

# Annual Report

January 2018 to December 2018

## Nijera Kori

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ALRD	Association for Land Reform and Development
BLAST	Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust
CFT	Cubic Feet
CF	Contract Farming
DISA	Development Initiative for Social Advancement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HDRC	Human Development Research Centre
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ILC	International Land Coalition
JSC	Junior School Certificate
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
LRF	Lease Rent Farming
MP	Member of Parliament
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NDC	Nezarat Deputy Collectorate
PO	Programme Organiser
PSC	Primary School Certificate
RIB	Research Initiatives Bangladesh
RTI Act	Right to Information Act
SC	Standing Committee
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
SSNP	Social Safety Net Programme
TIB	Transparency International Bangladesh
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
UP	Union Parishad
VAW	Violence Against Women

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nijera Kori is a registered NGO working in various parts of rural Bangladesh since 1980. The mission of Nijera Kori is to empower the rural poor, both women and men, to create independent democratic organisations for taking up challenges within their own spheres for a better and more meaningful life, and to establish their rights over the institutions that decide on the allocation of natural resources and services for the poor. Nijera Kori works in four administrative divisions of Bangladesh: Dhaka; Rajshahi (Dinajpur, Rangpur, Kurigram and Gaibandha, previously part of Rajshahi, are now administratively under Rangpur division); Chittagong; and Khulna. It covers 14 districts, 31 upazilas, 147 unions and 1,168 villages. Nijera Kori succeeded in developing 10,867 landless organisations with membership of 220,705 people.

### Activities and Achievements

**Mobilisation and organisation building:** In 2018 Nijera Kori succeeded in developing 126 new groups (enrolment of 2,418 new members), though the planned target was 161. This rate of achievement however, varies across divisions due to migration of poor to urban areas, local level political resistance and rise of religious fundamentalisms.

**Group Meetings:** In 2018, 92,112 group meetings—which are the fundamental pillar of the awareness building process—were organised against the planned target of 111,543, which gives an achievement of 83%. This process was supported by regular trainings, conducted in Nijera Kori training centres. The groups also organised 6,526 annual group meetings, where members reviewed their activities, formulated plans and elected committee members.

**Formation of Landless Committee and Building Collective Leadership:** When 66% of the target population of a village is enrolled as members, a village committee is formed with 7 elected members. Similarly, when 66% of the total villages of any union are covered, a union committee is formed with 13 representatives. The same principle is also used for the formation of upazila committee, which is formed with 21 members. Currently there are 359 committees; consisting of 303 village committees, 23 at the union level, 3 at the upazila level and 30 at area-level. These committees are increasingly being recognised as legitimate voices of the poor.

**Election of Committee Members:** During the reporting period 1,057 committee posts were open for election for which 2,071 (women: 944 and men: 1,127) members contested. 534 women members were elected. In 77% of total open posts, women were elected, and 47% of the women succeeded by defeating male counterparts through the electoral process. These clearly indicate increased acceptance and recognition of women leadership within the organisation, a reflection of changing male-biased mindsets within members.

**Group Savings:** The groups build up their own capital through monthly savings to finance their collective activities and to support members during unforeseen crisis. In the reporting period, the landless groups mobilised Taka 1,71,77,176 (USD 206,954). Share of women's group savings was Taka 1,09,02,975 (USD 131,361). Of the total amount mobilised, Taka 97,75,272 (USD 117,774) was redistributed among members to deal with immediate needs (production and consumption). Use of group savings to help members during crisis is a good testimony of the groups' awareness and commitments to support each other to overcome seasonal unemployment, and substantially reduces members' dependency on traditional money lending system practiced by the *mahajans* and/or micro credit lending programmes. The group savings are also used for undertaking collective economic activities and to partially cover costs of various group activities such as organising local workshops, conventions, providing legal support, organising protest movements and cultural activities. Landless organisations also made use of their savings to provide scholarships to meritorious students from member families, assistance for medical expenses, and to celebrate dowry free marriages.

**Collective Economic Activities:** As of end December 2018 a total of 5,802 groups were engaged in collective economic activities using their own savings. Number of groups engaged in collective economic activities is highest in Chittagong division, followed by Rajshahi and

Khulna. The groups are engaged in a range of activities including collective agricultural projects, fishery, livestock rearing, small businesses and the operating/pulling of rickshaw vans. The landless groups invested Taka 91,61,905 (USD 110,384) out of their savings for collective economic enterprises, which generated a profit of Taka 92,76,016 (USD 111,759) and employment for 5,474 members (women: 1,980 and men: 3,498) for a period of 6 months.

**Capacity and Awareness Building Trainings:** Nijera Kori on a regular basis organises training sessions to enhance the analytical capabilities of the group members. During the period, 1,562 (women: 826 and men: 736) members participated in training programmes. Interestingly, 53% of the trainees were women and women's participation in trainings marginally exceeded the planned target. 70 follow-up trainings were also conducted where 2,041 members participated. Additionally, 118 (women: 47 and men: 71) members participated in basic and advance level cultural trainings against a target of 120. During cultural trainings participants composed 49 new dramas covering various socio-economic issues, of which 18 were on women's right and violence against women and 11 against religious fundamentalisms.

The trained members are now facilitating discussions on various thematic subjects of concern in regular group meetings. A series of thematic workshops were also organised to develop the analytical and planning skills of members to launch movements in redressing injustices and improve their social position. 3,758 members participated in these workshops. Again, women's participation in the workshops was higher than that of men, which is a clear sign of their interest in acquiring knowledge and taking leadership in initiating social change.

**Cultural Activities:** Currently there are 54 cultural groups. In 2018 these groups performed 268 dramas in different working areas covering various issues. This year, 47 women members performed for the first time in the drama and musical events that were held in public spaces.

**Pursuing Legal Action:** In 2018 the landless groups had to address 24 new legal cases. Of these, 20 cases were filed by the landless groups while for 4 cases they had to appear in the court as defendant where cases were lodged by the rich power-holders. Out of 20 cases lodged by the landless groups, 16 were seeking justice on account of violence against women. In the period, judgements were received for 26 cases, and all were in favour of the landless groups.

The landless groups had to spent Taka 5,07,660 from their savings to support legal cases. Had it not been for the well-wishing lawyers providing legal support to the landless groups for minimal legal fees, the cost figure would have been much higher. At the end of the reporting period, with addition of the new cases, the landless groups are still faced with 632 court cases. Nijera Kori is providing assistance for 146 cases (23%) for which the groups could not mobilise resources.

**Right to Information Act:** Enactment of Right to Information Act in 2009 makes provisions for ensuring free flow of information and people's right to information. The RTI Act is also seen as deterrent to corruption and thus ensuring good governance. The landless groups, to ensure that their voice is heard in implementation of state policies, use the RTI regularly. In 2018, the groups submitted 113 applications, and information was duly received against 89. The applications submitted were for details of safety net program, local development projects, education and health services, sexual harassment complaint committees in school, agricultural service, khas land, fisheries department, EIA of brick kiln among others.

A total of 129 members applied for information. On receiving the information, the groups verified them and demanded that the irregularities identified be addressed. Some important achievements are: 278 safety net cards were reallocated to needy families after cancellation of non-eligible beneficiaries, list of medicine to be given free of cost was put up in hospitals, projects were halted due to use of low-quality materials, 4 Union Standing Committees were reconstituted, in 20 schools sexual harassment complaint committees were formed and in 17 schools landless women leaders were included as members of the committees.

**Local Governance:** An effective local governance mechanism plays a critical role in ensuring improved service delivery to citizens. To enhance Union Parishad service-delivery capacities,

and to ensure transparency and people's participation in decision-making, the government decided to establish various Standing Committees (SCs). Due to close monitoring of the functioning of the SCs to promote transparency and subsequent mobilisations, the upazila administrations had to reorganise several SCs. As a result, 42 landless members were nominated in 33 SCs. Women's participation rate stands 55%, and importantly, of the total 23 nominated women, 13 are either single woman or from women-headed households. A total of 179 group members also contested against the local powerful elite in the school, market and sluice gate management committee elections. Of these, 113 were elected.

The data demonstrate the dynamic changes that are taking place in the management of the local government institutions, the acceptance of the leadership of landless groups. The representation of the landless organisations in the local power structure has restored some degree of balance in the distribution of power. Further, due to the intervention of the organisations, 2,090 vulnerable families received social safety net cards; 8 members received relief for the flash flood related sufferings, 520 landless members received government support such as blankets and food during the winter months and 25 members received agricultural cards and 70 households received vegetable seeds. Persistence advocacy of the committee also resulted in necessary infrastructure development in Char Jubilee area.

**Shalish:** Group members participated in 1,734 *shalish* for resolution of different issues. In 22% (or 388) *shalish*, the group members played the role of judges along with the local leaders, and solely conducted the rest 78%. A total 4,810 members (women: 1,562 and men: 3,248) participated as judges in *shalish*. Among the 1,734 that were held in 2018, 70% of cases were regarding VAW; 13% concerning land property disputes; 17% about illegal physical attacks; and 4 on fundamentalist activities. In addition to their role as judges, the landless members played an important role in monitoring the cases. During the reporting period, 18,179 members were involved in monitoring. Due to active engagement of the landless members in the *shalish*, 17 criminal cases were instead referred to a formal court. As a result of participation of landless group members, disputes were successfully settled in favour of the real victim in 1,579 *shalish*.

**Access to Natural Resources (agricultural land and water-bodies):** The landless members, through their movements, succeeded in obtaining information and eventually clearly demarcating 665 acres of *khas* land. The groups also recovered 16 acres of water bodies from illegal occupation of powerful elites and made these water bodies open to all as common property resources. Additionally, the landless organisation successfully recovered 195 acres of private water bodies, which were illegally occupied by powerful individuals.

**Education:** As a result of door-to-door campaigning, 4 girls withdrew themselves from madrasas, and were admitted into mainstream education. The landless organisation committee with the help of school management committee developed two girls' football teams in Char Jabbar. Monitoring and collective pressure stopped graft in distribution of textbooks in Bashhata primary school. Around 350 students benefited under the free book distribution programme. Additionally, 20 students of Dhanbari and Pairabandh high school completed registration for SSC examination by paying only the government registration fees.

**Religious Fundamentalisms:** The committees have successfully stopped activities of 6 Talim Kendros (informal Islamic teaching centres). In Char Jabbar area, when without consultation with the community and committee, the mosque committee chair took an initiative to form an imam association, the watch committees mobilised to stop this, since it could lead to furthering of religious fundamentalist messages. The monitoring also resulted in withdrawal of 10 students from madrasa education in favour of general education. Also 5 families stopping financial contributions to mosques (which was being collected through misleading information), 2 families withdrew from Islamic insurance schemes and 21 male members stopped joining the Tabligh.

**Access to Government Health Service:** Four landless members have been nominated as members of the Community Clinic Management Committee. The landless organisations also successfully convinced 4 women to stop using Norplant as a contraceptive method; 17 expecting mothers were given regular pre-delivery check-ups and then admitted to hospitals

during child births; 6 nutrition cards were issued during pregnancy and 3,127 landless members received proper treatment and free medicine in government hospitals.

**Gender Relations:** 3 child marriages were prevented by exerting collective pressure and dowry was stopped in one case. In addition to that, landless members took more care with regards to ensuring health, medical treatment and nutrition of women and due to committee's regularly monitoring violence against women has reduced in Watch Committee areas, particularly within landless group members' families. 59 cases of domestic violence have been stopped.

A consistent and structured approach to address patriarchal social values and norms within the household resulted in creating some space for women to establish better rights within the home. In many cases, women reported positive changes in their relationships with husbands in terms of increased mutual respect, caring and co-operation and a decline in domestic violence, and spoke of better participation in the household decision-making process. 29,748 landless male members reported their participation in household work, while 2,137 landless member families reported that presently family decisions are taken through mutual discussions between men and women. This indicates an increasing level of respect and acceptance of women in the household.

