exercise the influence they have. Within this contextual challenges and constraints, the landless organisation performed their role in promoting justice for women.

Unequal social and economic structure (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 is increasing. 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 to inheritance of property. A total of 279 collective mobilisations were organised for realising inheritance property rights. As result of these, 109 women got the title of 41.76 acres of land which was till then under the possession of their male family members.

Description	No. of shalish	No. of settled shalish	No. of shalish on process	Shalish stopped	Refard to formal court
Domestic violence	738	695	31	11	1
Dowry	131	124	5	1	1
Maintenance allowance	163	156	3	4	0
Divorce	89	81	6	1	1
Bigamy/Polygamy	58	58	0	0	0
Child Marrige	109	102	7	0	0
Harassment of girl	224	222	0	2	2
Total	1,512	1,438	52	19	5

Additionally, during the reporting period, the landless organisation has conducted 2,040 *shalish*, of which 1,512 were related to women’s rights and violence on women.



“People turn to us now because they know we stand up for what’s right. Particularly for women related cases or cases involving violence, they know that if they come to women landless members, we will be there for them even if no one else is.”

Landless leader Shukumari says.

Table-7 shows the types of cases addressed during the reporting period. 49% of them are on issues of domestic violence 9% related to dowry; 11% on the claiming of maintenance allowances, 6% related to divorces; 4% on Bigamy/Polygamy; 7% related to child marriages; 15% on issue related to harassment of girl. Of the 1,512 shalish related to women's right and violence against women, 1,438 cases were resolved in favour of the women. 14,487 women and 24,368 men attended for monitoring, while 1,546 women and 3,345 men participated as judges in shalish processes. This data indicates increased active participation of women in the decision making process at the community level.

Further 19 shalish 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, 5 cases were filed in a formal court. The rate of legal action taken by the landless groups is 26%. 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-9: Recovery Amount from Shalish and Value of Inheritance		
Description	Taka	Beneficiary
Recover treatment cost, dowry and maintenance allowances	5,031,001	1,922
Value of inheritance property	25,473,600	109
Total	30,504,601	2,031

Table-9 shows that, the economic value of inheritance property and other cost recovered due to proper justice is equivalent to Taka 30,504,601 and benefited 2,031 households. This is another

economic indicator of the value of awareness building and mobilisation activities.

2.4.6 Increased participation in economic activities as labourer:

Despite being pioneers in agriculture and significantly contributing to our agricultural society, the condition of women is one of hardship. According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, for 85 percent of the women in this country, there is not freedom of earning. Only 15 percent of women get the freedom to earn on their own volition. And about 24 percent of those who earn have no control over their income. Urban women are slightly more in control over their earnings than women in rural areas. On top of that 85 percent of the women in the country are victims of violence.

A Seminar titled "The Role of Women in Agricultural Development of Bangladesh" organised by Agriculturists Institution, Bangladesh in observance of International Women's Day, speakers called for recognising the women who work in agricultural sector as "farmers and ensuring equal payment". In the seminar Prof. Mahfuza Begum said that over the last one and a half decades, female participation in agriculture has increased from 27.8 to 64.8 percent due to various reasons such as poverty, changes in society and empowerment of women by different NGOs. She also pointed that according to the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI), that even though they have a great contribution in agriculture, 77 percent of rural women in Bangladesh are disempowered.

However, the introduction of modern technology in agricultural production has been the gradual decrease of manual labour, hence labourers, from the process. At the same time, the role of women as agricultural labourers is not recognised due to the family, social and gender norms and values. The landless groups have been independently striving to tackle these issues. There have been some results in the reporting period.

Firstly, women were encouraged, through trainings, workshops and cultural activities, to be involved more in the agricultural production as labourers. A total of 7,312 women members newly started working as labourers in agricultural and other economic sector. Of these women, 2,903 (40%) are either single or from women-headed families – the most vulnerable in society. Their involvement in economic production earned them a total of Taka 39,907,950. This has meant an average income increase of Taka 5,458.

On the other hand, 675 women newly started businesses in their local markets (haat), while others also established small shops. Through these businesses they earned a total of Taka 2,028,075. This resulted in an average income increase by Taka 3,004. All of these significantly contribute in improving their economic position in the society.

These results of increased participation of the women, especially the most vulnerable sections, in the agricultural and other economic sectors are significant in the achievement of the economic objectives of the programme.

2.4.6 State Recognition of Contribution Made by Women Members-Recognition of Leadership

In the reporting period, 35 women landless members were selected for the Joyeeta award. 8 of them were recognised in the category for development in society; 5 in the successful mother category; 9 for economic success; 7 for erasing the trauma of violence against women and starting a new life; and finally 6 in the education and service category. All of them were honoured by the government through official award giving ceremonies. This recognition of landless women members by the family, society and the government is an extremely positive step towards women's empowerment and encourages more women to take part in the development process.

2.5 Analysis of Value for Money

Income and Expenditure

During the reporting period, programme been received Taka 70,040,797 and expenditure was Taka 67,956,306 for the period of January 2016 to December 2016.

Economy

1. Programme has a standardized procurement policy and procedure according the policy;
2. Through open discussion and need assessment by the partner prepares the requisitions for the programme;
3. Partners requisition review is undertaken by the secretaries on the basis of planned activities and approved by The partners;
4. Programme review funds and cash flow assessment on a quarterly basis and report present in steering committee meeting;
5. With full justification and approve the planed and budget.

Efficiency

1. The total numbers of beneficiaries are 215,181 in December 2016 in the project.
2. On the basis of the total, cost for per beneficiary is (Programme expenditure Taka 67,956,306/ beneficiaries 215,181)= per beneficiary Taka 315.80.
3. As per the cost and benefits analysis, during the reporting period the programme has created economic value of Taka 3,122,810,525. On the basis of the cost and benefits analysis

the ratio is (Programme expenditure Taka. 67,956,306/economic value Taka. 3,122,810,525) = **Taka 1: Taka 46**. Note that one Taka generated Tk. **46**.

4. In addition to that, the output and outcome level beneficiaries are 329,047. It is to be noted that in some cases output and outcome beneficiaries have been doubly counted because some of them were involved in individual vegetable farming and in collective economic activities. Thus on average we have account final individual as **55%** of total output and outcome level beneficiaries. Hence the number of average output and outcome level beneficiaries is total 180,976 members. It is to be noted that some are not members of the landless organisation.
5. Finally, in the reporting period a total of 180,976 persons have been benefited at the output and outcome level. Each of the beneficiaries on average economically benefited Taka **17,255** (Taka. 3,122,810,525/individual member 180,976)

Effectiveness

1. Actually out of total 137,715 (on average 64%) members in December 2016 have been directly involved in building beneficiary group savings. In addition to that, they have been benefited through their economic activities by their own initiative, received safety-net, student stipend, recovered corruption amounts from government, and non-government projects, recovered dowry and inheritance property etc.
2. This indicates to some extent that these types of benefits are sustainable. In addition to that, the beneficiary groups have partially contributed for the implementation of the mobilisation activities, their own activities, drama performances, and some welfare activities. In the reporting period the beneficiary groups spent a total of Taka 2,192,424 in programme implementation and support.

Equity

Through baseline, focus group and from pilot phase the existing beneficiary members select their priority and other members. Programme does not provide any financial support. Therefore, they select their most vulnerable communities, particularly women.

The beneficiaries comprise of

- Landless Poor women and men;
- Women header family
- People with disability;
- Marginal farmers;
- Sharecroppers;

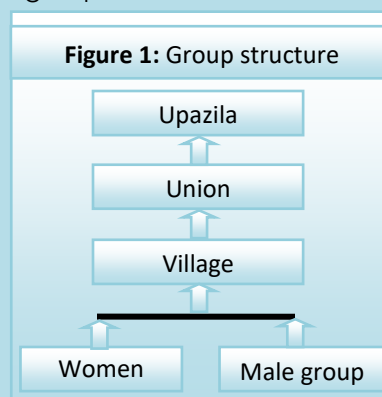
The right based approach has also positively impacted border communities. Awareness building and mobilisation has encouraged the communities to participate in mobilisation, which fosters the development of the concept of citizenship among the communities and empowers them as actors of social change. Thus, increased identification as citizens contributes to the development of informed collective action that significantly contributes to social change. This programme approach is a sustainable change for the marginalised communities, particularly women in family, society, political and economic spares.

CHAPTER FOUR

Landless Groups and Their Activities

3. Approach to organisation of Landless groups and their structures

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 a predominantly patriarchal society, which often excludes 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 committees' in areas where membership coverage is less than two-thirds. The formation and re-organisation 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.

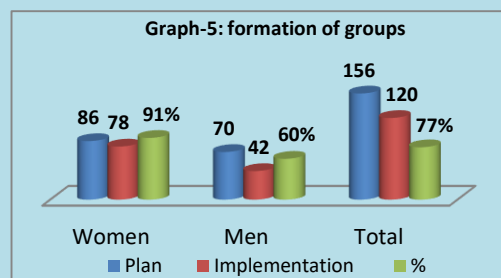
3.1 Formation of landless group and members

Analysis of achievement:

The fundamental basis of awareness building activities is organising neglected and deprived men and women in the society, particularly the ultra-poor. Through discussions the landless women and men are given the realisation on the need to develop solidarity among themselves and encouraged to form groups.

This process also helps them to analyse and understand the nature and basis of disparities in society and their own role within it. The groups can then begin to take steps to articulate their demands and realise their rights.

As presented in **Graph-5**, the plan for this year was to form **156** groups (W: 86 and M: 70). The actual achievement is 121 (W: 78 and M: 43), which is 77% (W: 91% and M: 61%) of the targeted output.



Despite falling short of the planned target, the formation of more women groups is a powerful sign of women's desire to establish their rights and gaining empowerment by defying the patriarchal values in both society and home.

At present, the total number of landless groups are 10,633 (W: 6,144 and M: 4,489). Out of these ethnic minority groups is **93** (W: 42 and M: 57) covering 1,700 members. Short-fall in realisation of target is mainly due to Union Parishad election, militant attack and killings, and the as well as increased trend of seasonal migration particularly male. The 121 new groups includes membership of **2,284** (W: 1,471 and M: 813) individuals

Nijera Kori's awareness building activities are not limited merely to the landless members themselves. Family members of landless group members also benefit from the activities through inclusion in activities such as listening to group discussions and people's songs, watching people's dramas, and participating in the movements. They eventually become involved in various activities of Nijera Kori.

Group meeting is the fundamental tool of awareness building process. These meetings are used for dissemination of information, which plays a very important role in building the foundation of people's power. Therefore, much emphasis given to group meetings and they remain a pivotal activity in the development of people's organisations. In the group meetings the members determine the topics for discussion based on their experiences and recognised knowledge gaps. The members learn through sharing of their personal experiences and enhance their knowledge by attending the training courses. The members also discuss local issues in group meetings and work out strategies to address them. The groups also select who will attend training courses or serve as mediators in the *shalish*. All these are largely decided in a participatory way and such process continue to build their capacities to work together.

The group members also coordinate organisational activities in the working areas and join forces to organise representative meetings with leaders and members of various groups for undertaking joint initiatives those are considered important. During the reporting period number 101,181 (W: 63,386 and M:37,795) meetings were organised against the planned target of 109,467 (W:67,520 and M:41,947) (see annex Table-4). The rate of achievement is 92%. It is to be noted that, 57% group meetings were initiated/moderated by the landless groups.