**The State's Recognition of Landless Women's Contributions and Leadership:** The "Joyeeta Onneshone Bangladesh" is a national programme initiated by the Government of Bangladesh. The programme awards five women in five categories from each of the seven administrative divisions of Bangladesh. In the reporting period, 50 women landless members were selected for the Joyeeta award at upazila level. 11 women were recognised in the category for development in society; 10 in the successful mother category; 12 for economic success; 10 for erasing the trauma of violence against women and starting a new life; and 7 in the education and service category. Out of the 50 recipients, 2 landless women were awarded at the district level.

**Educational Activities Undertaken by the Landless Organisation:** Due to absence of public schools in many areas, the landless groups have been demanding to the government to establish schools in their areas and were also active to make the parents aware of the importance of education. In areas, where the government response is yet to come, the landless organisations have taken the initiative to establish schools with their own natural resources. Currently the landless organisations are pursuing their education programme through 30 primary schools, 4 junior high schools and 1 high school. Student enrolment at primary school is 25,875 (13,344 girls).

**Activities with Children and Adolescents:** 590 children and adolescents are currently involved in various activities. They have formed 6 football teams and 6 cultural teams, and have participated in dialogues, video screenings and discussions, art camps, games, and performed in 205 events.

**Advocacy, Networking and Representations by the Landless:** Mobilisation of the masses and coalition building between the landless and different professional groups continues to be an important area of action. On the basis of the demands and the issues raised by the landless group, Nijera Kori and landless organisations jointly adopts and conducts advocacy activities at local and national levels. In the reporting period, 14 dialogues with elected representatives of 14 Union Parishads (UP) were organised with the participation of 350 people. Issues discussed includes, UP's service, Social Safety Net, Khas land, Role of UP standing committee, UP budget, etc. The landless organisation, local civic bodies and local government administration also organised 6,626 meetings concerning local issues. Of these meetings, 2,316 meetings were organised at the initiative of the government administration and 4,310 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. The upazila administrations also invited landless cultural groups to perform songs and dramas on for celebration of various commemorative days.

**Collective Movements:** During the period 1,105 movements were organised. Of these, 774 addressed violence against women, 13 to resist religious fundamentalisms, 170 for establishing rights over natural resources and 148 addressed corruption and irregularities. 79 memorandums were submitted demanding justice for violence against women, illegal eviction, against irregularities in development projects, hospital services and administration of safety net programmes.

**Knowledge Generation and Its Dissemination:** Nijera Kori in partnership with HDRC, ICCO and ALRD organised a national level workshop (20 March, 2018) to share the findings of the research “Present Form and Disempowerment Process of Rural Peasants”. The research focused on the changing tenancy market of land, and expanded on the rationale for two dominant modes of farming, i.e., lease rent farming (LRF) and contract farming (CF), and their consequent social and ecological impacts. It also came up with recommendations to ensure farmer’s rights in this context.

**Seminars, Workshops and Roundtable Discussions at National Level:** Nijera Kori in partnership with its allies organised various events addressing multiple themes. These included freedom of speech, communalising of education, good governance, ensuring justice for rape survivors and access to information. These events were addressed and attended by Ministers, Members of Parliament, university teachers, civil society representatives and others.

**External Evaluation:** In June 2018 on behalf of Nijera Kori’s partner Bread for the World, a three-member team carried out a comprehensive evaluation of Nijera Kori’s core program. The evaluation team found that the core programme was “highly relevant in terms of the larger political and developmental context of the country, and is well aligned to the economic and social situation of the marginalised communities whose needs it seeks to address.” It noted the significant impacts of Nijera Kori’s programme in terms of its intended outcomes, but also pointed the areas of weaknesses that the organisation needs to better address. The findings will be a valuable guideline for the organisation in its future activities.

**Sustainability Planning:** To consolidate the achievements made and sustain the institutional development process Nijera Kori carried out a systematic process of reflections and analyses to formulate a Sustainability Plan. This process was led by Seth Warren, a friend of Nijera Kori on a voluntary basis. A wide group of stakeholders were involved in this process through which process a comprehensive plan emerged, outlining three objectives:

(a) Financial Sustainability: stable funding was acknowledged as Nijera Kori’s foremost sustainability concern. With an increasingly challenging fundraising environment, Nijera Kori will take steps to ensure consistent and adequate funding that aligns with its ideology.

(b) Institutional Sustainability hinges on staff’s commitment to transparent, accountable, democratic and participative systems and processes, along with a deep commitment to ideology. Nijera Kori needs to build upon the strong fundamentals to ensure the highest standards of risk management and excellence of work.

(c) Managerial Sustainability: The staff—particularly, those who rise to leadership positions through open elections—are the future of the organisation. Nijera Kori must take steps to equip emerging leaders with managerial expertise and to safeguard the organisation from the loss of key talent.



## CHAPTER ONE

### 1 Organisational Background

#### 1.1 Introduction

Nijera Kori is a well-known activist NGO in Bangladesh. Nijera Kori in English means “We do it ourselves”. Nijera Kori in its present form was reorganised in 1980. It is registered with the NGO Affairs Bureau vide registration No. 66 dated 22.4.1981, and the Societies Registration Act vide No. S-749/34 of 1980-81 dated 17.2.1981. The organisation believes in creating strong autonomous organisations of the rural poor so that they can assert their rights and ensure their entitlements as citizens of Bangladesh, rejecting the use of microcredit or any other service-delivery approach.

Nijera Kori believes that unless transparency, accountability and participatory democracy is practiced within the organisation itself, attempting to instil similar values and practice amongst people that it works with is a contradiction. This remains the core value that has shaped Nijera Kori's management structure and decision-making process, both internally and within the groups. A core principle of Nijera Kori is that poverty can be addressed through the strength and capacity of those living in poverty as they have the knowledge of its dimensions and the experience to fight it. Its staff thinks of themselves as facilitating agents whose main goal is to support the collective efforts of the poor through skill development and creating bonds of trust between them. Most interactions are through face-to-face meetings, which promote closer relationships, establish trust and ensure participatory decision-making and accountability.

#### 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 organisations to take up challenges within their own spheres for a better and more meaningful life for themselves and their immediate community, and to establish their rights over the institutions that decide on the allocation of natural 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 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, empower them to voice their opinions and ensure that it is being heard, and to involve them in the decision-making processes at the village and local levels.

#### 1.3 Nijera Kori's Target Population

Nijera Kori, 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 the selling of labour as their main source of livelihood. They include wage laborers, sharecroppers, small and marginal farmers, and people involved in various traditional trades and occupations. Furthermore, Nijera Kori makes it a priority to involve the ethnic communities of Bangladesh within its programme. Additionally, in recognition of the realities of rural Bangladesh, the Nijera Kori Staff Council in its meeting on 18–20 May, 2018, decided to expand

the target population to include those who are physically-impaired/challenged or those who have special needs. In sum, Nijera Kori aims to work with those who live under extreme poverty and whose basic human rights and needs are largely ignored by society.



The defined target population, according to Nijera Kori's analyses, is faced with multi-dimensional constraints. Economically, 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 which are often arbitrarily determined by the buyers and which 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, in the *shalish* (informal village courts) which are dominated by the powerful landed sections of village society, and in the delivery of the government's programmes. In social terms, the poor are kept "in their place" by powerful norms and beliefs which seek to legitimise their oppression and disenfranchisement and prevent them from questioning the status quo. The lack of exposure to any alternative set of values and basic education has left the poor unaware of their legally-recognised rights, while absence of organisations of their own prevents them from claiming and establishing these rights. An additional set of cultural norms and practices further undermine the position of women.

#### 1.4 Fundamental Principles of Nijera Kori

Nijera Kori's overarching goal, as noted above, is establishment of a society free from oppression and deprivation through ensuring 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. It must also encompass all the spheres—economic, social and political—in which the poor are denied their rights. In realising this goal, Nijera Kori follows a number of principles. These are elaborated below:

**Nijera Kori emphasises social mobilisation:** Nijera Kori believes that alongside poverty, there is unemployment, concentration of wealth and power, and various other injustices in society. The majority of the poor are exploited by a handful of people who own and control the means of production as well as political power. In this backdrop, Nijera Kori defines its role as the facilitator of a dialogical process through which people would be equipped with the ability to analyse and assess their situation and act 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 establish their rights through building their own organisations rather than depending on others to act on their behalf.

**Nijera Kori does not run any credit programme:** Though Bangladesh has become famous for its innovation in the arena of micro-credit, Nijera Kori continues to be guided by 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 need 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, create new dependencies and vulnerabilities among the communities instead.

**Nijera Kori strongly believes in gender equality:** For Nijera Kori, gender equality is one of the pillars of the organisation and remains central to its 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 households as well as face restrictions on their physical movements and discriminations within the labour market. 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 in their families and 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 programmes and activities are structured to ensure that financial and organisational autonomy remains with the people. Nijera Kori emphasises on an autonomous structure of the working people's organisation so that the resource-poor members' dependency on Nijera Kori gradually decreases till they can 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. The 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 democratic principles in the management of the people's organisation. Nijera Kori strongly believes that democratic management is key to the successful establishment of the rights of the poor.

### **1.5 Organisational Structure Decision-making and Work Culture**

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, composed of 39 members, which elects a Governing Body every two years. The role of the Governing Body, which meets quarterly, is to ratify policies and programmes 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 coordinating the overall programmes and management of Nijera Kori.

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 with 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 has 14 *anchals* (area), and 31 *upakendras* (sub-centre). In its headquarters, there is a central team constituted of the Coordinator, 1 Central Organiser and 1 Central Trainer. This team oversees organisation-wide coordination and overall administration of the programmes. The Dhaka office also houses 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.

### **Programmatic decision-making and reporting**

Democratic decision-making, based on documentation, feedback 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 coordinate and provide overall supervision at the 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 has never been required.

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 are 5 women elected to open *anchal* posts (out of 14), 4 in open divisional posts (out of 12), and 2 in open central posts (out of 3).

All staff from field and central levels participate in strategic decision-making, both directly and through the elected representatives. Nijera Kori's decision-making, reporting and evaluation processes are closely intertwined. There is a great deal of emphasis on documenting these processes through written minutes, monitoring visit reports and programme 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, staff 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 *khas* land, where decisions on how to act have to be made by groups themselves, and not by the staff.

A description of the process 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 internal and external audience to understand Nijera Kori's organisational strategy.

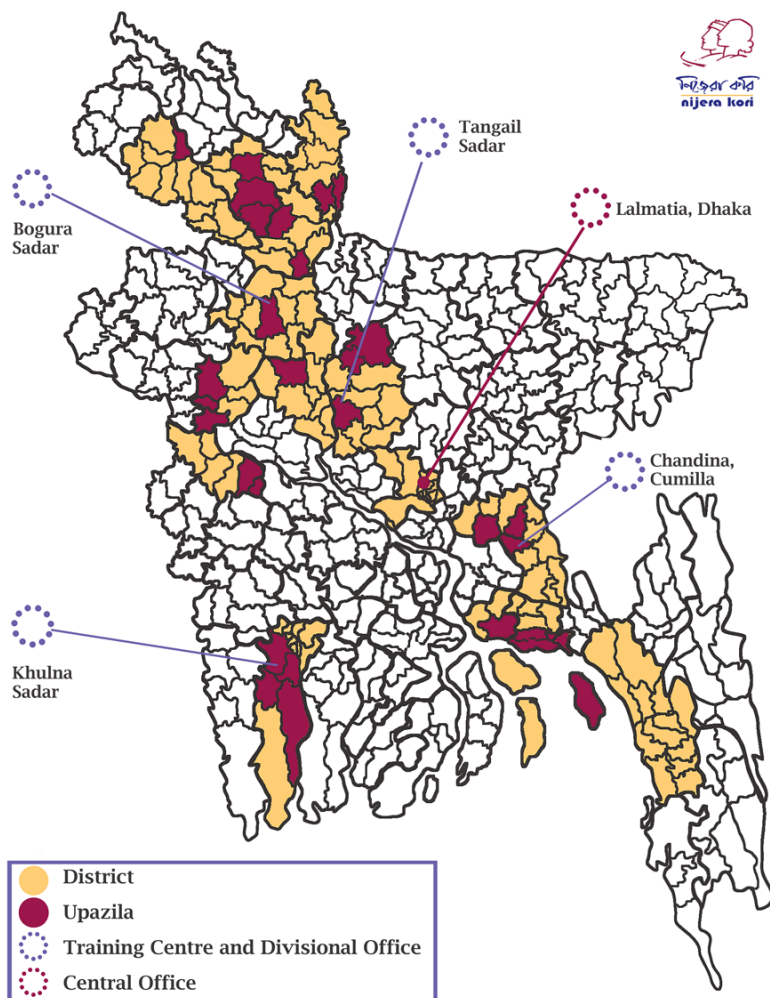
- Staff at the 31 different sub-centres meet on a weekly basis to reflect on their performance over the week, share problems they have encountered, evaluate each other and discuss plans for the coming period. These are minuted. Every staff member has to maintain a separate file for each of the groups which she or he is overseeing so that continuity is maintained in relationships with groups even if the staff member in question changes.
- 2 to 3-day long monthly area meetings are held each month at the 14 *anchals* (areas). Individual staff members in an *anchal* submit a written activity report for the month and

provide verbal self-evaluation of their performances for comments and questions. Individual and *anchal*-level activities are decided at these meetings.

- These meetings are minuted and a monthly report is prepared. Administrative decisions regarding leaves are taken here. One day is kept aside for study and learning, based on current newspaper articles, reports, books and periodicals, which are recommended by the trainers.
- 2-day long 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 takes decisions itself or takes it up at the Staff Executive Council (Nirbahi Parishad). Proceedings are minuted and sent to the *anchals* and to the centre.
- 2 to 3-day long quarterly meetings are held by the Executive Council (nirbahi parishad). Four divisional chairs and all central committee members, including the Coordinator, meet to review the entire program. The divisions give their reports, identify and discuss key issues and decide on new strategic directions. The 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 2 to 3-day long conventions are held at the divisional level. All staff of the division, including divisional accountants, conduct a review of divisional and area performance, check achievements against targets and prepare a report on divisional activities for the entire year.
- A 3-day long central convention meets every second year. All Nijera Kori staff members are present, including 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 the Divisional Coordinator, the Divisional Organiser and Divisional Trainer. The entire body of staff elect the central organisers and the central trainers. The only non-elected member in the decision-making structure is the Coordinator who is appointed by the Governing Body and has remained the same for the sake of continuity since 1980.
- 3-day council meetings are held every alternate year. Here, five NK staff members are represented by an elected councillor. This is thus a smaller forum than the biennial convention and allows for more in-depth analysis and evaluation than is possible in the larger forum. The annual report for the year in question is presented at this meeting. Any changes to decisions or policies taken at these biennial council meetings have to be approved at the next convention.
- Finally, if specific issues need discussion, an extended meeting of the Nirbahi Parishad and all elected representatives is convened. This is to ensure that decisions taken on unanticipated issues or unplanned changes are also taken democratically and

implemented at the relevant level. The outcomes of all meetings, at different levels, are transmitted back to lower level committees and groups after each meeting.

### 1.6 Nijera Kori's Working Area



Nijera Kori works in four administrative divisions of Bangladesh: Dhaka; Rajshahi (Dinajpur, Rangpur, Kurigram and Gaibandha, previously part of Rajshahi, are now administratively under Rangpur division); Chittagong; and Khulna. The criteria for selection of working areas are: the majority of the population in these areas belong to its target group. Nijera Kori plans to continue working in these four divisions in the foreseeable future, widening and deepening its coverage within them rather than expanding into other parts of Bangladesh. The critical constraint to the expansion of social mobilisation activities is quality of staff and the fact that the organisation

is reluctant to expand into new areas—involving the associated start-up costs—unless it is sure of maintaining the staff quality.

Currently in these four divisions, Nijera Kori covers 14 districts; 31 upazilas, 147 unions and 1,168 villages (see map below). In these areas, there are 10,867 groups with total membership of 2,20,705, of whom 1,23,579 are women and 97,126 are men. If we compare this with the overall poverty statistics in these villages, then it appears that Nijera Kori has covered a significant portion of the target population.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. The Process of Developing Poor People's Organisation

#### 2.1 Group formation

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

A group leader, secretary and cashier are elected in each group on the basis of perceived commitment or ability. They are responsible for the day-to-day running of the group and serve as the link between the group members and the local office i.e., sub centres of Nijera Kori.

Soon after selection, they are offered a basic training course in social development issues as well as group dynamics. As the group matures, further training is provided, usually to the elected members, who are then responsible for the dissemination of information, skills and ideas to the rest of the group.

Every week group members sit together to discuss group and village activities and formulate working plans for the coming weeks. In addition, group meetings are used as a forum to analyse a range of issues, from their personal lives to broader political, social, cultural and economic issues. For many villagers, this is the first time they are exposed to the idea that they have rights as citizens and human beings. In addition, it is also the first time that they learn about women's rights as human rights.

In many groups, written minutes of the group meetings are kept and the cashier maintains written accounts. Workshops are organised at regular intervals at the village level. These are of two kinds: one deals with organisational matters while the other focuses on local issues and perceived needs of the area. These usually last for a day or two.

As the groups gain more experience, they take on a range of additional activities such as weekly group savings. This is intended to reduce members' vulnerability to emergency credit needs and dependence on professional money lenders. The amount contributed to the savings fund and the utilisation of funds is decided by each group, taking into account the ability of the poorest members. Nijera Kori encourages its groups to save their money in a bank account, partly to familiarise them with bank procedures. While the savings mechanism is useful, for most groups it remains a small-scale activity in relation to their financial needs.

As groups become more self-confident, they begin to act around various issues identified through group discussions. Many of these entail certain forms of social mobilisation. Meetings held by landless groups at village, area and divisional levels are used to review their own achievements, to identify problems and decide future courses of action. This process of reflection-action is an important part of the awareness-building process.

At their annual conventions, organisational positions, roles and responsibilities of the committees are evaluated and problems and weakness are identified. Members of the committee/landless representatives visit other village and working areas for short periods in exchange programmes for evaluating their performance and exchanging experiences.

## 2.2 Group Federation and Committee Structures

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

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

**Area Committee:** The Area Committee is an interim committee which coordinates the activities of village committees in a specific area until the conditions for forming a union or upazila committee have been met. In certain cases, it may also be formed due to the specific needs of an area. It is composed of eleven members: a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a joint secretary, an organising secretary, a finance secretary, a publicity secretary and representatives from two male and two female groups. Its tasks include arranging meetings of representatives to organise campaigns on specific issues. There are currently 28 area committees

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

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

### Common principles of committee structures

All committees share the following common principles:

- They are democratically elected for the period of one year at the annual conference of the group members
- Gender equity in representation and participation
- The committees give leadership in social movements and lead the action programmes at local level
- The committees are important forums for taking decisions which are relevant for members within the committee's jurisdiction



- Learning and self-awareness through a process of review is used to inform decisions
- Accountability among the committees is maintained through leadership structure, annual conference, and regular discussions
- A committee's responsibilities include solving internal problems of the organisation and coordination of Nijera Kori group activities
- They seek to liaise with other organisations in order to have a more powerful impact

### 2.3 Training—An Important Input to Group/Organisation Development

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

For training, members are selected by their groups on the basis of their commitment and aptitude. Usually, the same members tend to get selected and thus, develop as the leaders of their groups. All members who are selected for training at different levels come together to form a training forum. The role of the forum is to provide village-based refresher courses to ensure the retention of the trainings received and to disseminate what has been internalised among group members on a regular basis.

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

- **Primary level:** Groups at this level concentrate on becoming organised, developing basic awareness and ensuring regular attendance at meetings. Group savings and account-keeping are given importance in group activity. Currently there are 7,679 (women: 4,593 and men: 3,086) groups at this level.
- **Secondary level:** These groups have reached a level of social awareness when they can act on behalf of all members of their class within their area, irrespective of whether they are group members or not. They have developed accountability and leadership skills and begun to initiate collective action. There are currently 3,767 (women: 2,025 and men: 1,742) groups at this level.
- **Higher level:** Groups are able to analyse national issues and relate these to their own lives. They participate in national rallies and organise rallies in their own localities. Their savings are used for the benefit of the community. They also ensure access to local and national resources for collective production or use. Their leadership is established in the locality. There are 569 (women: 323 and men: 256) groups at this level.

The third stage corresponds to a situation when groups become self-managing. They are able to initiate their own meetings and actions without the presence of Nijera Kori staff. Nijera Kori's earlier experience with setting up an independent apex organisation of the landless has made

it cautious about the idea of withdrawing its support entirely from its groups. As such, it has adopted a process for withdrawing partial support from its groups as they progress from primary to secondary and then to higher levels. However, it remains involved in planning and executing projects which involve larger areas. These areas require brokering resources and advocacy with public and private systems at local and national levels such as government administration, the elected bodies and the police.

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

## 2.4 Group Voice within Nijera Kori

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



The close relationship between members and staff means that staff at the sub-centres are accessible to members at all times. Nijera Kori staff do not have any fixed working hours. Male programme organisers often meet with their groups late in the evening as this is the only time the landless groups are able to meet. Group members also visit the sub-centres whenever they need

to. In addition, central and divisional staff pay regular visits to groups in which they are able to provide feedback on, or express dissatisfaction with, any aspect of Nijera Kori's work.

## 2.5 Advocacy and Alliances

The processes by which landless women and men become confident enough to assert their rights tend to be slow and uneven. Consequently, while Nijera Kori groups have gained considerable strength at the local level, they have not yet become an organised presence in

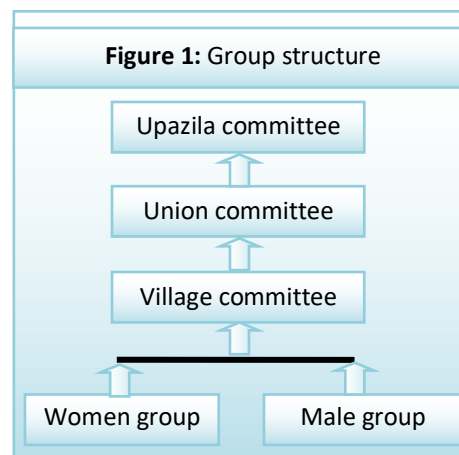
national policy forums and governance structures. Even at the local level, the more distant the struggle for justice becomes, the less confident are the poor and landless likely to feel due to the urban, bureaucratic and legalistic procedures. One strategy by which Nijera Kori seeks to address this is through its own advocacy activities and by its alliances with like-minded NGOs in the field as well as with the more liberal and sympathetic sections of the bureaucracy, media and civil society in the local areas and districts in which it works. In addition, it also participates in broad-based people's organisations at the national level and helps to build national movements and campaigns around specific issues.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. Nijera Kori's Activities and Achievements

#### 3.1 Social Mobilisation and Organisation Building

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

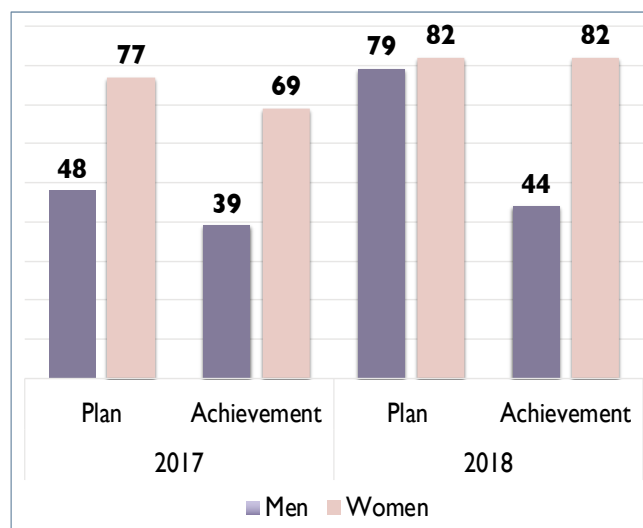


However, at times, to give impetus to organisational activities, the members decide to form ad-hoc coordination committees called area committee in areas where membership coverage is less than two-thirds. The formation and reorganisation of the committees at every level is achieved through an annual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

#### Achievement

During the reporting period of January to December 2018 a total 126 groups (women: 82 and men: 44) have been formed against plan 161 (**Graph 1**). The rate of achievement is 78%. Formation of new groups is 17% more against last year (108).