In addition to regular group meetings during the reporting period, 6,125(W:3,773 and M:2,352) annual group meetings were held against the planned 6,451(W:3,871 and M:2,580) for coordination and monitoring. The rate of achievement is 95%. In these meetings the members review their activities to identify their weaknesses and strengths. During such meetings the members also elect their leadersto institutionalise the culture of democracy.

Holding of regular group meetings, participating in workshops, trainings and collective mobilisations all contributes to enhance members level of understanding and awareness. In this process, when at least half of the members of any group reaches a same or common level of understanding and conceptual clarity the group is elevated to the next level, whereby they can continue to gain tools to become self-reliant. Details precondition and indication to assess level of group consciousness **(Box-1 in bellow)**

During the reporting period, a total of 102 landless groups (W: 60 and M: 42) were promoted from the primary to secondary level. The target was 113(W: 68 and M: 45). The rate of achievement is 90% (W: 88% and M: 93%). It should be noted that more women's groups were promoted from the primary to the secondary level than the men's groups. This in itself is a positive indication.

On the other hand in the reporting period, the number of promotions of groups from secondary level to third level was 13 (W: 7 and M: 6) against the target of 21 (W:13 and M:8). The rate of achievement is 61% (W: 54% and M: 75%).

At the end of December 2016, there were 6,504 (W: 3,909 and M: 2,581) groups at primary level; 3,601 (W: 1,925 and M: 1,676) groups at secondary level and 542 (W: 310 and M: 232) groups at the tertiary level.

Coordination, collective review and monitoring are some of the important processes for building an autonomous organisation. Therefore, the groups organise representative and joint meetings. During the reporting period, 618 representative meetings were organised against the plan of 734, which is 119%. Additionally, 861 joint meetings were held against the planned target of 648, which is 133% (see annex

Table-5). In these meetings, the groups reviewed their achievements and formulated plan of action to facilitate collective mobilisation for establishing their rights.

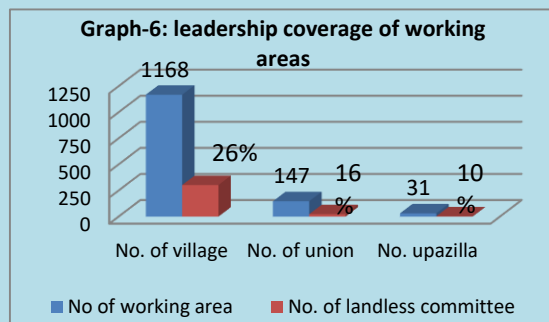
3.2 Formation of landless committee to enhance cohesion and building collective leadership

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 members.

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.

Box-1: Brief indicator for assessment of level of group consciousness
Primary Level
Groups at this level concentrate on developing basic awareness, organising members of similar class, learning to trust and sympathise with members of the same class. <i>The group gives special emphasis on cultivating a sense of unity amongst the members. It organises regular meetings, ensures regular deposits and withdrawal of savings and undertakes the responsibility of forming and renewing group committees.</i>
Secondary level
At this level the group is able to organise protests against any ongoing injustice. The group is also responsible for ensuring the continuation of the movement for protests if their initial efforts fail. The group members at this level learn from an evaluation of the various activities. The members raise awareness amongst the various professional groups in the society by holding discussions. The group also sees to the participation of its members throughout the village. <i>The group specifically takes the initiative to invest its savings in joint cooperative ventures and organise members of the same class to ensure group accountability and to develop a group culture.</i>
Tertiary Level
At this level the group must be able to: distinguish exploitation and oppression (and take necessary steps against them), organise movements by ensuring the support of the local people, take initiative for publicity at the national level, strengthen the organisational activities of the villages, ensure support of the neighbouring villages, expand and enlarge support of the well-wishers, and raise the cultural and awareness amongst people. <i>The group should specifically develop a clear conception about exploitation, organise for the group savings to be invested in joint ventures, raise cultural awareness amongst the masses, & take responsibility for conducting local committees.</i>

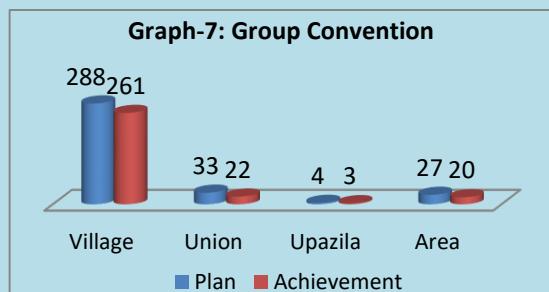
Though there is no plan, as per need of landless groups they formed 2 landless area committees were formed in the reporting period. A total of 356 landless committees at various levels have been reported to be active through mobilisation, coordination and organisation of issue-based programmes. As of December 2016, the total number of committees are 358 consisting of 302 village committees, 23 union committees, 3 upazila committees and 30 at the area-level. Within the working area of Nijera Kori, committees exist in 26% of the villages, 16% unions and 10% upazilas (see Graph-6). These committees are increasingly being recognised as a legitimate voice of the poor within the community. These committees also facilitate building linkage with the Union Parishad.



The landless committees regularly review and monitor their activities, and guide their members to take play active role for the development of collective leadership and monitoring progress. In the reporting period, 2,847 village committee meetings were held against the target 2,853. For union committee meetings this figure is 301 against the target 257 and 27 for upazila committee against the target of 35; and 230 area committee meetings against the target 308. Rate of achievement is 99% for village, 117%; union, 77% for upazila, and 75% for area committees.

In the reporting period the landless committee facilitated a total of 1,349 mobilisation events for establishing rights. Of these mobilisations, 932 addressed violence against women, 18 activities related with resisted fundamentalisms, 206 concerned establishing rights to natural resources such as Khasland and water-bodies, and 193 addressing local corruption and irregularities. This data are self explanatory in terms of groups march towards establishing fundamental rights and justice.

Finally, graph-7: shows that, the landless groups organised group convention to review their activities, select issues for mass actions and carryout risk analysis to finalise future action plan. As per the plan, rate of implementation of landless committee conventions was 75% at village level, 67% at union level and 75% at upazila level and 74% at area level (see Table 18). In these group conventions, in addition to reviewing of activities and finalising action plan for the following year, the members also elected the new committee members. (See annex Table-7) Results of committee election per division are presented in Table-10 in the bellow. In the election of a total number of open post are 1,063 open seats (seats in which both women and men can contest), 1,113 women members and 1,513 male members contested.



In the election, a total of 898 women members, who contested against the male members in 1,513 posts, and 577 women member were elected in the open posts for the different landless committees. In the election 38% women were elected against their male members. It may be mentioned that out of elected women members, 104 were from women-headed households. This is a very significant positive indication of empowerment of the most vulnerable women in society.

Description of committee	No. of committee where convention held	Total post	No. of open post where women & men both contest	Reserve post for women	Contested Candidate		Elected
					Women	Men	Women
Village	261	1,827	783	522	744	896	381
Union	22	242	154	66	167	263	72
Upazila	2	42	26	8	24	30	6
Area	20	220	100	60	178	324	118
Total	305	2,331	1,063	656	1,113	1,513	577

Acceptance and election of women members for leadership is a significant development and sign women's empowerment and their recognition in society. Election of single women especially in an open seat, is rather remarkable and

demonstrate empowerment of deprived and oppressed women.

3.3 Group savings and bank account

Group savings are collected to support organisational activities and undertake joint economic activities. The rate of contribution is decided by consensus. The groups take full responsibility for managing the accounts, but Nijera Kori staff assists with book keeping. No staff of Nijera Kori ever gets involved in collection of funds or operate these accounts.

Analysis of achievement

During the reporting period, the landless group mobilised Taka 15,969,176 (W: 10,006,586 and M: 5,962,590) as group savings. The rate of achievement against the target is 88%. To manage these funds 199 collective bank accounts (W: 160 and M: 39) have been opened (details in Annex table 8 and 9). The rate of achievement against the target is 101%. The members' contributions to group savings accounts indicate their aspiration and commitment to achieving self-sufficiency.

In this reporting period, the members, through the collective decisions distributed a Taka 10,871,514 (W: 7,307,079 and M: 3,564,436) to its to meet their personal immediate needs (production and consumption) and temporary crises.

Mobilisation of group savings and its use to help members during the 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* 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, 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 2,192,424. In addition to the above activities, the landless organisations have also provided scholarships to meritorious students of the members, assistance for medical expenses, and celebrating dowry free marriages (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. A total 15,385 members and individuals from the community benefitted through such direct support.

3.4 Use of group savings in a collective form

The main purpose of savings by the landless groups is to initiate and conduct collective economic activities. This process contributes in developing an ideology of collectivism. As a result of collective economic activities, the bond between the members gets strengthened. The members become accustomed to making collective decisions; they learn to execute and manage activities in co-operation with each other and gain an understanding of the concept of equal distribution. The group members themselves through such processes can identify their abilities and weaknesses; they can decide the course of action and by making and implementing their decisions at the field-level, they gain practical experience of collective work and principle of equity in sharing benefits. This is a very positive practice.

Analysis of achievement

The landless groups, instead of borrowing money from NGOs (under micro-credit program), bank or money-lenders are able to undertake collective economic activities with their own group savings. The activities pursued by the landless groups include cultivation of crops, fish farming, rearing of cattle, buying rickshaws and small businesses. These collective economic activities also contribute in developing a sense of solidarity amongst themselves. Through these activities the members also get exposed to dynamics of effective collective management and equal distribution, as well as learn to detect problems, risks and weaknesses of their various activities. The self-reliance of the landless groups' collective economic activity with group savings is a gesture of economic sustainability and this is a positive sign. These activities through creation of jobs pave the way for self-reliance.

In the reporting year, 339 (W: 196 and M:143) new groups started collective economic activities with own savings. By the end of December 2016, of the 10,512 landless groups 54% were involved in collective economic activities. Number of groups engaged in collective economic activities is highest in Chittagong division, followed by Rajshahi. Engagement of women's group in collective economic activities was 48%, which is slightly less compared to men groups. As of end December 2016, a total of 5,691 (W: 2,732 and M: 2,959) groups were involved in collective economic activities. These groups are engaged in a variety of activities. 5,490 groups have taken up collective agricultural projects, 275 are in fishery, 690 in livestock rearing and 3,690 in small businesses and operating/pulling of rickshaw van (See annex Table-13).

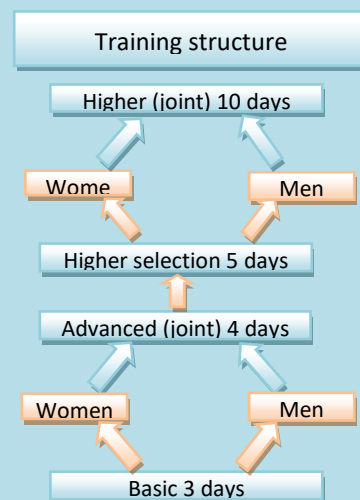
At the same time 151 groups (W: 85 and M: 66) had to close down their collective enterprises, at least temporarily, for not being able to renew their lease of Khasland and water-bodies, and/or buying new livestock during the reporting period.