However, this rate tends to vary across divisions. Performance of Rajshahi division is lowest with a 29% achievement rate. Dhaka and Khulna divisions reached 50% and Chittagong division achieved 248% of the planned targets. Please refer to the remarks in **Box 1**, below.



Graph 1: Formation of Landless Groups

### Box 1: Group Formation Variance by Division

In Rajshahi division group formation suffered due to eviction of landless from the Beribadh (embankment) and many members had to leave the area to seek employment outside and that affected the work. In Khulna division due to expanded shrimp cultivation and in Dhaka division due to changes in profession many had to migrate to the city in search of employment. Due to these, the activities of these groups had become irregular. Therefore, instead of focusing on forming new groups, a strategy was adopted for reorganisation of these groups. As a result, the number of new groups formed is less than planned in Rajshahi, Dhaka and Khulna divisions.

On the other hand, in Char Jabbar area in Noakhali of Chittagong division, the landless organisation mobilised a movement against a government initiative to establish an economic zone on agricultural land. In this movement, landless people of many *char* areas participated. Due to this mobilisation, the landless people were inspired to form committees themselves. Afterwards, the landless organisation and Nijera Kori carried out a survey and incorporated them in the group. This contingency was mentioned in the project's risk analysis. As a result, the rate of formation of new groups in Chittagong division is much higher than expected.

However, in spite of concerted efforts all inactive members of existing groups did not participate regularly in the programme activities. During the reporting period, a total of 292 (women: 187 and men: 105) landless groups were reconstituted. The new group development process secured enrolment of 2,418 new members (women:1,604 and men: 814).

Group meeting is the fundamental pillar of the awareness building process. The number of meetings organised stands at 92,112 (women: 56,913 and men: 35,199) against the planned target of 111,543 (see annex Table 4). The rate of achievement is 83%. It is to be noted that the rate of group meeting is 6% more against last year's achievement (87,230). Details of meetings against each divisional plan is presented in **Table 1**.

Division	Plan			Achievement			
	W	M	T	W	M	T	%
Rajshahi	30,888	19,375	50,263	23,073	17,532	40,605	81
Dhaka	5,234	3,066	8,300	4,732	2,729	7,461	90
Khulna	21,058	11,628	32,686	19,258	9,635	28,893	88
Chittagong	11,358	8,936	20,294	9,850	5,303	15,153	75
Total	68,538	43,005	111,543	56,913	35,199	92,112	83

On average, nearly 11 members attended each meeting and participated in the discussion. For women's group, average attendance was 13 and for men it was 10. Meetings contributed to building a sense of collective identity among members. It also enhances members' ability to analyse and understand the basis of existing exploitative social and political systems. In addition, progress was made with regards to the potential of

the poor to challenge the status quo using their collective strength.

In addition to regular weekly/monthly group meetings during the reporting period, the landless groups organised 6,526 annual group meetings against the target of 6,451. The rate of achievement is 101% and it is 17% more against last year's achievement (5,600). In these meetings, the members reviewed their activities, formulated plans and elected the group committee. These meetings succeeded in electing 2,426 (women: 739 and men: 1,687) group leaders, all selected by the members of the primary groups.

Through regular group meetings, the members continue to enhance their level of awareness and seek promotion from primary to secondary and tertiary levels. This process is supported by the collective training process.

In the reporting year, 82 (women: 47 and men: 35) groups graduated from primary to secondary level, which is 2% less than last year (84) and 16 (women: 8 and men: 8) groups graduated from secondary to the tertiary level, which is 45% more than last year (11). It is important to note that once the group reaches tertiary level, they are capable of managing their activities independently, without the help of Nijera Kori's staff.

In the reporting period, the landless groups organised a total of 670 representative meetings against the planned 734, and 1,971 joint meetings against the planned 648. The rate of achievement is 91% and 304% respectively (**Table 5**). It should be noted that, representatives from different groups participated in the representative meetings and three or four groups organised joint meetings. Please refer to **Box 2** provided below.

### **Box 2: Landless Group Meetings**

Landless members in Rajshahi, Dhaka, Khulna and Chittagong divisions migrated to various areas for 3-5 months for work in the last working year. So, regular meetings of those groups could not be held. Because of the adopted strategy of organisational continuity, it was decided to hold joint meetings with landless members of adjacent areas who had not migrated.

As a result, the number of joint meetings is much higher than planned. Due to these joint sessions, relationships between groups, members and even members' families of adjacent areas have been strengthened—this exemplifies the efficacy of these joint meetings. This situation had been mentioned in the risk analysis.

### **3.2 Formation of Landless Committee**

Committees are formed at the village, union and upazila levels when a certain percentage of the target population are enrolled as members. For instance, 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 used for the formation of upazila committee, which 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 coordinate activities, ensure accountability and organise rights-based movements. The organising committee in such cases is elected for one year through an open voting process during the annual group convention.

#### **Achievement**

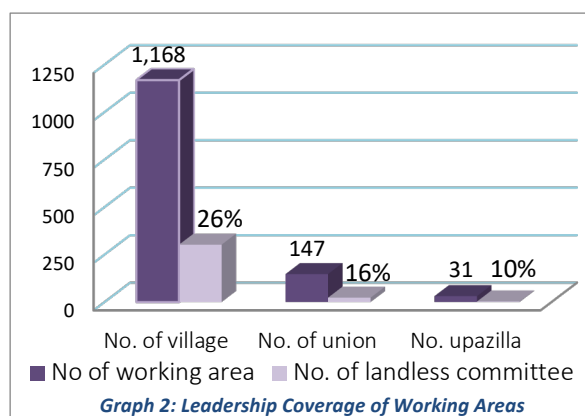
A total of 359 landless committees at various levels have been reported to be active through mobilisation, coordination and organisation of issue-based programmes. As of December 2018, the distribution of the 359 Committees were as follows: 303 village committees, 23 at the union level, 3 at upazila level and 30 at area-level.

Committees exist in 26% of the villages, 16% unions and 10% upazilas within the working area of Nijera Kori (**Graph 2**). In the reporting period one landless committee was formed in Paikgacha area under Khulna division.

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

The committee members as reported above are elected through a democratic process.

During the reporting period, for the 288 committees, 1,057 posts were open for election. For these seats a total of 2,071 (women: 944 and men: 1,127) members contested. This is 15% higher than that of last year (women: 24% and men: 9%). In the committee elections, 534 women members were elected. The rate of elected is 57%. 21% more women were elected as compared to the previous year (442). Interestingly, in 77% of total open posts women got elected and 51% of the women members succeeded in getting into the committees by defeating their male counterparts through the electoral process. These data show that number of women members in both contested and elected posts has increased. These indicate increasing acceptance and recognition of women leadership within the organisation, and thus of changing of the male-biased mindset within members. This is a very positive indication of women's empowerment in rural Bangladesh, where women are often the most vulnerable segment of society (**Table 2**).



Description	No. of open post where women & men both contested	No. of open post where women contested	Contested Candidate		Elected Women	% of women elected in total open post	% of women elected against male
			W	M			
Rajshahi	461	301	374	447	241	80	54
Dhaka	115	76	114	134	58	76	43
Chittagong	257	169	272	288	134	79	47
Khulna	224	148	184	258	101	68	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,057</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>1,127</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>47</b>

During the reporting period, the landless committees at various levels organised 3,395 meetings against the planned target of 3,463. The rate of achievement is 98%. Of the committee meetings, 2,862 were organised by village committees, 258 meetings by union committees, 35 by the upazila committees and 308 by area committees. A total of 34,139 members attended these meetings. As a follow-up to the meetings' decisions, the landless groups organised 1,734 issue-based collective mobilisations; addressed 1,214 cases of VAW; and organised 4 mobilisations to resist religious fundamentalisms, 224 for establishing the rights of landless people over natural resources, and 292 against corruption and irregularities (**Annex Table 22**).

Additionally, the landless committees organised annual conventions: 243 at the village level; 22 at the union level; 1 at the upazila level and 26 conventions at area levels. The number of conventions organised at union and area levels have been below target but at village level have been above the planned target (village: 260, union: 17, upazila: 3 and area: 24). Rate of achievement against plan is: for village: 93%, union: 129%, upazila: 33% and area: 108%.

### 3.3 Group Savings and Utilisation

The landless groups build up their own capital through monthly savings deposit to finance collective activities and to support members at times of unforeseen crisis/emergencies. This monthly contribution is kept in a collective group account with a bank. In the reporting period, the landless groups mobilised Taka 17,177,176 (USD 206,954). Share of women's group savings is Taka 10,902,975 (USD 131,361) and for men, Taka 6,274,201 (USD 75,593).

These funds are kept in 55 collective bank accounts (women: 47 and men: 8, details presented in **Annex Table: 8 and 9**).

Of the total amount mobilised, Taka 9,775,272 (USD 117,774, 10% of the total savings) was redistributed among the members to deal with personal immediate needs (production and consumption). The women's groups used Taka 8,379,552 (USD 100,958) and men's groups Taka 1,395,720 (USD 16816) to support members immediate personal needs.

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

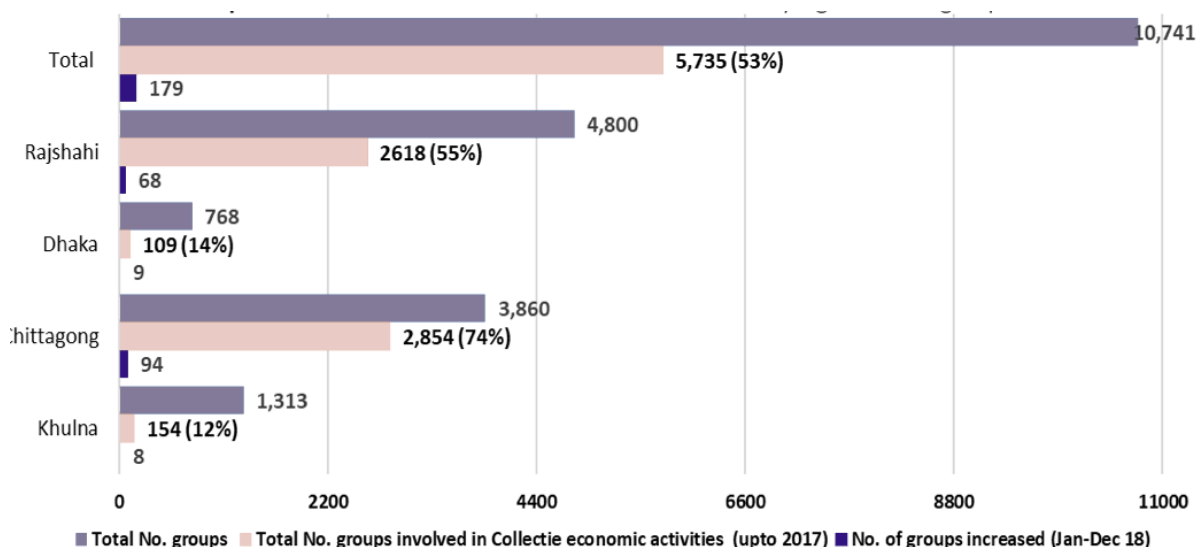
The group savings is not only used for mitigating unforeseen crises, but also for undertaking collective economic activities. A part of group savings is also used for covering costs of various group activities such as organising local workshops, trainings, group conventions, providing legal support, organising protest-movements and cultural activities.