The landless groups invested Taka 73,823,786 out of their savings fund for various collective economic enterprises. This investment gave them a profit of Taka 9,037,746, of which share of women's group is Taka 2,463,934 and for men's group this comes to Taka 6,573,812. The rate of return is around 12%. In terms of employment, the collective activities generated work for 7,574 (W: 2,693 and M: 4,881) members for a period of 6 months, meaning 1,363,320 labour days.

CHAPTER FIVE

4.1 Awareness raising and capacity building activities

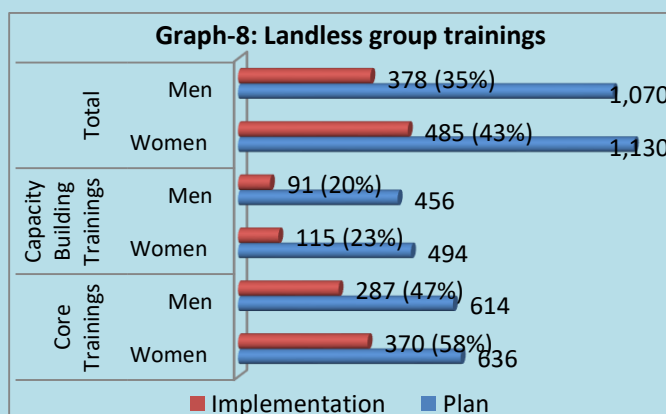
Nijera Kori on a regular basis organises training sessions to enhance the analytical capabilities of the group members. Such trainings are normally organised with 20-25 participants. At the basic level, trainings are provided to female and male members separately; while at advanced level, both female 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 sessions. It is worth noting that cultural trainings, both at the basic and advanced levels, are organised jointly with female and male cultural group members.

Analysis of achievement

Trained members hold discussions to share their learning with other group members, encouraging them to participate in the discussions and relay the material to them in a way that is easily understood. Music, role-play and story-telling are also used as tools to make the discussions more practical and lively. With the experience gained through trainings, the members become capable of analysing local issues and determining the most appropriate courses of action. Once the members gain awareness through training, they are more willing and better-equipped to shoulder responsibility. In group settings, discussions become in-depth, deliberative, and analytical. Graph-8: shows that, in the reporting period, 863 (W: 485 and M: 378) members participated in different trainings programs against the planned target of 2,200 (W: 1,130 and M: 1,070); See Table-10 in annex). In the trainings programme participation of women was 56% and 44% men.



It is to be noted that, this programme is funded by the mainly European Currencies and the EURO higher level of exchange rate has fallen over the reporting period. Due to exchange loss few trainings could not be organised though all technical preparations were put in place. As a result, the number of trainings is less as compare to plan target (see annex Table-10).

Analysis of data as presented in Table-10, shows that, participation of women members in training was higher than that of male members. This demonstrates women's increased mobility and enhanced level of awareness, which is a pre-condition of women's empowerment.

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.

4.2 Follow-up trainings

Follow-up training is very important to ensure effectiveness of the trainings programme that aims to building awareness about human rights, injustices in society and their consequences. In the follow-up trainings the trained members go through analyses of their own lived experiences in relation to the broader socio-political context. They analyses local issues in the light of the theoretical knowledge gained during the trainings. As a result, there is a noticeable increase in the level of awareness among the members. In addition, all the members analyses issues and decide on strategies based on their real life experiences. This makes the activities of the trained members more dynamic (see Annex Table-11). During the reporting period, 98 follow-up trainings were conducted against the target of 102. A total of 2,404 members (W: 1,492 and M: 912) participated in these follow-up trainings against target 2,550 (:1,340 and M:1,210) (see Annex Table-11). The rate of achievement in terms of participation is 94%

Also in the reporting period, 378 forum meetings were held against the target 394. Rate of achievement is 96%. It mentioned that, each of the forums consists of higher-level women and men leaders. At present, 28 forum activities have been conducted.

4.3 Workshops at local level

Landless groups organise day-long field-level workshop to analyse their activities, identify organisational strengths and weakness, identify local issues to address, carry out risk analysis and making decisions about future activities. During the past few years, such day-long workshops are being held regularly and with participation of around 25-30 members.

In the period, a series of thematic workshops were organised. A total of 2,728 members (W: 1,625 and M:1,103) participated in these workshops (details in annex Table-6). 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-11 gives details of women/men distribution of participants in the workshops.

Description	Table-11: Participants in workshops						
	Plan			Achievement			%
	W	M	T	W	M	Total	
Rajshahi	636	589	1,225	324	258	582	48
Dhaka	220	205	425	249	252	501	118
Chittagong	665	635	1,300	690	329	1,019	78
Khulna	376	349	725	362	264	626	86
Total	1,897	1,778	3,675	1,625	1,103	2,728	74

In the reporting year importance was given to ensure participation particularly of members who migrated outside of the working areas for employment. Due to such seasonal migration, some 36% workshops were held for these landless people when they returned home. This initiative contributed

to reduce gap between general landless members and leaders of the organisation. Moreover, in the activity year, importance was given to organise thematic workshops to increase the awareness of the members and enhance their proficiency. This helped to cover the knowledge gap due to less number trainings in the reporting period.

4.4 Landless cultural group and its activities

Nijera Kori believes that cultural activities are an integral part of social mobilisation. The program is designed to develop human qualities, increase social consciousness. The program also enables people to conceptualise social injustices and depict them through stories and play to bring changes in the attitudes, overcoming superstition, dependency and ignorance. In this effort weekly discussions are held for 2-3 hours and through this process, 15-20 members are selected to form a group. The group performs issue-based dramas and songs in various working areas and plays a critical supporting role in mobilising people.

Analysis of achievement

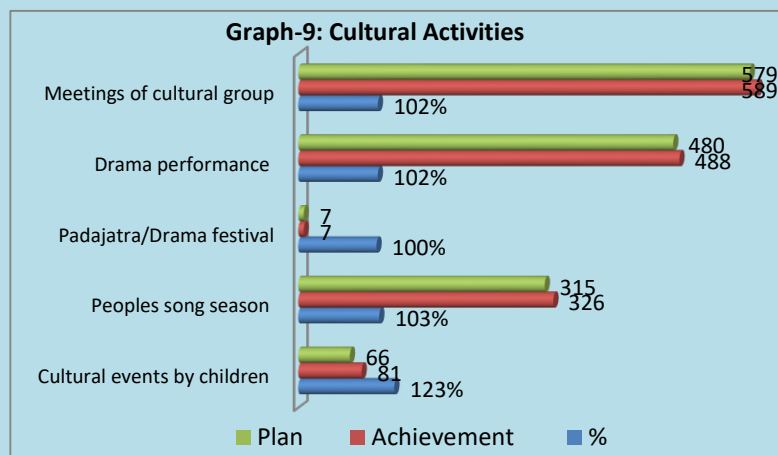
Cultural activity of the landless groups

Currently there are 54 cultural groups and activities undertaken by these groups are reported in **Table-12**. In the reporting period 4 cultural trainings at basic level with 77 participants (W: 29 and M: 48) and 98 (W: 34 and M: 64) cultural group members participated in the day long cultural workshops against plan 100 (W: 33 and M: 67). In addition to that, Table 22 shows that, 416 (W: 172 and M: 246) cultural group members participated in cultural discussion.

Description	Plan			Achievement			%
	W	M	T	W	M	T	
Gender							
Cultural training	28	52	80	29	48	77	96
Cultural workshops	33	67	100	34	64	98	99
Cultural discussion	140	220	360	172	246	418	116

During the training and workshops, the participants composed 47 new dramas covering issues such as women's right including inheritance property rights, wages, child marriage, dowry and harassment; rights of farmers; against religious fundamentalisms and communalisms; commercialisation of agricultural, rights to Khasland and water bodies, environment etc and common folksongs reflecting on various social issues.

Graph-9: shows that, as per plan cultural group meeting were held 102%, drama performance by landless cultural groups 102%, arrange peoples song season 103% and performed cultural



events such drama, song etc by children 123% in reporting period. Cultural groups organise 2-5 days long cultural each year. During this period the troupes make door to door visits in the village and also perform in the *haat* (bazaar) in their area. In the reporting period, 7 'Cultural Long March' were organised. The themes were against commercial agricultural and intrusion of saline water in the agricultural fields; establishment of

agricultural workers rights and recognition of women as farmer; against violence on women; women's right on resources; against fundamentalism and communalism and child marriages. Cultural Long March had positive impact in generating public opinion.

The landless cultural groups were invited by 11 upazila level government administrations for performing drama and songs in national and international day celebration events. This means in 35% working upazilas the landless cultural groups received this recognition.

And interestingly enough the groups were requested to perform addressing violence against women. This indicates the work of the landless organisations in stopping violence on women and ensuring justice has had impacts. This also contributed to build relation and linkage, as well as recognition of the landless organisation.

It is worth noting that this year, 46 (W:14 and M:32) landless members performed for the first time in the drama and peoples song events that were held in public space such as local markets and school grounds. In addition to that, 204 children (girls-41 and boys-163) also participated for the first time in cultural activities. The participation of women and girls 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 81 dramas. 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. Additionally, the landless cultural team commemorated national and international days.

CHAPTER SIX

5.1 Legal aid

As the movements of the landless organisations for establishing basic rights become stronger, the voices of the disadvantaged people gradually gain more recognition from the State and society. However, this is not without challenge. The local elite and the vested-interest groups systematically try to harass the landless groups and often through filing false lawsuits and using the police to persecute them. In such context, legal recourse is one of the most potent means for the landless people to defend their rights. With the rise of legal suits it becomes difficult for landless groups to pursue these legal battles. At this stage they turn to Nijera Kori for financial support. In such situation, depending on the merits of the cases from the view point of their relevance for establishing the rights of the landless groups, Nijera Kori provides necessary legal and finance support.

Achievements

During the reporting period, 32 new legal cases were conducted (see Table 13). Among these cases, 8 were filed by the local powerful groups and the rest 24 were filed by the groups. Of the cases filed by the landless groups, 18 cases are concerning violence against women, and one was filled by the powerful group. Against illegal occupation of Khasland by *jotdars*, the landless groups filed 4 cases. In response to this, the local influential people have filed 1 case. On the other hand, the local powerful group filed 6 criminal cases against the landless members, whereas landless members filed 2 cases for self-protection. The landless groups are trying to use legal means to establish justice in society and eventually establishing their own rights, while the local powerful group are filing cases only to harass the landless members with the intention of denial of justice. (details in annex Table-15)

Table-23: Characteristics of cases and settlement

Characteristics of cases	New cases	Resolved cases			
		T	I	Ag	A
Total	32	72	69	3	2
Criminal	8	36	35	1	1
Groups of the plaintiffs	2	10	9	1	1
Groups of the accused	6	26	26	0	0
Civil	5	13	11	2	2
Groups of the plaintiffs	4	8	6	2	1
Groups of the accused	1	5	5	0	0
Violence against Women	19	23	23	0	0
Groups of the plaintiffs	18	21	21	0	0
Groups of the accused	1	2	2	0	0

T= Total, I = infavour, Ag= Against, A= Appeal

Of all the cases filed during this reporting period and previous years by both the landless groups and the influential people, 72 have been settled out of total 642. Among these 72 cases the landless groups in 69 cases received the verdict in their favour, while against the verdict of another 3 cases the groups have appealed 2 cases in higher court.