For organisational activities as cited above, the landless groups spent Taka 22,46,625 (USD 270,668). Additionally, landless organisations also made use of their savings to provide scholarships to meritorious students of the member families, assistance for medical expenses, and celebrating dowry free marriages. Using of group savings for wider social enterprises clearly demonstrates the growing awareness and commitment of the members for collective ideology and contributed to strengthening the process of social mobilisation, which is the core focus of Nijera Kori's work (see **Annex table: 17**).

In December 2017, of the 10,741 groups, 53% (5,735) were involved in collective economic activities. During the reporting period, of the 5,735 groups, 112 (women: 63 and men: 49) had to close down their collective enterprises, at least temporarily, for not being able to renew leases on *khas* land and water-bodies and/or buy new livestock. 179 (women: 117 and men: 62) groups started collective economic activities with savings.

This means as of end December 2018 a total of 5,802 groups (women: 2911 and men: 2891) are engaged in collective economic activities based on their own savings. Number of groups engaged is highest in Chittagong division, followed by Rajshahi and Khulna (**Graph 3**). These groups are engaged in a variety of activities. 1,071 groups have taken up collective agricultural projects, 271 are in fishery, 716 in livestock rearing and 3,744 in small businesses and the operating/pulling of rickshaw van (**Annex Table 13**).





Graph 3: Achievement and Collective Economic Activity against Total Groups

The landless groups invested Take 9,161,905 (USD 110,384) out of their savings fund for the collective economic enterprises. This investment yielded a profit of Take 92,76,016 (USD 111,759). Share of women's groups is Taka 28,16,992 (USD 33,940) and men's Taka 64,59,024 (USD 77,819). In terms of employment, the collective activities generated work for 5,474 members (women: 1,980 and men: 3,498) for a period of 6 months (9,85,320 labour days).

### Box 3: Nayan Hossain's Education

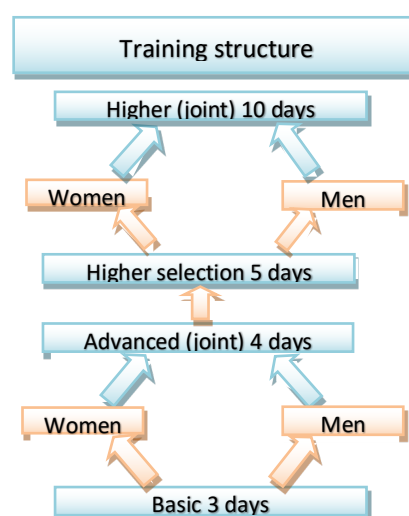
Due to efficient financial management and use of the group savings for collective social and economic enterprises the economic condition of the members has improved. This is aptly described by 24-year-old Nayan Hossain of Chhandah village of Nandalalpur Union in Kumarkhali. In Nayan's words:

"I am a first-year of honours student of Kumarkhali College. My parents do not have the means of supporting my education. I earn my education expenses by doing agricultural work. At the time of admission, I requested the group to advance me Taka 36,000 to buy a cow for getting involved in agriculture through sub-leasing of land. The group extended its support. I worked in the field after college hours. During last Eid, I sold the cow for Taka 44,000 and earned a profit of Taka 8,000. I bought books with the money. I couldn't have bought the books without this opportunity. I requested the group to grant me another loan to buy a cow."

### 3.4 Awareness Raising and Capacity Building

Nijera Kori on a regular basis organises various training sessions to enhance the analytical capabilities of the group members. Such trainings are normally organised with 20-25 participants. At the basic level, trainings are provided to female and male members separately, while at advanced level, both female and male members participate together in joint training sessions. Again, at the higher selection level training, the sessions are organised separately for women and men while at the advanced level of such trainings, the women and men sit in joint sessions.

In recognition of the existing socio-religious values of the society, the gender disaggregated approach is followed to create space for women so that they can express



themselves freely and interact with fellow women at the initial stage. 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. Cultural trainings, both at the basic and advanced levels, are organised jointly with female and male cultural group members.

## Achievement

During the reporting period, 1,562 (women: 826 and men: 736) members participated in different training programmes against the planned target of 1,616 (women: 792 and men: 824) members. This gives an accomplishment rate of 97%. Interestingly, 53% of the trainees were women and women's participation in the training programmes marginally exceeded the planned target. Details on training participants per division is presented in **Table 3**.

Training Subject	Gender	Rajshahi		Dhaka		Chittagong		Khulna		Total		%
		Plan	Achiev	Plan	Achiev	Plan	Achiev	Plan	Achiev	Plan	Achiev	
Core trainings	W	122	113	94	98	100	102	61	60	377	373	99
	M	98	84	84	62	100	98	119	118	401	362	90
	T	220	197	178	160	200	200	180	178	778	735	94
Knowledge and capacity buildings	W	158	164	60	62	80	75	78	105	376	406	108
	M	136	121	60	58	80	65	76	59	352	303	86
	T	294	285	120	120	160	140	154	164	728	709	97
Cultural Trainings	W	12	12	12	12	12	13	13	10	49	47	96
	M	18	17	18	17	18	17	17	20	71	71	100
	T	30	29	30	29	30	30	30	30	120	118	98
Total Achievement	W	292	289	166	172	192	190	152	175	802	826	103
	M	252	222	162	137	198	180	212	197	824	736	89
	T	544	511	328	309	390	370	364	372	1,626	1,562	96
	%		94		95		90		102		95	102

**W= Women; M= Men; T= Total and Achiev.= Achievement**

According to data, Khulna division has the highest achievement with 102%, followed by Dhaka with 95%; Rajshahi division with 94% and Chittagong with 94%.

In addition to the various trainings noted above, 70 follow-up trainings were conducted against the target 80. A total of 2,041 members (women: 1,203 and men: 838) participated in these training follow-up activities (**Annex Table: 11**).

In the reporting period, 118 (women: 47 and men: 71) members participated in basic and advanced level cultural trainings against target of 120 (women: 49 and men: 71). The rate of achievement is 98%. The advanced cultural training was organised along with staff and landless members. 14 (women: 8 and men: 6) staff participated in advanced cultural training.

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

During the period, a series of thematic workshops were organised. The aim was mainly to develop the analytical and planning skills of members to launch movements in redressing injustices and improve their social position. A total of 3,758 members (women: 2,196 and men: 1,562) participated in these workshops, exceeding the target of 3,662 (women: 1,970 and men: 1,692), and gives an achievement rate of 103%. Again, women's participation in the workshops was higher. This higher rate of women's participation (11% more than the plan) is a clear sign of their interest in acquiring knowledge and taking leadership in initiating social change.

**Table 4** gives details on the number of workshops and men/women distribution of participants per Nijera Kori working division.

Gender	Rajshahi		Dhaka		Chittagong		Khulna		Total		
	Plan	Achiev.	Plan	Achiev.	Plan	Achiev.	Plan	Achiev.	Plan	Achiev.	%
Women	676	814	355	355	522	550	417	477	1,970	2,196	111
Men	624	566	287	280	398	375	383	327	1,692	1,562	92
Total	1,300	1,380	642	635	920	925	800	804	3,662	3,758	103
%		106		99		101		101			

**Achiev.= Achievement**

### 3.5 Cultural Activities

Currently there are 54 cultural groups. Activities of the cultural groups mainly consisted of holding meetings, discussions on specific cultural issues, performing drama and organising musical festivals. Detailed achievements of each activity against planned target are reported in **Table 5**. In addition to that, 80 (women: 24 and men: 56) participated in drama-based workshops.

Description	P	A	%
Meetings of cultural group	573	559	98
Cultural discussion	26	27	104
Drama performance	260	268	103
Padajatra (Cultural Long March)	4	5	125
Cultural function by children	83	141	170
Cultural workshop	21	21	100

**(P=Plan, A=Achievement)**

During the training and workshops, participants composed 49 new dramas covering women's right (18); rights of agricultural workers (11); against religious fundamentalisms (7); and rights to Khas land and water bodies (13).

Over the year landless cultural groups performed a total of 268 dramas in different working areas covering issues as noted in above. In addition, five 2-3-day long "Cultural Long March" were organised which covered 16 villages. Around 65 to 70 thousand individuals were present.

This is a remarkable achievement showcasing that the landless cultural groups have reached border audience with different messages. This significantly contributes to raising awareness within the community. It is worth noting that this year 47 women members performed for the first time in the drama and musical events that were held in public spaces such as local markets and school grounds. The participation of women members in the cultural activities is an indication of women's freedom, empowerment and participation in decision-making.

### 3.6 Empowerment Support Initiatives

#### 3.6.1 Legal aid support activities

During the reporting period, the landless groups had to address 24 new legal cases. Of them, 20 cases were filed by the landless groups, while for 4 they had to appear in court as defendants in cases lodged by the rich power holders. The highest number of new cases were in Rajshahi (13) and Chittagong (7). In Dhaka, the highest number of cases were resolved (13).

Out of 20 cases lodged by the landless groups, 16 were seeking justice on account of VAW. The increased number of court cases is due to fact that the landless groups have the strength to challenge oppressors, while the rich and elite uses repression of women as a weapon to silence the groups. The increased number of court cases by the landless in itself is an indication of social progress. In the reporting period, for 26 cases, judgements have been received, and all were in favour of the landless groups.

Of the cases resolved, most were criminal cases; second highest were cases regarding VAW (which fall under criminal cases, but is shown separately for specificity), and then civil cases. Details have been presented in **Table 6**.

Nature of cases	New cases	Resolved cases		
		T	I	Ag
<b>Total</b>	24	26	26	0
<b>Criminal</b>	3	15	15	0
Groups of the plaintiffs	2	5	5	0
Groups of the accused	1	10	10	0
<b>Civil</b>	5	3	3	0
Groups of the plaintiffs	2	1	1	0
Groups of the accused	3	2	2	0
<b>Violence against Women</b>	16	8	8	0
Groups of the plaintiffs	16	7	7	0
Groups of the accused	0	1	1	0

T= Total, I = in favour, Ag= Against, A= Appeal

Due to the high costs associated with court cases, the landless groups had to spend Taka 507,660 from their savings. Had it not been for the well-wishing lawyers providing legal support to the landless groups for minimal legal fees, the costs would have been much higher. At the end of the reporting period, with addition of the new 24 court cases, the groups are

still faced with 632 cases. Of the 632 cases, Nijera Kori is providing legal assistance for 146 (23%) cases for which the groups could not mobilise financial resources.

#### **Box 4: Waiting for justice for 15 years**

Manjila Khatun was a 16-year-old girl from Taluk Raghu village of Sadar Upazila in Rangpur. Manjila's parents have been members of the landless organisation for 17 years.

In 2003, a retired police officer named Altab Ali raped and murdered Manjila and with the help of his wife, dumped her body in a drain. The next day, Altab Ali himself recovered the body later and buried her publicly. This raised the suspicion of the landless organisation, and they mobilised for justice. At the pressure of the landless, the police were forced to take on the case (900/3). Altab Ali and his wife Saleha Khatun were accused.

When the police failed to find any evidence in the investigation, the CID started investigating. They found evidence of rape and murder. The local police and administration pressurised on Manjila's parents to withdraw the case. But due to the landless organisation's pressure and regular monitoring, they did not succeed. Nijera Kori has been helping with this case. But the process was long-term. Due to judicial transfers, failure of witnesses to show up on the scheduled dates, change of dates through bribes, the trial kept being interrupted.

After 15 long years, the verdict of the case was given on March 25, 2018. The verdict was life-term imprisonment of Altab Ali for rape and 14 years of imprisonment for both Altab Ali and Saleha Khatun for murder. After the verdict, Manjila's mother Rabeya Khatun said: "He did not let anyone suspect a thing. He lied and tried to bury the body quietly. I was suspicious, but nobody would listen to me. But the landless members did. Because they mobilised, we were able to file a lawsuit. It might have been delayed, but we were able to get justice for my daughter."

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

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

Freedom of thought, conscience and speech is recognised in the constitution as a fundamental right and the right to information is an inalienable part of it. Since all powers of the Republic belong to the people, it is necessary to ensure right to information for their empowerment. The RTI Act is designed to ensure transparency and accountability in functioning of all public, autonomous and statutory bodies and institutions, and private

organisations run on government or foreign funding. The act is also seen as deterrent to corruption. Nijera Kori firmly believes that RTI is a very important mechanism available to citizens to demand accountability from the state and uses this to ensure that the community's voice is heard for the effective implementation of state policies. During the report period the RTI Act was widely used and details are presented in **Table 7** below.