The 72 cases that have been settled of them 33 of these were filed by the local influential groups against landless groups and 13 cases were concerning Khasland and water bodies, and of them 5 cases were filed by the local influential. And interestingly enough the power groups did not appeal against the verdicts in the higher court but landless group filed 2 appeal cases. Out of 36 criminal cases that have been settled, landless groups received verdict in their favour for 35 and in these cases also the local influential, they did not appeal in higher courts.

Finally, 23 cases on the issue of violence on women have been settled 21 of them were filed by the landless groups to seek justice and prevent violence on women. Out of total settled cases all of verdicts come out infavour of landless organisation. The overall results throughout the reporting period indicate that the landless groups have gained considerable strength and now well positioned to challenge the local power holders through legal means as well.

For ensuring justice and establishing their rights through legal process the landless groups have spent Taka 696,841 from their group savings. This spending demonstrates their level of awareness and commitment to establish their rights and justice in society. By the end of December 2016 total number of court cases was 629, and of them, Nijera Kori assisted in 173 cases, whilst 456 cases were pursued by the groups themselves based on their own resources.

5.2 Educational activities

Due to lack of awareness and absence of public schools, children of the poorer families start to work at a very early age. The landless groups over the years have undertaken various programs to reverse this. The groups also recognise that children from the disadvantaged background have the ability to realise their right to education.

Achievement

The landless organisations over the period succeeded to establish 30 primary schools, 4 junior high schools and 1 high school to give access to education of their own children and children from other poor. Table 14: shows that, the number of students enrolled in these schools stand to 51,318 (*Girl students: 26,878 and Boy students: 25,628*). The rate of increase in the number of girl students is recorded higher than male students.

Description	Number of students		
	Girls	Boys	Total
Primary	17,706	14,612	32,318
Junior high schools	6,411	7,841	14,252
High schools	2,761	3,175	5,936
Total	26,878	25,628	52,506
Total No. of students with stipend	6,126	4,552	10,678

The higher enrolment of female students, particularly in the secondary schools in the remote areas, is a positive indicator of growing consciousness and recognition of the importance and rights of women's education within the landless organisation.

A total number of 10,678 students received government grants for education (*Girl students: 6,126 and Boy students: 4,552*) in the reporting period. And unfortunately a total of 311 students (*Girl students: 184 and Boy students: 127*) were forced to drop-out from schools in the reporting period for employment. The landless groups spent a total of Taka 274,560 from their group savings to purchase books and notebooks and support other cost for students. Of this amount, around Taka 74,617 was spent to support the children of non-group members.

The landless organisations monitor the educational activities or program in their schools on a regular basis. Assemblies are held in every school. Furthermore, the schools also organise sports, discussion meetings and cultural functions. The members of landless organisations regularly held discussion with the guardians of the students on the necessity of education. If a student stop coming to school or if his/her absence rate suddenly increases, the teachers and landless members visit his/her house, collected information, and take necessary steps.

5.3 RTI Application and access to information

During the reporting period, the landless group members submitted a total of 86 applications under the RTI Act to obtain information. These included 10 applications concerning health service; 31 on safety-net programme; 12 regarding Khasland and water bodies; 8 about local development projects; 12 on education; 3 for fisheries list and audit report, 5 land registration; and 1 bath certificate; 1 Government responsibility of child marriage; 1 budget for legal aid support. Of these 86 applications, 35 applications were submitted by women's group. In response to 86 applications the groups received information against 75 applications.

During this period the landless group members also submitted 2 appeal applications and in all these cases they could not received the information that was requested for.

Additionally, the landless groups submitted 2 complaints to the Right to Information Commission. In both cases hearing sessions were held and the judgment was passed in favour of the landless.

A summary of application submitted by the groups requesting for information, the information received and experience of landless members.

Summary of application analysis see table below

Table 25: RTI Applications					
Description	No. of RTI Applications		Total	Information Received	
	January to December -2016	Pending Application		January to December-2016	From Pending Application
Primary applications	86	2	88	75	13
Appeal applications	2	0	2	0	0
Complain application	2	0	2	2	0

CHAPTER SEVEN

6. Advocacy and networking

Nijera Kori through its program aims to enhance the collective ability of the masses so that they can establish their rights through grassroots movements. Such local level mass actions mobilise public support and creates opportunities for local-level joint initiatives to create pressure on policy makers at various levels. Thus, mobilisation of the masses and coalition-building between the landless and different professional groups remain central to the core objectives of Nijera Kori. Nijera Kori, on the basis of the demands and the issues raised by the landless group, adopts and conducts advocacy activities at local, national and international levels often with the participation of landless organisations.

6.1 At Local Level

- **Collective movements:** In the reporting period, the groups organised 1,349 collective mobilisation or demonstrations. Of these 932 addressing violence against women, 18 resisting fundamentalism, 206 for establishing rights of the landless over local resources, and 193 addressing local-level corruption and irregularities.
- **Networking with local activist groups:** Though the movements were organised by the landless groups, they received active support from professionals, political and cultural workers, women's organisations, other development organisations, local clubs, rickshaw-bus-truck driver's samity (association) and school students. This is a positive achievement in developing public relations and networks at local levels. Due to solidarity with others the landless organisations were successful in having their demands met on 1,295 issues.
- **Dialogue with local decision-makers and activists:** In this reporting period, the landless organisations held 7,834 meetings concerning local issues with local civic bodies and local government administration in different districts. These opinion-sharing meetings were held 2,590 times at the initiative of the government administration and local institutions and 5,244 times at the initiative of the landless groups. These meetings are positive steps towards solving local issues, collecting reliable information, ensuring accountability and establishing rights, and above all recognition of the landless group as a legitimate body.
- **Local and national newspaper reports:** 234 news reports were published in 17 local-national newspapers on the demands and movements of the landless on various issues. Among them, 64 were for establishment of rights to khasland, 42 for removal of illegal land grabbers, 39 for resisting industrial shrimp cultivation, 11 for establishing land rights of the excluded community, and 78 against violation of human rights such as rape, murder of women, dowry violence on women.
- A total of 19 reports were published on protests and movements with information provided by the landless people. Additionally, in the activity areas of different newspaper published 13 reports independently on various issues of concern to the landless groups.

6.2 At National Level

Advocacy activities conducted at the national level included issues regarding agriculture, prevention of violence against women and land-rights.

6.2.1 During the reporting period, Nijera Kori participated in joint 6 fact findings teams. Association of Land Reform and Development (ALRD) , Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) , Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) , Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) Community Development Association (CDA). Based on the findings jointly organised press conference, press release, advocacy through media, participation in collective mobilisations with different groups, demanding justice etc. resulted in judiciary investigation on the attacks on Hindu minorities of Nasirnagar, Brahmanbaria and the ethnic people (Santal) in Gobindaganj Upazila, Gaibandha.

6.2.2 Monitoring Shrimp Farm Audit for Certification and Campaigning against Certification:

Aquaculture Stewardship Council had globally started Certification approval through Shrimp Farm Audits. It may be recalled that from its inception as a proposed approval process by the industry, retailers and other vested groups, Nijera Kori along with likeminded groups and individuals across different continents have been playing a crucial role towards bringing into public sphere the debate about the inconsistent, inaccurate and destructive nature of this industry, where certification for shrimps would only provide a 'greenwash' to the industry, thus making it an acceptable industry. On hearing about an audit process for certification of 'Kuliarchar shrimp farm' in Cox's Bazar, Nijera Kori conducted a people-centred monitoring and review audit process at the field level of the appointed auditors of ASC. By being present and having gone to the field where the so called certified farm was 'located', Nijera Kori and local activists challenged the ASC auditors. The auditors had to admit that the entire process was faulty and that they had not followed any of the stated guidelines, that their audit would be based on the information provided by the company itself. Through this process Nijera Kori prepared a report. As a result, the certification process was suspended. The key achievement was that Nijera Kori's people-centred monitoring and review audit process was accepted internationally and is at present being considered to be put in practice in Ecuador, Honduras, and Indonesia as and when such audits are proposed.

6.2.3 Seminar: "Land-water-food rights of rural women and the agricultural system" jointly organised by ALRD, Nijera Kori and BELA

On 13 November, 2016, the seminar titled "Land-water-food rights of rural women and the agricultural system" was organised. The seminar was moderated by the executive director of ALRD, Shamsul Huda. The key note paper on the role of women in ensuring food security was presented by BELA chief executive Advocate Syeda Rizwana. Professor and researcher, Dr Swapan Adnan, professor of social science of University of Dhaka, Sadeka Halim, and Chairman of Barkal Upazila of Rangamati Moni Chakma were also present as panellists in the seminar.

Summary of the report

Women's ownership of land is only 18 percent. On the other hand, the percentage of women engaged in agriculture is 43 percent and their contribution to the sector is 66 percent. A woman has to do on average 92 different chores in one day. But because this household work is unpaid, it is not given any recognition. The presentation highlighted how the work of crop cultivation, preservation and management, seed collection, preparation of organic fertiliser etc. are primarily performed by women. Besides, women are the driving force through their roles in preservation of natural resources, innovating local and traditional practices, holding the family together, and ensuring economic stability. They are also more skilled and contribute more in ensuring the family's nutritional needs, collecting water, time management compared to men.

According to 2011 statistics by the Food and Agriculture Organisation, the global agro-production can be increased by 2.5 to 4 percent if women are empowered. This would contribute to end world hunger by 12 to 19 percent. If women were empowered in the farming system, then the family's diet would be diversified and calorie intake rate would increase. Different research done in Bangladesh show that if women own the assets/wealth, then the family's health is improved, and its food security and sovereignty are strengthened.

The key note speaker stated, as an example. "The constitution of neighbouring Nepal mentions food sovereignty alongside food security. On the other hand, in the name of food security, the encroachment of modern farming systems is negatively affecting agriculture in Bangladesh as well as food security of women."

In another report, titled "Ensuring the rights of rural indigenous women in security, food, wealth, education and land" Bhoumika Tripura said, "The lives and livelihoods of rural indigenous women in the CHT is primarily dependent on the natural and agricultural resources. But, despite this, their Jhum lands are decreasing every day only due to illegal land encroachment. Especially, the declaration of 2 lakh 18 thousand acres of land as reserved forest has negatively affected their lives. The supply of vegetables, fruits, medicinal plants, kindle and lumber for building their homes, which they traditionally collected from the forest, has been cut off. The cultivation of Shegun tees, which are environmentally harmful, has caused decreased water flow of spring and waterfalls. Some springs have dried up. Many indigenous families have been deprived of their homesteads. As a result, the women now have to collect water for their regular needs from faraway springs, which is time consuming. Women and children are becoming victims of brutal murders and torture. Demanding the ensuring of their security and livelihood, she said, "The indigenous women are deprived of healthcare as well." She also mentioned allegations of commoditisation of indigenous women in the growing tourism industry in the CHT.

Summary of the open discussion

Dr Swapan Adnan said, "There has been progress in our country regarding women's position and the relations between men and women in the last few decades. In the 80s, women's mobility was restricted due to segregation practices. Gradually, due to relevant reasons, women's mobility has increased. The pressure on land is steadily increasing, as is the number of landless people. When people don't possess land their household chores decrease. They resort to farming others' lands or other professions. So, despite segregation and social pressure, women have to go outside for food.

Another reason is the development of industries. The percentage of women workers in EPZs, garments and other factories is relatively higher than men. They have become self-reliant due to their earning. They are financially providing for the family alongside the men. On the other hand, in some cases, women are the sole breadwinner in families, and are also contributing to the remittance.”