Table 7: Use of RTI Act									
Description	No. of RTI Applications		Total	Information Received			Total	On process	Rejected by Concerned Authorities
	Jan' to Dec' 2018	Pending Application Jan' to Dec' 2017		Jan' to Dec' 2018	From Pending Application	From Complain Application			
<b>Primary applications</b>									
Social Safety Net Programme	23	9	32	17	9	0	26	6	0
Local Development Project	12	5	17	6	5	0	11	6	0
Education	2	0	2	2	0	0	2	0	0
Health	4	2	6	3	2	0	5	1	0
Complaint committee	51	0	51	46	0	0	46	5	0
Agriculture	2	0	2	1	0	0	1	1	0
Khas land	10	2	12	9	2	0	11	1	0
Local institution i.e. village court, rural power association	4	0	4	3	0		3	1	
Fisheries department on amount fish fry	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
Brick kiln on EIA	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Total Primary Application</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>
Appeal applications	2	2	4	0	2	0	2	2	0
Complain application	1	1	2	0	0	2	2	0	0
<b>In Total</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>

In 2018 under the RTI Act 113 requests were made, and information was duly received against 89 applications. Two were appeal applications filed after non-receipt of information at the primary appeal. 1 complaint was filed to the Information Commission on non-receipt of information from appeal authority. 23 applications were still under process from the previous year. So, the total number of information applications for the working year is in effect 134.

The applications submitted under the RTI Act were for details of safety net programmes (32); local development projects (17); education (2); health services (6); sexual harassment complaint committees in school (51); agricultural service (2); Khas land (12); local institution i.e. village courts, rural power associations (4); fisheries department (1); and brick kiln EIA (1) among others.

A total of 134 (women: 71 and men: 63) landless members applied for information. On receiving the information, the groups verified them and asked for addressing the irregularities identified. Some important achievements were: 278 safety net cards were reallocated to real needy families after cancellation of non-eligible beneficiaries who were solvent and/or relatives of UP members; list of medicine to be given free of cost was put on public display in hospitals; development projects were halted due to use of low quality materials and eventually implemented as per approved designs and materials; 4 Union Standing Committees were reconstituted and members selected based on patronage/nepotism were dropped.

The High Court in a verdict on May 13, 2009, in response to a writ petition for the prevention of sexual harassment, issued a set of guidelines which included, among others, formation of

sexual harassment complaint committees in Schools to file, investigate and take action relating to sexual harassment incident. The High Court in its Guidelines clearly stated that such committee should consist of at least five members, majority of whom should be women and must be headed by a woman.

A report published on the *Prothom Alo* newspaper on May 22, 2010 stated that according to the Secretary of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry is not supposed to form these committees; rather the department and institutions under the ministry have the task of setting up these committees. In an Action Aid report titled "Sexual Harassment at Educational Institutions and Workplaces: A Study on the Implementation Status of the 2009 High Court Guidelines" it was found that authorities, especially senior officials, lack awareness about the implementation of the High Court guidelines. The above suggests that in reality no strong initiatives were taken for implementation of the High Court verdict.

#### **Box 5: Formation of Sexual Harassment Committee GKA Mannan High School**

**Context:** In 2017-18 when two female students and a male student were sexually harassed in Jhapra village, Dhangora Union, Raiganj Upazila, Sirajganj district, the landless organisation organised a protest march demanding justice. They called for implementation of the High Court's 2009 guidelines for ensuring educational and work environments free of sexual harassment and establishment of sexual harassment complaint committees in educational institutions and workplaces.

**Process of change:** As follow-up of The Swallows Bangladesh partners meeting (December 5-7, 2017) and drawing from the experiences of working with children and adolescents, Nijera Kori took the initiative for the formation of sexual harassment complaint committees in educational institutions. For this, the High Court guidelines were thoroughly discussed in the workshops, trainings and meetings of the landless organisation. The landless organisation took a policy decision to create pressure on the school committee for the formation of complaint committees. In the Dhangora Union committee meeting of the landless groups (May 20, 2018), the decision was taken to first ask for information regarding formation of the complaint committee in the GKA Mannan High School using the RTI Act.

Laili Begum took the responsibility of filing the application under the RTI Act on behalf of the organisation. On May 25, 2018, she applied to the headmaster of the school asking whether the harassment complaint committee had been formed, and if yes, who were the members. The headmaster did not provide the information despite the law. So, on July 12, Laili Begum filed an appeal application to the Upazila Education Officer. On August 19, the officer responded that complaint committees had not been formed and directed the headmaster in writing to form the committee.

On receipt of this instruction, the headmaster and the school management committee invited Laili Begum to the school for discussion. On August 27, 2018, she sat with the teachers, the chairman and secretary of the school management committee to discuss the HC guidelines. She talked to them about the key points of the guidelines, and provided them with copies of the judgement. Based on this, in September, the school authorities short-listed the names of possible members of the harassment complaint committee. On November 27, 2018, the school formed a sexual harassment complaint committee of five members, with assistant teacher Laboni Begum as its head. Landless leader Laili Begum and an ally of the landless organisation, Jahirul Huq, were also included in the committee.

Hearing of this success, other schools have taken initiatives for formation of such committee. The landless organisation is regularly monitoring the progress.

In 2018 Nijera Kori and the landless organisation undertook a joint initiative to collect information on the formation of the complaint committee in schools. 51 information requests were filed under the RTI Act asking if complaint cells have been formed, and if yes, for the names of its members. Of the 51 applications, 44 applications were made to school principals

and 7 requests were made to the Assistant Upazila Education Officer. Information was received for 46 schools. With the exception of one school, the remaining 45 schools had no committee. The school authorities also added that they had not received any directive in this regard, and were unaware of the court verdict. The Assistant Upazila Education officials even stated that no official instruction was received from higher authorities for the formation of complaint committees. Four Assistant Upazila Education Officers in all sincerity indicated that they were not aware of the Court verdict and asked for the guidelines.

The landless organisation and Nijera Kori started collective mobilisation for exerting pressure on the respective institutions and responsible officials to set up the sexual harassment complaint committees. To this effect 146 meetings were conducted with Upazila Education Officers, and Women and Children Affairs Officers. Memorandums were submitted to the Upazila Executive Officer and copies of the HC guidelines were distributed. These brought results. 3 Assistant Upazila Education Officers wrote letters to all schools in their jurisdiction for formation of complaint committees in line with the Court guidelines. 23 school management committees invited landless leaders for discussion and asked for recommendations regarding the formation of committees and its responsibilities. Subsequently, 20 complaint committees were formed due to pressure created by landless organisation, and in 17 schools, landless women leaders were included as members of the committees. Example in **Box 5** above.

### 3.6.3 Watch Committee and its activities

Nijera Kori considers it of crucial importance to build effective information dissemination and monitoring systems at the grass-root level to make people more aware of their rights and entitlements, and thereby mobilise them in building institutions and asserting their rightful demands leading to their participation in the societal development process.

For collection and dissemination of information pertaining to all development activities, Watch Committee is formed at the union level with 30 members. The committee is then divided into 6 sub-committees each composed of five members. The sub-committees are formed to cover education (1), health (2), access to natural resources (land and water) (3), local development and good governance (4), religious fundamentalisms (which includes religious intolerance and bigotry) (5), and gender equality (6).

Members of the groups who are willing and able to contribute their time voluntarily and have the capacity to undertake necessary actions on the issues are selected. The convenor of each sub-committee is a general member of the landless union level committee, who reports to the union committee about progress during scheduled monthly meetings. Decisions, if needed, are taken at this meeting. **Box 6** presents details on the coverage of Watch Committee.

Type	Box 6: Areas/Location of watch committees
1	Paiska union, Dhaka division, Tangail district, Dhanbari upazila, Dhanbari area
2	Sahas union, Khulna division, Khulna district, Dumuria upazila, Paikgacha area
3	Char Jubelee union, Chittagong division, Noakhali district, Subarna Char upazila, Char Jabbar area
4	Saghata union, Rajshahi division, Gaibandha district, Saghata upazila, Gaibandha area
5	Mahammad union, Chittagong division, Comilla district, Daudkhandi upazila, Comilla area
6	Pairabandha union, Rajshahi division, Rangpur district, Mithapukur upazila, Pairabandha area

### **Key achievements of sub committees are:**

As a result of Watch Committee monitoring and action, there have been some achievements (primarily limited to watch committee areas):

#### **Local governance**

- a) As a result of collective initiative of watch committees, 2,090 vulnerable families received social safety net cards and 8 members received relief for flash flood related sufferings.
- b) Due to persistent advocacy of the committee, the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) has built a culvert in Char Jublee. Also, in response to the demands of the landless organisation, the same department installed three pipes in the Bagga embankment to remove water logging in agricultural land.
- c) As a result of advocacy and submission of alternative beneficiary list to union parishad, a total of 520 landless members received government support such as blankets and food during the winter months in Saghata, Pairabandh and Dhanbari working areas.
- d) As a result of advocacy and networking with LGED, a total of 13 landless households received sanitary latrine.

#### **Access to natural resources (agricultural land, water-bodies and agricultural resources)**

- a) The sub-committee in Char Jabbar initiated awareness building activities on use of organic agriculture inputs through holding of discussion meeting, drama performance, cultural long march. As a result, a total of 239 farmers decided to reduce use of chemical fertilisers and use vermicompost fertiliser. 6 members are now producing vermicompost fertiliser and selling them in the market. The economic benefit of this new initiative promoting sustainable employment is Taka 4,400.
- b) As a result of linkage and relationship established by the committees with government agencies, a total of 25 people received agricultural card in Saghata Upazila.
- c) 3 members deposited 3 kg seeds of pulse in the Saghata seed bank and distributed vegetable seeds among 70 households.

#### **Education**

- a) As a result of door-to-door campaigning, 4 girls withdrew themselves from the madrasa education system and got admitted in the mainstream government primary school.
- b) The sub-committee with the help of school management committee developed girls' football team in Char Jabbar
- c) Due to effective monitoring and collective pressure, the sub-committee stopped graft in the distribution of textbooks in Bashhata Primary School. Around 350 students benefited under the free book distribution programme.
- d) Due to advocacy and collective pressure, 20 students of in Dhanbari and Pairabandh high schools completed registration for Secondary School Certificate examination by paying only the government registration fees (and not additional fees collected by schools illegally).
- e) As a result of effective monitoring and collective pressure, the sub-committee ensured hosting the national flag and singing the national anthem in Amon Gram, Koyra and Dorichondro Bari Government Primary School.



### Religious fundamentalisms

- a) As a result of regular monitoring and initiative of sub-committees, 741 (girls: 378 and boys: 363) students decided to pursue their education in the mainstream education system rather than the madrasa education system.
- b) The committees have successfully stopped activities of 6 *Talim Kendros* (informal Islamic teaching centres) conducted in different areas.
- c) 5 families stopped their financial contributions to mosques, which were collecting contributions through misleading information.
- d) Without consultation with the community and committee, the Char Jabbar mosque committee chair took an initiative to form an imam association. The watch Committee mobilised to stop this, since it could lead to furthering of religious fundamentalist messages.
- e) The committee-initiated awareness building activities about Islamic insurance and this resulted in withdrawal of 2 women from this insurance scheme.
- f) A total of 21 male members stopped going to 4-day long Chilla (a 40-day programme where people go around villages preaching and analysing Wahhabi religious teachings).

### Health

- a) 4 (women: 3 and men: 1) landless members have been nominated as members of the Community Clinic Management Committee.
- b) The committees successfully prevented 4 women from using Norplant as a contraceptive method.
- c) 17 expecting mothers were given regular pre-delivery check-ups and then admitted to hospitals during child births.
- d) Due to advocacy and collective pressure, 6 nutrition cards were issued during pregnancy. The benefits received amounts to Taka 30,000 (USD 361).
- e) A total of 3,127 (women: 1,950 and men: 1,177) members received proper treatment and free medicine in government hospitals. This made a savings of Taka 77,090 (USD 925).