He also said, “The women from the hilly areas enjoyed more freedom than the women from plain lands. The women from the hill tracts were ahead of men in the traditional work distribution. But to losing of land, the participation of women in Jhum is decreasing. This is hampering their food sovereignty and food security.”

Professor Sadeka Halim said, “Even though women contributed to the country's independence, they do not have the opportunity to enjoy it. The Pakistan we gained independence from is ahead of us in terms of women's freedom. Due to lack of implementation of the Women's Development Policy that was enacted by the government in 1997 women are disadvantaged in every sphere of society. Their household chores are not valued because have no market value.” She said that, discrimination and development are continuing simultaneously in the country.”

Sandha Mala, a participant from Gaibandha Bagda Farms of Gaibandha District said “Land grabbers are perpetrating violence against the indigenous Santals. Six were murdered after the recent attacks in Mohimaganj.” She questioned that if land grabbing, rape and murder continue in the northern area, then how will their land rights be protected? She also demanded that the state play a role in establishment of human rights.

Rahela Begum from Khulna said, “Alongside men, women are contributing to the country's economy. We want recognition of their work inside and outside the household.” She demanded equal rights for men and women regarding khas land and wages.

Mahmuda Begum from Pirganj in Rangpur said, “Women are the driving force in agriculture. Even though they process and preserve crops, their work has no market value.” She also raised the need of preserving local seeds in order to use organic farming methods to ensure food security.

Recommendations

1. Recognition of the concept of “food sovereignty” at the state level, and ensuring its reflection in terms of land, water, agricultural, health and other policies;
2. Enactment of agro-land protection law, and ensuring preservation of and equal access to natural resources;
3. Taking steps for institutional recognition of women's roles and encouraging cooperative societies, trainings, traditional farming techniques, seed preservation and biodiversity protection;
4. Encouraging organic farming, giving importance to nutritional and low-risk produce, ensuring access to market for the produce and discouraging cultivation of the so-called high yield GMO crops;
5. Enacting food security law and starting starting insurance in favour of farmers;
6. Scrapping discriminatory laws, policies and practices, and establishment of women's equal access to khas land and water bodies'

7. Legal steps from the state to bring equality in individual and family life and special importance in implementation of the act to prevent violence against women;
8. Giving recognition of rural indigenous women in social and economic development;
9. Reserve forests and other development work cannot be undertaken which violates the rights of rural indigenous women;
10. Military and BGB camps cannot be established near villages or any other place when the security of indigenous women is compromised;
11. The health, education, land and property rights of indigenous women have to be ensured.

6.2.4 Celebration of One Billion Rising Day (OBR)

Nijera Kori is actively participating in "One billion rising- Bangladesh" campaigning. It may be mentioned that in the project area of Nijera Kori the landless organization is working at grass-root level to create people's awareness and support in resisting women's persecution and hence is participating actively in world-wide violence against women. In Nijera Kori's main activity area that is in 31 areas the landless organizations organized rallies. In each rally the actual information on women's persecution depicted through banners and festoons and demand against women's persecution was projected. After the rallies discussions were held in area basis 31 places. In the evening in total 5 places big gatherings, discussions and dramas were organized. As result of this the landless groups think that this enormous dissemination of information and communication will expedite the movement in future and make it stronger. Besides, landless organization collected more than 60 thousand signatures.

6.2.5 Participation in research with "The University of Texas" at Austin

The University of Texas proposed a qualitative research on "Women's Empowerment in Nutrition Index" covering Bangladesh and India. On principle Nijera Kori has agreed to take part in the community-based research.

Background of research:

Recently, a lot of research has tried to link agriculture to nutrition. But, very few studies find strong relationships between the two. We believe this is because household decision making, fertility choices, health and sanitation, and cultural factors influence the effects of agricultural improvements on nutrition. Thus the research aims to understand what factors contribute to nutritional outcomes of women and their children in rural Bangladesh and India.

Activities:

During the reporting period, Nijera Kori facilitated training with landless group members to develop skills as community-based researchers along with 7 representatives from the Indian partner organisation, namely Collaborative Research and Dissemination (CORD). As Nijera Kori has had previous experience of community based qualitative research, the main researchers wanted to train partners from India on the Nijera Kori community based-research method. The partners will then implement a similar approach in Orissa and Bihar in India. In the reporting period, testimony collection was completed. The transcription process is ongoing. We expect the final report will be ready by December 2016. It may be noted that the research cost is borne by The University of Texas.

CHAPTER EIGHT

7.1 Administration and Finance

7.2 Staff strength

A total of 5 (W: 3 and men-2) staff joined the organisation in January to December 2016. On the other hand, a total number of 17 staff (W: 9 and M: 8) left the organisation in the reporting period. The total number of staff working in Nijera Kori in December 2016 was 227 (W: 76 and M: 151). Out of these 66 staff (W: 8 and M: 58) are performing their duties as service staff.

7.3 Statement of Financial Accounts

During the reporting January 2016–December 2016 Nijera Kori received financial assistance totalling Taka 58,229,280 from different partner organisations. Others and own sources Taka 11,811,517. Total Taka 70,040,797. The total spending for the reporting period is Taka 67,956,306. Details are in audited financial report.

Annex

Case studies

Case studies-1:

Use of Right To Information Stops Corruption in Blue Gold Project

About Blue Gold

The Blue Gold Project is a joint development project financed by the governments of Bangladesh and Netherlands. The span of the project is from March 2013 to March 2019. The main goal of the project is poverty reduction among 1,50,000 families living in 1,60,000 hectares of Khulna, Patuakhali and Satkhira. The Bangladesh Water Development Board and Department of Agricultural Extension are implementing this project. Department of Fisheries and Department of Livestock Services also also involved as associate organisations.

The objective of Blue Gold is improved agricultural production and business development through water management and highest utilisation of water resources with public participation. Blue Gold has started its 6-year activities in polder areas 29, 30, 31, 22, and 26 in Khulna. Most of these polder areas are working areas of Nijera Kori.

Activities of Blue Gold

In 2013, the project started its activities in the different polders of the working area. To this effect polder committees were formed with the local influential people of every polder area. There was no representation of the landless, poor in the committees. Under the leadership of the local influential people, a village-based Water Management Group (WVG) was formed with the poor people of the areas and was registered under the Water Development Board. Note that, Blue Gold had stopped calling the polder committees to the meetings or giving them any importance after getting registration from Water Development Board (WAPDA). In the beginning, the Water Management Groups were provided some agricultural tools, fertilisers, and hybrid seeds with the financing of the FAO. Cotes for poultry, vaccination for cattle, and training on rearing livestock were also provided. Then the work of reconstruction of the WAPDA dam was undertaken.

To this effect 5 Labor Contracting Systems (LCS) under 4 (WVGs) were formed in February. Every contracted labour group (LCS) had 80 labourers totalling 400 which included 60 women labourers from the 2 women's contracted labour groups. In the dam reconstruction work of Blue Gold and Water Development Board, 112 members of the landless organisation were associated. To uphold the accountability, transparency, and public participation of the project, they used the Right To Information act and asked for information regarding the Blue Gold Project. In this case, Jahirul Islam Fakir, Omiyo Das Roy, and Harichand Roy, members of the landless organisation, applied for the policies of Blue Gold program, list of names of the beneficiaries, list of agricultural materials distributed under this program, policies of the water management groups and information regarding management/policies of usage of the agricultural materials, and policies of the 5 components under the Blue Gold program. Their application was denied on the first time. So, they filed a complaint with the Information

Commission. A hearing was conducted following the complaint. In the hearing, the Information Commission asked Blue Gold to provide the demanded information but Blue Gold officials did not provide the information. As a result, the three members of the landless organisation filed another complaint. Again, a hearing was arranged and Blue Gold officials were forced to provide information related to Blue Gold.

On March 12, 2015, 4 WMGs were given work orders. 5 Labor Contracting Systems (LCS) under 4 WMGs participated in the work. Taka 3982198.19 was allotted for working on 4.317 kilometers with the deadline of June 25, 2015.

As decided, the work started on March 15, 2015. Before starting, the members were provided training. Within two days of starting work, the labourers realised that the chart was not being followed.

Box-2: plan-design and practice

According to the project plans, first the grass was to be cleared. Then the land had to be ploughed for 6 inches, after which it was to be flattened by a hand held roller. This process had to be repeated three times. The result would be a platform 3 feet high and 15 feet wide.

However, irregularities in the soil clearing and piling were noticed despite the presence of officials. The responsible first showed that the work was done with a tractor. Later, workers were made to put 15 feet of soil in place of 20.

Again, in the slabs where 28 feet of soil was needed, only 18 feet were put and the top was only 13 to 14 feet. These were deviations from the chart to be followed.

Where the soil's a bit lower, it was shown to be 2 feet high. Labour cost would be more if soil was brought from afar and so the slabs were being fixed by digging for soil nearby.

The workers became suspicious because of disregard of the chart and irregular works. The disregard of the Blue Gold and Water Development Board officials further raised questions among the workers. They became suspicious that the officials might have some association with this irregularity and some sort of corruption was happening here. Later, landless organisation sub-committee and Union Committee decided, after a meeting, to protest and prevent this irregularity with the help of

the people.

Application of Right to Information Act against the immoral activities of Blue Gold: Role of the organisation

To scrutinise the activities of Blue Gold, RTI applications seeking information relating to the WAPDA embankment were sent to Blue Gold and the Water Development Board on March 23, 2015. Panchanan Bishwas, a member of the landless organisation, applied for the information to executive engineer Mujibur Rahman of Bangladesh Water Development Board Khulna and senior quality control engineer Md. Ajijur Rahman of Blue Gold program. The application asked about the number of groups designated to work in the reconstruction of the dam, the names of the committees, the schedule of the work, chart, work order and allocated financial resources, the list of the names of the WMGs and contracted LCS and their work policies. When the information was provided, it was determined after verification and analyses that irregularities and corruption was prevalent in the project. Despite protests regarding this, work was going on.