### Gender

- a) 3 child marriages were prevented by exerting collective pressure.
- b) Giving and taking dowry was stopped in 1 marriage by exerting pressure.
- c) Approximately 27 male members have been participating in regular domestic household works. In addition to that, landless members took more care with regards to ensuring health, medical treatment and nutrition of women.
- d) The sub-committees regularly monitored the issue of VAW. As a result, VAW has decreased in Watch Committee areas, particularly within landless group members' families. As a result, 59 cases of domestic violence have been stopped.

#### 3.6.4 Educational activities run by the landless organisation

Due to lack of awareness and absence of public schools in many remote areas, children of the poor families mostly start working from a very early age. The phenomenon is particularly dominant in the *char* areas. The landless groups for the last few years were demanding to the government to establish schools closer to their homes, and were also active to make the

parents aware of the importance of education and motivate them to send their children to schools. In several working areas of Nijera Kori, where the government response is yet to come, the landless organisations have taken the initiative to establish schools with their own resources.

## Achievements

Currently the landless organisations are pursuing their education programme through 30 primary schools, 4 junior high schools and 1 high school in Char Jabbar. During the reporting period, student enrolment at primary school was 25,875, of which 13,344 were girls and 12,531

Description	Number of students		
	Girls	Boys	Total
Primary	13,344	12,531	<b>25,875</b>
Junior high schools	8,481	9,483	<b>17,964</b>
High schools	1,602	1,605	<b>3,207</b>
Total	<b>23,427</b>	<b>23,616</b>	<b>47,046</b>
<b>Total No. of students with stipend</b>	<b>5,662</b>	<b>4,685</b>	<b>10,347</b>

boys. Details of student enrolment in **Table 8**.

The rising enrolment of female students, particularly in the junior and high schools in the remote areas, shows the positive impact of consciousness-raising on the necessity of and right to women's education within the landless organisation.

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positive impact of consciousness-raising on the necessity of and right to women's education within the landless organisation.

In the reporting period, 10,347 (girls: 5,662 and boys: 4,685) new students received government education grants of Taka 100 per month. The landless groups also gave Take 2,96,393 (USD 3,571) from their savings as scholarship for 2,917 students to purchase books and other academic materials.

During the reporting period due to regular monitoring and initiative of landless organisation 741 (girls: 378 and boys: 363) students rejected madrasa education and got admitted into mainstream education system. Example in **Box 7** in the below.

### Box 7: Eti's decision

Eti Khatun, aged 19, is from Kurigati village of Raiganj Upazila in Sirajganj. Her mother is Maryam Begum and father Asaf Uddin. At the wish of her family, Eti started her education in a madrasa and passed her Dakhil exam under the Madrasa system. Eti says that she had studied in a madrasa as she had no other choice. Now, after passing her Dakhil exam, she wanted to get admitted to a mainstream college.

Her parents agreed. But teachers from her madrasa started to pressurise her for staying in the madrasa system. But Eti was committed to her decision to pursue mainstream education and went with her father to the college and collected the necessary admission forms. Eti, to her surprise, discovered that the madrasa teachers, without her consent, had enrolled her name in their institution. Eti could not accept this decision. She informed her uncle Abdus Samad, a member the landless organisation, about this. Abdus Samad took up the matter in a landless meeting. Per decision of the meeting, on June 14, 2018 about 25 landless leaders went to the Principal of the Rayganj Fazel Madrasa and asked why Eti was admitted against her will. They also demanded to see a copy of Eti's admission application. The principal had no answer, nor could he provide any paper.

Nijera Kori brought this incident in the GO-NGO meeting held in Raiganj on June 21, 2018 and demanded an investigation. A memorandum was submitted by the landless organisation to the Upazila Executive Officer. After the meeting, the Upazila Executive Officer brought the matter to the attention of the Mayor of Raiganj municipality. The Mayor called the principal of madrasa and asked about Eti's admission. The principal was directed to cancel the admission immediately and it was acted upon. Next day the landless leaders took Eti to the principal, where he admitted his error. Eti is now a student of Dhangora Women's College."

While there are clear signs of progress in terms of school enrolment, during the reporting period, unfortunately 93 students (girls: 59 and boys: 34) dropped-out from schools. These children had to join their parents to work at home and fields to support their families.

The landless organisations monitor students' attendance in the schools on a regular basis. If a student stops coming to school or his/her absence from school is prolonged, the landless group members along with the school teachers organise home visits to understand the situation, and if needed, to persuade the parents to send back their children to school.

As a result of such active monitoring by both landless members and teachers, a qualitative change of school performance has been noticed. This is clearly reflected in the results. In Primary School Certificate examination, 100% students have passed and were promoted to the Junior School Certificate (JSC) level. Also, 98% JSC students successfully passed and were promoted to the secondary education level from schools run by the landless organisation.

### 3.7 Activities with Children and Adolescents

Major threats to social progress and empowerment of the poor as identified by Nijera Kori staff and the landless group members are: a) the introduction of market led neo-liberal globalised agriculture processes which leaves the producer with no controls; b) the ever-present and increasing violence against women, both at the domestic level as well as in the public sphere, further strengthened by increase of patriarchal norms and controls in all its forms, old and new (despite increasing number of cases and positive benchmarks of women's achievements); c) decreasing democratic space; and d) religious extremism leading to violence, bigotry and terrorism of the religious majority, imposition and introduction of a particular imported brand (not traditionally practiced in this region) of Wahhabism.

In this backdrop to sustain and strengthen the empowerment process the group members and Nijera Kori decided to include the younger population within its activities. Nijera Kori in the recent years started dialogues with young students from high school and fresh college graduates to learn from them and involve them in its work. Such experiences have demonstrated significant achievement, for example, in the form of young girls' football teams, cultural groups performing plays, singing songs, and engaging in artwork and creative writing. They have also formed vigilante teams to stop sexual harassment of children and stop child marriages etc. At present, 590 (girls: 320 and boys: 270) children and adolescents are involved in such activities.



In the reporting period, a total of 10 open platforms were formed with children and adolescents, of which 6 are football teams and 6 are cultural teams. A total of 32, 2-3-day long dialogues, consultations, video screening and discussions, art camps, games, etc. were organised. Children and adolescent teams performed in 205 events of which 141 were drama performances. Issues such as child marriage, their aspirations and dreams, gender and gender discrimination, history of Language

Movement and Liberation War, schooling on what a girl is and what a boy is etc. were brought up and discussed. It is to be noted that 6 football teams are practicing 3-4 days a week in Noakhali char area.

### **Some awareness and qualitative changes observed in the reporting period**

- Nijera Kori training centre has become a safe space for the girl children where they are able to freely express themselves (for example, talking or laughing loudly), which is often not the case in their homes.
- Children have increased critical thinking abilities and are able to question backward social and religious norms.
- Children from some areas are expressing more independence in their movements. The girls are freely laughing, talking and playing in public.
- Children are calling their friends to attend the sessions and hence the lessons are reaching out to even more children.
- There are clear signs of mindset changes among the children regarding sexual harassment and they are now being more vocal about it.
- Children are learning to question existing social norms.

### **3.8 Advocacy and Networking**

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

#### **3.8.1 Dialogue with Union Parishad**

During the reporting period, 14 dialogues with elected representatives of Union Parishad (UP) were held. In these dialogues a total of 350 people, of whom 213 were landless members and 137 were elected representatives of the Union Parishad, participated. Issues such as UP's service, social safety net, khas land, role of UP standing committee, UP budget, etc. were discussed. These helped both parties to establish better understanding, build relationships and network, as well as ensure transparency. In these dialogues, the landless organisations presented their demands to the UP and out of 14 UP Chairmen, 9 positively responded to landless organisation's demand and expressed their interests in working together.

#### **3.8.2 Dialogue with local decision-makers and activists**

In this reporting period, the landless organisations, local civic bodies and local government administration in different districts had held 6,626 meetings concerning local issues. Of these opinion-sharing meetings, 2,316 meetings were organised at the initiative of the government administration and 4,310 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. As a result, over the year, out of 31 working upazilas, 13 upazilas organised preparatory meetings with the landless organisation by their own initiative for observing national day celebrations. In addition to that, the upazila administration requested and invited landless cultural groups to perform songs and dramas for celebration of International Women's Day, Right to Information Day, Human Rights Day, Cooperative Days, and celebration of Rokeya Day. This is a significant success in building linkages and networking

with local government administration. These are clear signs of recognition of the landless organisation and their activities by the government. Example in **Box 8**.

**Box 8: Upazila Executive Officer's statement**

Upazila executive officer in Debidwar Upazila, Comilla, on 9 December 2018 while celebrating Rokeya Day in his speech stated: "I did not understand properly the awareness building programmes and activities of Nijera Kori and their subsequent results. After seeing today's rally and listening to the slogans and the discussions of the landless groups, I have realised how deeply rooted Nijera Kori's work is in the society and how important it is for the improvement of the society. Since my joining in Debidwar in early 2017, this is the first time I have seen such a large number of women participating in a rally. Their voices on violence against women and children should be encouraged. It is so well organised because of the initiative of landless organisation. The government and the landless organisation jointly organised Rokeya Day this year. I thank the landless cultural team for performing songs and drama, which perfectly reflects Rokeya's views and her way of educating us".

**3.8.3 Collective movements**

In the reporting period, 1,105 distinct movements were organised. Of these movements, 774 addressed violence against women, 13 resisted religious fundamentalisms, 170 were for establishing rights of the poor over natural resources and 148 addressed local corruption and irregularities. Additionally, 79 memorandums were submitted by the landless organisation demanding justice for violence against women, illegal eviction, establishing landless people's right to khas land and water bodies, against irregularities of local infrastructure development projects, irregularities in hospitals and government safety net programmes. These programmes created significant pressure on the concerned authorities to ensure proper actions. Consequently, justice was achieved, irregularities rectified and illegal grabbing of khas land and water bodies stopped.

**3.8.4 Participation in seminars/workshops at national level**

In the reporting period, Nijera Kori participated in 37 seminars/workshops. Of the 37, Nijera Kori staff and landless members participated in 12 with Nijera Kori's Coordinator. In addition to that, in 4 seminars/workshops that were held at the national level, 21 (women: 14 and men: 7) landless members attended and presented their concerns to the audience with Nijera Kori's staff. Some of these are mentioned in details in the national-level events described below.

**3.8.5 Follow-up of advocacy activity**

In 18 November 2017, Nijera Kori organised an event titled "Public Hearing: How Are Our Women Migrant Workers Faring?". This symbolic public hearing was attended by a three panel judges: Nazmun Ara (Retired Judge, Appellate Division), Nizamul Huq (Retired Judge, Appellate Division) and Dr. Hameeda Hossain (Human rights activist).

This panel of judges gave directions as outlined in **Box 9** below. As follow-up, Nijera Kori had a consultation meeting with the National Human Rights Commission on March 7, 2018, and in the meetings, it was agreed that the National Human Rights Commission will undertake joint activities with Nijera Kori for implementation of the given directions.

### Box 9: Directions of the Public Hearing

The aim of today's programme is to ensure that the interests and rights of female migrant workers are maintained and asserted.

Females in Bangladesh want to thrive and earn more. They know that their access to education and pay is limited here, which is why they want to go abroad. Realistically, closing off this option completely is not practical. We need a way for it to be safe and fair for the migrant workers, so we will not recommend that we stop sending them completely.

1. There needs to be conditions and restrictions on the recruiting agencies and accountability for the government and embassies to follow through on this.
2. We feel that NGOs do great work and also play an important role in this and should continue to do so.
3. There needs to be standards and guarantees when sending workers from here such as safe working environments, no harassment policies, no exploitation, etc. The government must enforce this and demand the same from destination countries.
4. Language is an important aspect and workers need to be able to speak and communicate when they are sent abroad.
5. Training and certificates should be mandatory to prepare migrant workers beforehand. Workers going abroad should be made aware of the potential dangers and educated on what to expect when they get there.
6. There are many private or fraudulent recruitment agencies. Recruiting agencies need to be held accountable and the government should monitor them.
7. Embassies should be capable of protecting migrant workers, but corruption in embassies make them ineffective in stopping these cases from happening.