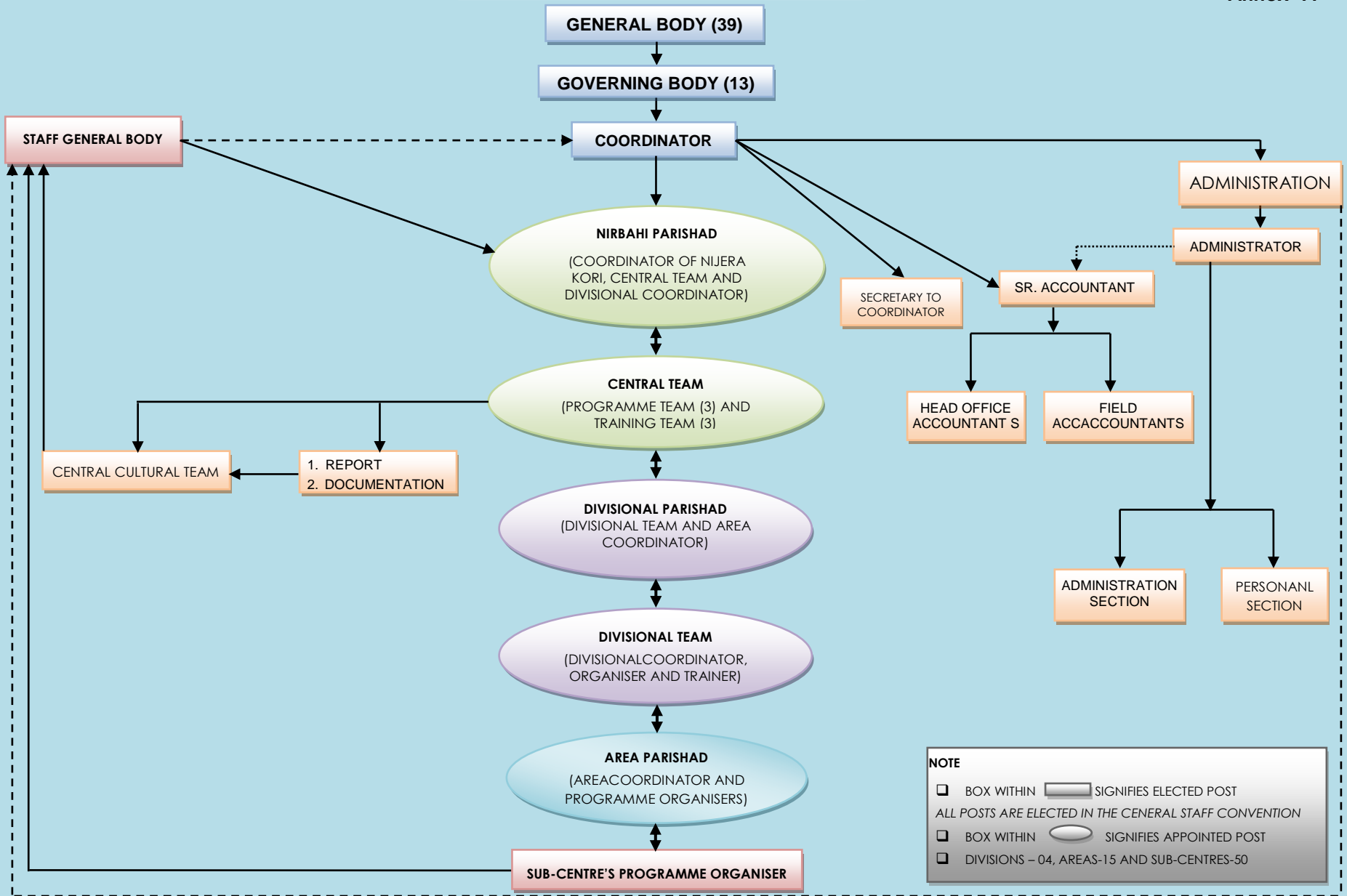
Afterwards, when only one third of the wages was paid, 4 others, Rekha Begum, Mostain Gazi, Tilok Rani Mandal, and Basudeb Kundu, again submitted RTI application to Water Development Board and Blue Gold on May 20, 2015. In the application, master roll papers and a copy of the contract paper between water management group and executive engineer of Water Development Board were requested. After verifying the information, more irregularities and corruption in project activity came to light. Corruptions such as creating a fake list of contracted labour groups (LCS), not following the contract while digging and levelling earth, bringing in workers from other localities and not employing local workers, and illegally receiving money with promises of work were discovered. Applications under the RTI act with the initiative from the landless organisation and trials through making complaints to collect information upon disregard of the application scared the local agents of the Blue Gold Project. They informed the higher authorities of the movement. The authorities went for a field visit on August 20, 2015 and found proof of corruption and irregularity. They found that only 40 percent work activity was complete. They stopped the remaining activity and the payment. The situation is still ongoing.

Result:

The landless organisation was able to unite the people to receive information by using the Right to Information act. As a result, the people were able to protest against the corruption of Blue Gold and Water Development Board and to stop corruption and irregularities. The people were also able to ensure accountability of Blue Gold and Water Development Board. This is a prime example of the Right to Information Act's potential to ensure transparency and accountability in a private development project.

ORGANOGRAM OF NIJERA KORI

Annex- A



NOTE

- ☐ BOX WITHIN [] SIGNIFIES ELECTED POST
- ALL POSTS ARE ELECTED IN THE GENERAL STAFF CONVENTION
- ☉ BOX WITHIN () SIGNIFIES APPOINTED POST
- ☐ DIVISIONS - 04, AREAS-15 AND SUB-CENTRES-50

List of Governing body Members 2014-2016

1.	Mr. Nurul Islam Khan	Chairperson
2.	Kazi Madina	Vice Chairperson
3.	Ms. Khushi Kabir	Secretary
4.	Ms. Ira Rahman	Treasurer
5.	Ms. Dil Monowora monu	Asst. Treasurer
6.	Mohammad Shahid Hossain Talukder	Member
7.	Mr. Abdul Majid Mallik	Member
8.	Ms. Shaheen Islam	Member
9.	Mr. Bashirul Haq	Member
10.	Mr. Biren Shome	Member
11.	Mr. Shafique uz Zaman	Member
12.	Dr. Rowshan Ara Firoz	Member
13.	Syed Abul Barq Alvi	Member

Annex table from - 1 to 23

Table – 1: Geographical Location of Programmes of Nijera Kori

Sl. No	Division	District	Upazila	Area	Sub-center	Total up to December 2015		Expansion		Total up to Dec' 2016		Village Coverage		
						U	V	U	V	U	V	Up to Dec' 2015	New	Up to Dec' 2016
1	Chittagong	Comilla	Chandina	Comilla	3	24	110	0	0	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		
Sub total	1	4	9	4	11	53	211	0	0	53	211	32	0	32
2	Dhaka	Tangail	TangailSadar	Tangail	1	4	22	0	0	4	22	5	0	5
			Madhupur	Madhupur	2	12	127	0	0	12	127	20	0	20
				Dhanbari										
Sub total	1	1	3	2	3	16	149	0	0	16	149	25	0	25
3	Khulna	Kushtia	Kumarkhali	Kumarkhali	1	7	51	0	0	7	51	14	0	14
			khoksa											
		Khulna	Paikgacha	Paikgacha	6	19	171	0	0	19	171	41	0	41
			Dumuria											
			Batiaghata											
Dakope														
Sub total	1	2	6	2	7	26	222	0	0	26	222	55	0	55
4	Rajshahi	Sirajgonj	Raygonj	Raygonj	2	5	82	0	0	5	82	13	0	13
			Bogra											
		Rangpur	RangpurSadar	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	16	147	0	0	16	147	64	0	64
			Sadullapur											
		Rangpur	Pirgonj											
Natore	Bagatipara	Bagatipara	1	10	170	0	0	10	170	42	0	42		
	Lalpur													
	NatoreSadar													
Sub total	1	7	13	6	9	52	586	0	0	52	586	169	0	169
Total	4	14	31	14	30	147	1,168	0	0	147	1,168	281	0	281

Table-2: Formation of Landless Group

Description	December 2015			Plan			Achievement			Total up to December 2016		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	2,642	2,115	4,757	33	26	59	17	7	24	2,659	2,122	4,781
Dhaka	429	322	751	7	9	16	6	5	11	435	327	762
Chittagong	2,182	1,545	3,727	35	21	56	44	24	68	2,226	1,569	3,795
Khulna	813	464	1,277	11	14	25	11	7	18	824	471	1,295
Total	6,066	4,446	10,512	86	70	156	78	43	121	6,144	4,489	10,633

Table-3: Group Members

Description	December 2015			Plan			Achievement			Total up to December 2016		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	51,884	44,688	96,572	871	679	1,550	294	130	424	52,178	44,818	96,996
Dhaka	8,246	7,358	15,604	295	198	493	112	92	204	8,358	7,450	15,808
Khulna	16,417	9,862	26,279	317	338	655	209	129	338	16,626	9,991	26,617
Chittagong	42,613	32,829	75,442	500	358	858	856	462	1318	43,469	33,291	76,760
Total	119,160	94,737	213,897	1,983	1,573	3,556	1,471	813	2,284	120,631	95,550	216,181

Table-4, 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	8,761	4,340	13,101	21,438	18,183	39,621	27,086	20,349	47,435	7,730	3,726	11,456	18,190	14,795	32,985	25,920	18,521	44,441
Dhaka	3,345	1,530	4,875	3,677	3,394	7,071	6,022	3,441	9,463	2,580	1,093	3,673	2,075	1,288	3,363	4,655	2,381	7,036
Chittagong	14,372	6,533	20,905	9,190	6,431	15,621	20,562	10,925	31,487	12,163	4,715	16,878	8,046	5,185	13,231	20,209	9,900	30,109
Khulna	11,592	5,941	17,533	7,176	4,291	11,467	13,850	7,232	21,082	7,715	3,587	11,302	4,887	3,406	8,293	12,602	6,993	19,595
Total	38,070	18,344	56,414	41,481	32,299	73,780	67,520	41,947	109,467	30,188	13,121	43,309	33,198	24,674	57,872	63,386	37,795	101,181

Table-5, 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	165	158	535	579	1,318	958	2,276	1,354	918	2,272
Dhaka	37	53	9	35	234	167	401	212	142	354
Chittagong	241	289	86	84	1,600	1030	2,630	1,608	951	2,559
Khulna	106	118	127	163	719	425	1,144	599	341	940
Total	549	618	757	861	3,871	2,580	6,451	3,773	2,352	6,125

Table-6, Description of Workshop

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
Right to Information Act and its use	117	108	225	56	35	91	39	36	75	90	94	184	65	60	125	52	29	81	78	72	150	61	39	100	299	276	575	259	197	456
Ethnic and Land rights	52	48	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	52	48	100	0	0	0
Khash land distribution & policy procedure	25	25	50	59	61	120	25	25	50	30	22	52	25	25	50	44	7	51	25	25	50	0	0	0	100	100	200	133	90	223
Household work and mane role	130	120	250	91	64	155	39	36	75	90	94	184	78	72	150	58	18	76	78	72	150	80	70	150	325	300	625	319	246	565
Collective economic cultivation	117	108	225	81	63	144	39	36	75	26	30	56	65	60	125	231	121	352	78	72	150	76	50	126	299	276	575	414	264	678
Market and Women	65	60	125	24	23	47	26	24	50	13	12	25	39	36	75	25	0	25	39	36	75	25	25	50	169	156	325	87	60	147
Agriculture and Women role	117	108	225			0	39	36	75	0	0	0	65	60	125	44	6	50	78	72	150	45	30	75	299	276	575	89	36	125
Workshop on Planning	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	100	48	28	76	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	100	61	40	101
Workshop on Leadership	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	50	50	100	44	35	79	0	0	0	0	0	0	76	74	150	44	35	79
Kashland distribution and women rights	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	200	41	7	48	0	0	0	75	50	125	100	100	200	116	57	173
Leadership Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	100	44	35	79	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	100	44	35	79
Land and women	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	36	75	26	24	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	36	75	26	24	50
Food Sovereignty	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	36	75	33	19	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	36	75	33	19	52
Total	636	589	1,225	324	258	582	220	205	425	249	252	501	665	635	1300	690	329	1,019	376	349	725	362	264	626	1,897	1,778	3,675	1,625	1,103	2,728

Table- 7, Formation of structural committee, Committee Meeting and Group Convention

Division	Total No. of Committee up to December 2016				Committee Meetings								Group Convention							
	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Plan				Achievement				Plan				Achievement			
					Name of the Committee				Name of the Committee				Name of the Committee				Name of the Committee			
					Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Village	Union	Upazila	Area
Rajshahi	167	11	1	8	1,540	131	12	59	1,373	124	12	58	152	17	2	5	133	10	2	2
Dhaka	28	6	1	1	290	61	11	8	300	102	9	10	46	8	1		25	6	1	0
Chittagong	58	3	1	13	680	35	12	149	688	36	6	145	57	6	1	13	63	4	0	11
Khulna	49	3	0	8	593	36	0	95	486	39	0	94	33	2	0	9	40	2	0	7
Total	302	23	3	30	3,103	263	35	311	2,847	301	27	307	288	33	4	27	261	22	3	20

Table-8, Group Saving

Division	Total up to December 2015			Plan			Implementation			Distribution			Total up to December 2016		
	W	M	Total	W	M	Total	W	M	Total	W	M	Total	W	M	Total
Rajshahi	12,857,594	13,108,462	25,966,056	2,735,158	2,049,080	4,784,238	2,551,918	1,815,270	4,367,188	1,609,560	1,316,335	2,925,895	13,799,952	13,607,397	27,407,349
Dhaka	757,757	281,111	1,038,868	842,128	712,578	1,554,706	833,785	335,110	1,168,895	595,705	114,000	709,705	995,837	502,221	1,498,058
Chittagong	22,257,886	18,091,325	40,349,211	5,440,426	3,662,778	9,103,204	4,954,167	2,993,158	7,947,325	2,422,366	1,607,487	4,029,853	24,789,687	19,476,996	44,266,683
Khulna	7,693,951	5,271,356	12,965,307	1,874,329	866,971	2,741,300	1,666,716	819,052	2,485,768	2,679,447	526,614	3,206,061	6,681,220	5,563,794	12,245,014
Total	43,567,188	36,752,254	80,319,442	10,892,041	7,291,407	18,183,448	10,006,586	5,962,590	15,969,176	7,307,078	3,564,436	10,871,514	46,266,696	39,150,408	85,417,104

Table-9, Bank Account

Description	Up to December 2015			Plan			Increases in 2016			Total up to December 2016		
	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total
Rajshahi	710	328	1,038	104	28	132	128	38	166	838	366	1,204
Dhaka	261	208	469	10	14	24	8	0	8	269	208	477
Chittagong	604	324	928	9	3	12	6	0	6	610	324	934
Khulna	572	158	730	19	10	29	18	1	19	590	159	749
Total	2,147	1,018	3,165	142	55	197	160	39	199	2307	1,057	3,364

Table- 10, Landless 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	W	M
Basic	100	100	200	47	47	94	75	75	150	112	107	219	100	100	200	83	45	128	75	75	150	49	30	79	350	350	700	291	229	520		
Advance	39	36	75	28	23	51	13	12	25	8	7	15	65	60	125	31	14	45	13	12	25	12	14	26	130	120	250	79	58	137		
Higher Selection	26	24	50	0	0	0	26	24	50	0	0	0	26	24	50	0	0	0	26	24	50	0	0	0	104	96	200	0	0	0		
Higher	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	52	48	100	0	0	0		
Total Core	178	172	350	75	70	145	127	123	250	120	114	234	204	196	400	114	59	173	127	123	250	61	44	105	636	614	1250	370	287	657		
Land use and Government policy and support	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	52	48	100	0	0	0		
Khas land distribution policy and procedure	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	2	3	5	13	12	25	13	11	24	13	12	25	5	4	9	52	48	100	20	18	38		
Leadership Development	26	24	50	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	65	60	125	0	0	0		
Patriarchy and Fundamentalisms	26	24	50	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	65	60	125	0	0	0		
Law, Policy & Women rights	26	24	50	4	2	6	13	12	25	4	6	10	13	12	25	8	7	15	13	12	25	16	9	25	65	60	125	32	24	56		
Government service policy	26	24	50	16	13	29	13	12	25	8	7	15	26	24	50	5	5	10	26	24	50	21	12	33	91	84	175	50	37	87		
Gender planning methodology in Agriculture	26	24	50	0	0	0	13	12	25	13	12	25	13	12	25	0	0	0	13	12	25	0	0	0	65	60	125	13	12	25		
Citizen rights and constitutional guarantee													26	24	50										26	24	50	0	0	0		
Land law and management													13	12	25										13	12	25	0	0	0		
Sub Total	156	144	300	20	15	35	91	84	175	27	28	55	143	132	275	26	23	49	104	96	200	42	25	67	494	456	950	115	91	206		
Total Nijera Kori	334	316	650	95	85	180	218	207	425	147	142	289	347	328	675	140	82	222	231	219	450	103	69	172	1,130	1,070	2,200	485	378	863		

Table- 11, Refresher Training and Forum Meeting

Division	Refresher Training									Up to December 2016	Forum Meetings	
	Number	Plan			Number	Achievement			Plan		Achievement	
		Participants				Participants						
	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total						
Rajshahi	34	443	407	850	32	429	310	739	15	121	116	
Dhaka	12	152	148	300	12	154	147	301	3	33	30	
Chittagong	28	387	313	700	26	471	193	664	0	112	107	
Khulna	28	358	342	700	28	438	262	700	10	128	125	
Total	102	1,340	1,210	2,550	98	1,492	912	2,404	28	394	378	

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	1	20	1	18	177	8	200	2	80	33	176	10	198	2	95	35
Dhaka	9	1	20	1	20	97	4	80	1	42	23	97	4	75	1	36	31
Chittagong	14	1	20	1	20	152	6	140	2	138	0	151	6	148	2	140	1
Khulna	11	2	40	2	40	153	6	60	2	55	10	165	6	67	2	55	14
Total	54	5	100	5	98	579	24	480	7	315	66	589	26	488	7	326	81

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

Description	Total			Krishi Card			VGF Card					VGD Card				Ration card					Others card					Elder/Widow Allowances/ Disability/					Maternity Allowances		100 Days Employment Generation Programme					Fisherman card				
	W	M	Total Card	W	M	D	Minority people	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW
Rajshahi	27,255	30,242	57,497	90	648	0	0	20	35,591	17,899	17,692	104	1,893	172	172	0	13	12,421	4,861	7,560	71	934	6,313	3,460	2,853	31	320	3	-	3	3	127	1,668	641	1,027	3	117	464	5	459	0	
Dhaka	2,368	1,953	4,321	20	40	0	0	15	2,054	1,052	1,002	60	293	34	34	0	3	922	400	522	44	149	980	752	228	40	343	4	1	3	4	0	28	202	81	121	0	31	37	0	37	
Chittagong	9,997	17,041	27,038	13	213	0	0	10	11,302	4,778	6,524	38	427	27	27	0	11	7,481	1,668	5,813	18	196	6,854	3,243	3,611	12	208	5	1	4	5	109	321	158	163	0	85	713	0	713		
Khulna	4,041	3,139	7,180	142	213	0	0	7	3,340	1,749	1,591	97	312	637	0	75	2,046	1,018	1,028	37	102	117	30	97	-	9	22	18	4	-	5	118	535	329	206	0	58	0	0	0		
Total	43,661	52,375	96,036	265	1,114	0	0	52	52,287	25,478	26,809	299	2,925	870	870	0	102	22,870	7,947	14,923	170	1,381	14,264	7,485	6,789	83	880	34	20	14	12	5	382	2,726	1,209	1,517	3	291	1,214	5	1,209	0

W- Women; M- men D- Disable and SW- Single Women

Table- 15, Legal aid Activity

Characteristics of cases	Up to December 2015	New cases	Rajshahi				New cases	Dhaka				New cases	Chittagong				New cases	Khulna				New cases	Total				Till Dec,16
			T	I	Ag	A		T	I	Ag	A		T	I	Ag	A		T	I	Ag	A		T	I	Ag	A	
Total	677	18	20	19	1	0	2	22	21	1	0	5	24	23	1	0	7	6	6	0	0	32	72	69	3	2	642
Criminal	306	1	8	8	0	0	0	16	16	0	0	4	11	10	1	0	3	1	1	0	0	8	36	35	1	1	280
Groups of the plaintiffs	135	0	1	1	0	0	0	6	6	0	0	1	3	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	10	9	1	1	129
Groups of the accused	171	1	7	7	0	0	0	10	10	0	0	3	8	8	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	6	26	26	0	0	151
Civil	175	3	3	2	1	0	0	5	4	1	0	0	4	4	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	5	13	11	2	2	171
Groups of the plaintiffs	99	3	2	1	1	0	0	3	2	1	0	0	3	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	8	6	2	1	98
Groups of the accused	76	0	1	1	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	5	5	0	0	72
Violence against women	196	14	9	9	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	9	9	0	0	2	4	4	0	0	19	23	23	0	0	192
Groups of the plaintiffs	169	14	9	9	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	1	7	7	0	0	1	4	4	0	0	18	21	21	0	0	166
Groups of the accused	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	26

T= Total , I = Infavor, 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
Secondary Level															
December 2015	538	473	1,011	93	77	170	318	276	594	916	808	1,724	1,865	1,634	3,499
Plan	18	14	32	13	6	19	29	19	48	8	6	14	68	45	113
Achievement	15	14	29	6	4	10	28	18	46	11	6	17	60	42	102
Total up to December 2016	553	487	1,040	99	81	180	346	294	640	927	814	1,741	1,925	1,676	3,601
Third Level															
December 2015	105	92	197	7	2	9	40	19	59	151	113	264	303	226	529
Plan	4	4	8	2	0	2	4	3	7	3	1	4	13	8	21
Achievement	2	1	3	0	0	0	5	5	10	0	0	0	7	6	13
Total up to December 2016	107	93	200	7	2	9	45	24	69	151	113	264	310	232	542

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

Description	Contribution (In Taka)	Organisational activities								Cooperation and Support Activities				Total NK	Beneficiary	
		Workshops	Refresher Trainings	Movement	Landless group Convention	Cultural Programme	Day Celebration	Conducting Case	Assistance to Family of arrested Member	Total	Medical Support	Educational Support	Contribution in marriage without Dowry			Total
Rajshahi	Within Group	9,079	7,056	500	58,805	19,953	34,920	41,050	0	171,363	84,397	15,550	36,380	136,327	307,690	271
	Outside Group									0	13,350	8,000	9,480	30,830	30,830	252
Dhaka	Within Group	750	665	0	56,847	400	3,000	1100	0	62,762	13,981	7,250	14,975	36,206	98,968	375
	Outside Group									0	8000	32000	6100	46,100	46,100	1275
Chittangong	Within Group	33,643	13,211	45,600	96,415	27,230	91,350	580,021	500	887,970	133,440	121,980	125,440	380,860	1,268,830	3,026
	Outside Group									0	14,800	80,430	26,170	121,400	121,400	2466
Khulna	Within Group	9,077	8,024	2,000	22,165	20,120	62,360	74,670	0	198,416	68,040	5300	23,750	97,090	295,506	4,098
	Outside Group									0	14,700	4,050	4,350	23,100	23,100	3,622
Total	Within Group	52,549	28,956	48,100	234,232	67,703	191,630	696,841	500	1,320,511	299,858	150,080	200,545	650,483	1,970,994	7,770
	Outside Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50,850	124,480	46,100	221,430	221,430	7,615
	Total	52,549	28,956	48,100	234,232	67,703	191,630	696,841	500	1,320,511	350,708	274,560	246,645	871,913	2,192,424	15,385

Table-18: A, Representation in Different Institutional Committees

Description (January to December 2016)	Gender	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chittagong	Khulna	Total
Number of Contested Union		36	14	34	22	106
Number of Elected Union		20	8	20	14	62
UP election Contested Member	Women	32	13	31	24	100
	Men	20	9	15	20	64
	Total	52	22	46	44	164
UP election Elected member	Women	17	4	13	10	44
	Men	12	4	10	11	37
	Total	29	8	23	21	81
School Management Committee (Contested candidate)	Women	73	4	34	28	139
	Men	78	16	40	37	171
	Total	151	20	74	65	310
School Management Committee (Elected)	Women	39	4	23	20	86
	Men	45	11	24	22	102
	Total	84	15	47	42	188
Market Management Committee (Contested candidate)	Women	0	0	1	2	3
	Men	34	20	21	32	107
	Total	34	20	22	34	110
Market Management Committee (Elected)	Women	0	0	1	1	2
	Men	31	12	14	22	79
	Total	31	12	15	23	81
Sluice Gate Management Committee (Contested candidate)	Women	2	0	0	5	7
	Men	8	1	4	10	23
	Total	10	1	4	15	30
Sluice Gate Management Committee (Elected)	Women	0	0	0	2	2
	Men	5	1	2	6	14
	Total	5	1	2	8	16
Number of Contested Committee		87	36	41	40	204
Number of Committee in Elected		73	26	36	36	171
Total Contested candidate	Women	107	17	66	59	249
	Men	140	46	80	99	365
	Total	247	63	146	158	614
Total Elected	Women	56	8	37	33	134
	Men	93	28	50	61	232
	Total	149	36	87	94	366

Table-18: B, Representation in Different Institutional Committees

Description (January to December 2016)	Gender	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chittagong	Khulna	Total
Community Health Clinic Management Committee (Nominated)	Women	1	3	3	3	10
	Men	2	5	5	3	15
	Total	3	8	8	6	25
LGSP project management committee	Women	1	0	0	0	1
	Men	2	0	0	0	2
	Total	3	0	0	0	3
Policing Committee	Women	4	0	0	0	4
	Men	3	0	0	0	3
	Total	7	0	0	0	7
Union Parisod Standing Committee (Nominated)						
Disaster Management Committee (Nominated)	Women	2	0	0	2	4
	Men	2	2	11	5	20
	Total	4	2	11	7	24
Law and Order Situation Control Committee(Nominated)	Women	0	0	3	1	4
	Men	3	2	4	3	12
	Total	3	2	7	4	16
Committee on Stop Violence against Women (Nominated)	Women	5	3	0	3	11
	Men	2	1	0	3	6
	Total	7	4	0	6	17
Agriculture Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	3	0	0	4	7
	Men	3	2	1	7	13
	Total	6	2	1	11	20
Education Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	4	3	0	1	8
	Men	3	0	0	2	5
	Total	7	3	0	3	13
Rural Development Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	1	1	0	1	3
	Men	2	1	0	0	3
	Total	3	2	0	1	6
Birth-Death Registration Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	1	0	0	2	3
	Men	1	0	0	0	1
	Total	2	0	0	2	4
Environment and Forest Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	3	1	0	0	4
	Men	2	1	0	1	4
	Total	5	2	0	1	8
Sanitation and Water Supply Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	2	2	1	3	8
	Men	1	0	0	2	3
	Total	3	2	1	5	11
Vat and Tax Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	0	0	2	3	5
	Men	0	0	2	2	4
	Total	0	0	4	5	9
Cultural and Game Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	1	0	2	1	4
	Men	3	0	2	2	7
	Total	4	0	4	3	11
Audit and Financial Management Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	0	0	0	0	0
	Men	1	0	0	2	3
	Total	1	0	0	2	3
Finance and Establishment Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	0	1	4	2	7
	Men	0	1	4	1	6
	Total	0	2	8	3	13
Number of Nominated Members	Women	22	11	12	23	64
	Men	23	10	24	30	75
	Total	45	21	36	53	139

Table-19-Participation in local shalish

Division and issues	No. of shalish	Observer			Judge			Arranged by		Result			On process	Recover Tk. as punishment
		W	M	Total	W	M	Total	Group	Group and local leader	Settled	Stopped	Cases		
Women against: (dowry, divorce, polygamy, rape, physical assault, fundamentalism indictment)														
Rajshahi	376	3,482	3,659	7,141	276	466	742	365	11	343	2	4	27	1,589,100
Dhaka	75	172	349	521	60	171	231	57	18	70	3	0	2	750,000
Chittagong	989	3,308	5,657	8,965	746	1,563	2309	772	217	965	8	1	15	1,981,401
Khulna	72	406	493	899	100	157	257	68	4	60	6	0	6	466,000
Total	1,512	7,368	10,158	17,526	1,182	2,357	3,539	1,262	250	1,438	19	5	50	4,786,501
Illegal Possession of Property from the Landless														
Rajshahi	31	283	412	695	16	55	71	27	4	27	0	2	2	25,000
Dhaka	5	9	33	42	4	15	19	1	4	5	0	0	0	0
Chittagong	218	897	1,736	2,633	127	360	487	185	33	203	4	1	10	10,000
Khulna	35	140	287	427	34	79	113	33	2	24	7	3	1	0
Total	289	1,329	2,468	3,797	181	509	690	246	43	259	11	6	13	35,000
Fundamentalist activities														
Rajshahi	2	38	38	76	4	3	7	1	1	2	0	0	0	0
Dhaka	1	2	4	6	1	2	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Chittagong	1	12	10	22	3	4	7	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Khulna	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4	52	52	104	8	9	17	3	1	4	0	0	0	0
Issue of Injustice and oppression														
Rajshahi	36	370	400	770	12	32	44	32	4	32	0	0	4	27,500
Dhaka	57	111	203	314	43	116	159	45	12	54	0	1	2	
Chittagong	108	485	936	1,421	103	292	395	94	14	106	0	2	0	174,500
Khulna	34	166	270	436	17	39	56	26	8	29	3	0	2	7,500
Total	235	1,132	1,809	2,941	175	479	654	197	38	221	3	3	8	209,500
Rajshahi	445	4,173	4,509	8,682	308	556	864	425	20	404	6	2	4	1,641,600
Dhaka	138	294	589	883	108	304	412	104	34	130	3	1	2	750,000
Chittagong	1,316	4,702	8,339	13,041	979	2,219	3,198	1,052	264	1,275	12	4	8	2,165,901
Khulna	141	712	1,050	1,762	151	275	426	127	14	113	16	3	13	473,500
Total	2,040	9,881	14,487	24,368	1,546	3,354	4,900	1,708	332	1,922	37	10	27	5,031,001

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

Table-6: Access and Control over Natural Resources and their Economic Value										
Division	Khasland and Water Bodies (Acres)								Economic Value	
	Reg. of Khas land	Posse. of Khasland	Posse. of W.B leased	Water body opened	Rec. land from Shrimp Farm	Rec. land of Farmers from illegal occupiers	Rec. Inheritance property in favour of women	Total	Bene. Household	BDT
Rajshahi	8.95	0.6	1.57	0	0	3.04	28	42.16	1,044	23,188,000
Dhaka	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	550,000
Chittagong	3,259.68	515.4	2.43	15.60	0	0.86	3.96	3,797.93	3,156	1,709,068,500
Khulna	3.1	0	1	113.4	7	1	8.8	134.3	1,721	73,865,000
Total	3,271.73	516	5	129	7	4.90	41.76	3,975.39	5,922	1,806,671,500

Reg-Registration, Posse- Possession, Rec- Recovering, Bene-Beneficiary, EV- Economic Value, WB- Water Bodies

Table- 21- Issue of Social Movement /Struggle

Issue of Social Movement /Struggle	Issue raised by organisation of women/men	Division wise movement/struggle in-2016					No. of movement won					Ongoing movement December 2016
		Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chittagong	Khulna	Total no. of movement in current year	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chittagong	Khulna	Total No. of movement won	
Movement on stopped Violence against women:	Women	202	39	297	50	588	201	38	294	36	569	19
Violence against women such as dowry, divorce, polygamy, rape, physical assault, kidnapping, fundamentalism and religious indictment	Men	164	4	151	25	344	163	3	150	22	338	6
Fundamentalism	Women	6	3	3	2	14	6	3	3	2	14	0
	Men	2	1	0	1	4	2	1	0	1	4	0
Establishment of rights on local resources:	Women	14	9	32	16	71	14	8	30	14	66	5
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	39	17	49	30	135	33	17	48	20	118	17
Resistance against corruption:	Women	47	4	22	10	83	46	3	23	14	86	-3
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.	Men	47	1	44	18	110	45	1	45	9	100	10
Total	Women	269	55	354	78	756	267	52	350	66	735	21
	Men	252	23	244	74	593	243	22	243	52	560	33
	Total	521	78	598	152	1349	510	74	593	118	1295	54

Table- 22-A, 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	Paddy Harvesting	False Cases and Harassment	Fundamentalisms	Law and Order Situation	Total
Deputy Commissioner	Govt.	4	0	5		1				5			15
	Group	31		6	1	1		2				8	49
Upazila Land Administration	Govt.	135		3						7		34	179
	Group	349	1	566	20	60	13	82	6	47		151	1295
Education Authority	Govt.			15	4	253		1	0	0	0	0	273
	Group	3	1	48	8	336	4	5	0	0	0	0	405
Health Authority	Govt.			4	171	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	181
	Group	3		8	389	2	4	2	0	1	0	0	409
Upazila Administration (UNO)	Govt.	109		273	20	49		35		15	2	98	601
	Group	355		5	2	4			3	1		14	384
Police Administration	Govt.	49	37					72	9	147	3	93	410
	Group	74		90		1	27	111	16	201		112	632
Parliament Member	PM	38		67	2	10	3	3	2	15	0	2	142
	Group	67		139	4	18	15	6	2	21	0	12	284
Union Perished	UP	102	1	402	11	12	49	79	7	88		38	789
	Group	322	6	917	35	18	135	158	22	101	2	70	1786
Total	Government and elected Authority	437	38	769	208	328	52	193	18	277	5	265	2590
	Group	1204	8	1779	459	440	198	366	49	372	2	367	5244
	Total	1,641	46	2,548	667	768	250	559	67	649	7	632	7,834

Table- 22-B, Opinion Sharing, Dialogue between Landless Group and Different Stakeholders on Following Issues

Description	Initiative by CBO's/ landless Group	Natural Resource (land and water body)	Commercial shrimp Aquaculture	Local Govt. Corruption	Local Development	Health	Education	National/International Day Celebration	Violence on Women	False Cases and Harassment	Fundamentalisms	Law and Order situation	Total
Political Party	Party	2		6			2		1				11
	Group	15		4	11		3		1			5	39
Press Club	P. Club	12		3	7		3	30	7	3	5	8	78
	Group	38		10	22	1	10	38	17	9		8	153
Bar Council	B.C	3					3	2		12	2	2	24
	Group	28					1		5	62		11	107
Women Organisation	WO				2			13	30	3		7	55
	Group				2			5	45	11		19	82
Total	Stakeholders	17	0	9	9	0	8	45	38	18	7	17	168
	Group	81	0	14	35	1	14	43	68	82	0	43	381
	Total	98	0	23	44	1	22	88	106	100	7	60	549