### 3.8.6 Celebration of the International Mother Language Day (Chandina, Comilla)

This event was organised by adolescent children, and their efforts were rewarded with the attendance of over 5,000 women, men and children. Due to the collective pressure of the children, the school management committee for the first time had to agree to celebrate the International Mother Language Day and also to construct a permanent replica of Shaheed Minar, which was previously not present in the school premise. On their own initiatives, the Upazila Education Officer, Mayor of Chandina and the local Member of Parliament attended the event. The policy makers and the government official in their deliberations stated that this event was not only a huge success but it far exceeded any political campaigns in terms of popularity, attendance, outreach and scope. They encouraged the children to continue hosting such cultural events in the future. The fact that girls and boys worked in harmony helps them understand gender relations and the confidence gained in being able to organise a programme of this magnitude is pivotal for breeding future leaders needed to bring effective change in these communities (Details in **Annex A: Celebration of Language Movement Day**).

### 3.8.7 Bicycle Rally (Ramgoti, Lakshmipur)

In Ramgoti, a coastal Upazila of Lakshmipur district, women face extremely difficult challenges from their families in the form of socio-religious practice and values. They do not have freedom of mobility or expression. Despite many instances of progressive movements in the past, women continue to be pressurised to adhere to the codes upheld by society. In this context, Nijera Kori planned to organise a bicycle rally for young boys and girls in 2018 to challenge religious and social practices and to promote freedom of movement for girls in their society. Despite stiff opposition from family members, Nijera Kori was able to gather a group of

enthusiastic girls and over the course of two weeks, members of landless organisations helped them to practice riding bicycles.

School-going girls and boys attended the rally. During this rally, they approached schools and markets, informing the people present about their opinions on women empowerment and the purpose of the rally. They also talked about their experiences of riding a bicycle and how it was liberating for them. Many of the onlookers commended the efforts of the children, which meant that



slowly the society began to accept the girls' involvement in riding bicycles and other male-dominant activities. Parents of roughly 20 of the school girls ended up buying them cycles and now these girls use their cycles to commute to school. Taking inspiration from these girls, many other girls in the area have started learning how to ride a bicycle. The relationship between boys and girls have improved significantly after the rally. Now, boys are teaching girls how to ride bicycles and encouraging more girls to learn. This has transformed public opinion to be more permissive. NK strives to build a society where women have equal opportunities and are not confined to the conventional definition of what a village girl's life ought to be like (see details in **Annex B: Bicycle Rally**).

### **3.8.8 Girls Under-12 Football Match (Subarna Char, Noakhali)**

This is a village where no girls were allowed to leave their homes till sundown, with the premise that no stranger should be able to even catch a glimpse of the girls. Most of girls were married at a very young age, often before they even reached puberty. This was the sort of mentality that tyrannised much of the female population in Noakhali, particularly those along the coastal belt of Subarnachar. To challenge this, Nijera Kori in consultation with the landless organisation decided to arrange a football match for young school girls of this area.

This initiative in this social context was designed, firstly to firmly embed the idea that both men and women can participate in football—or any sport for that matter—and that it should be socially recognised. Secondly, the impact of these girls taking part in an activity which they were otherwise deprived from and the courage shown by them to perform in front of their whole community should go beyond the boundaries of the football pitch. Nijera Kori hopes through such initiatives the girls will evolve from the socially and religiously conservative mindset they have been accustomed to and be able to foster liberal thinking which will in return provide the basis for personal development. It is also expected that ultimately the entire women population would be able to take these values forward and apply them in their daily lives. Slowly but surely, this practice would allow the women of Noakhali to uproot themselves from the sort of inequality and bigotry that has stifled them for much of their lives. The programme was attended by nearly 8,000 women and men, including Mahfuza Akhter Kiron, a FIFA Council Member and Chair, Women's Wing of the Bangladesh Football Federation. Her presence was a great encouragement to the girls and she in her deliberations asked the girls to continue their involvement in the sports and encourage other girls of the coastal villages to participate (for details see **Annex C: Girls Under-12 Inter-School Football Match**).

**Concluding remarks from the three events:** Adolescents are empowered and have now collectively formed a child marriage and sexual harassment protection committee in the concerned areas. Thus, given the wider impacts of these events, it is imperative for Nijera Kori and the landless organisation to continue arranging similar events to further expand and strengthen the personal and social development of the girls, boys, women and men in these communities.

### 3.8.9 OBR 2019 Launch: An event regarding #MeToo Movement in Bangladesh

A roundtable conference was held on December 9, 2018 on the #MeToo Movement in Bangladesh at *The Daily Star* premises. The roundtable conference was held to understand the



significance of the movement in this country and its relevance against the backdrop of rising sexual harassment.

Many feminists, activists, lawyers, academics, students, professionals and survivors were present. The survivors spoke about their personal experiences. It was discussed how an equity committee at a large scale could be formed to tackle this issue. Bangladesh's existing laws regarding sexual harassment were also discussed

and the recommendations were put forward to improve those, beginning with a clear definition of what constitutes sexual harassment.

### 3.8.10 A Research Presentation on “Present Form and Disempowerment Process of Rural Peasants”

HDRC with financial support from ICCO carried out a research with focus on “Present Form and Disempowerment Process of Rural Peasants” in two working areas of Nijera Kori. For dissemination of the research findings, on March 20, 2018 Nijera Kori in partnership with HDRC, ICCO and ALRD organised a seminar where the lead researcher Professor Dr. Abul Barkat presented the findings. The research concentrated on two kinds of farming—Lease Rent Farming and Contract Farming—and elucidated the reasons for them, which can be summed up as below:

#### Lease Rent Farming (LRF)

- Inadequate ownership of land.
- Better than share cropping, since the farmer does not need to give the landowner a share of the crops but rather a fixed amount of money.
- Profitable.
- Farmers can farm on rented land as they wish.

#### Contract Farming (CF)

- Timely cultivation of crops.
- Companies are able to sell their raw materials and insecticides and pesticides.
- Cultivation does not have to be handled by the company but are rather taken care of by the farmers themselves.
- Companies can buy crops at a lesser price than market price.



## Summary of presentation

The specific objectives of the research included exploring how farmers lose their rights, identity and control over natural resources, the degree of involvement of farmers in these two types of farming, investigating the trend of LRF and CF compared to a decade ago, how much land has been lost and left barren due to these farming practices, investigating how many farmers have moved away from said types of farming, exploring food security of farming households and finally exploring the role and impact of women in these two specific farming practices. The research findings suggest that there has been a significant increase in Lease Rent Farming and Contract Farming.

For LRF it was found that farmers do not have any compulsory requirement to buy the farming raw materials like seeds, insecticides, pesticides etc. from the company at their inflated prices. The farmers are able to farm on their free will. However, in the event of a natural disaster which results in the destruction of crops the farmers have to bear full financial responsibility for the lost crops. This results in farmers taking loans to compensate for the damage. Due to this cycle of debt, the farmers are then unable to lease the land for farming for a second time. On the other hand, if the land produces bumper crops, the landowners tend to increase the rent on the land and the farmers are again unable to lease the land at this increased price. It was found out that 71.7% LRF households, which is about 1.6 million households (6.7 million people) have already suffered from soil infertility, debt and other financial losses. The reason why soil infertility is a consequence in LRF form of farming is because farmers tend to limitlessly use chemical fertilisers to maximise crops since crops are not shared with the landowners. Furthermore, since there is no guarantee of getting the land in the next season, they refrain from using environment friendly, organic forms of fertilisers that in turn ruins the soil fertility. It was found that 1.4% of total agricultural land (22.2 million acre) is degraded by various degrees due to this system of production.

For Contract Farming, the farmers have to buy seeds, fertilisers and other agricultural inputs from the companies at a high price and they do not even have any control over the application of said agricultural inputs. After harvest, often part of the crops is rejected by the company in the pretext of grading and substandard quality, which the farmers then have to sell at prices valued under the market price. It was found that 71.7% of CF households i.e. about 1.1 million households (4.5 million people) have already suffered from soil infertility, debt and other financial losses.

The main reason, other than the use of chemical fertilisers as to why soil degradation is happening under the CF is because of the high level of tobacco farming that takes place under this system. It is estimated that 0.73% of total agricultural land in Bangladesh (22.2 million acre) are becoming barren because of CF.

Due to the various difficulties that farmers are faced under both forms of farming, many farmers are migrating to the cities and working as garment workers, rickshaw pullers and as non-farm day labourers. This section of the population is becoming more and more dependent on the market for food. In CF farming it was further seen that companies require farmers to cultivate other profitable non-food crops. Such imposition results in market dependency for food for these farmers.

## Recommendations form the research

Some recommendations were put forwarded in the research report. Mentionable are: farmers require some form of insurance so that when natural disasters strike, farmers do not have to pay the contracted amount; the buying of agricultural inputs from the companies should not

be made compulsory and that should be clearly mentioned in their contracts; farmers should not be harmed in the name of quality control of crops; a commission should be set up with the view to defend the farmers against violation of their contracts and rights; and contracts should be clearly written stating the duration of the contract, which should be at least 5 years.

### **Responses from few participants/policy makers**

**Advocate Umme Kulsum Smriti (MP)** drew attention on how women are being impacted because of the disempowerment process of the farmers. She further stated that the government is empowering women through projects such as “Ekti Bari, Ekti Khamar”.

**Mr. Fazle Hossain Badshah (MP)** stated that even though the research pointed out the ways the farmers are being pressurised, the ways by which they can escape this pressure was not mentioned. He called for the formation of farmer’s court in every upazila and proposed that the contracts should be signed in the presence of a magistrate, so that at a later stage, if needed, the farmer may seek the help of the law. When this is not the case, the UP Chairman should stand as witness on behalf of the farmers. Furthermore, he proposed that the government should announce an agricultural product purchasing policy so that farmers are aware of the pricing. Farmers should organise a march and try to send a representative to the parliament.

**Rashed Khan Menon (MP), Minister, Ministry of Social Welfare,** talked about the law for farmers that was written in 1972. But he admitted that the law was not properly enacted and should be done so. He said that contract farming started due to tobacco farming and absentee landowners. Protests have also been carried out for this resulting in the formation of Land Reform Commission and the drafting of the Bangladesh Labour Act, although it has not been properly implemented yet. Farming land is decreasing and urbanisation is taking place as a result of which food security might be affected. The issues regarding food security must be immediately looked into. For attaining sustainable development, agricultural reform is something that cannot be overlooked.

### **Recommendations put forward in the seminar:**

- Proper representation of farmers and a farmers’ revolution
- Farmers should collectively organise
- Farmers should be represented in the parliament
- The government should announce the pricing policies of agricultural products
- Farmer’s court should be established and legal actions should be taken against any violations
- More organic fertilisers should be used instead of chemical ones
- Contracts should be in written form and have to be legal. The agriculture-related laws should be reformed accordingly (which brings about positive changes in the farming households and the arable lands) and implemented.

### **3.8.11 Roundtable discussion at the national level on “Freedom of Speech and Demand for Justice”**

On July 14, 2018, Nijera Kori organised a roundtable discussion at the national level on “freedom of speech and demand for justice” with its various allies and progressive institutions such as ALRD, BLAST, and teacher of Dhaka University, BRAC University, Jagannath University. This discussion concluded that communalising of education under the influence of

fundamentalist groups is a challenge to the secular values of our Liberation War. It was decided that every organisation and individual had to continue building up public opinion regarding this. Mobilisation of various national level organisations and eminent individuals towards this goal has been a significant success.

### **3.8.12 Roundtable on “Obstacles of rape survivors to get justice and what should be done”**

Recently the rate of violence against women in Bangladesh has increased to an alarming level. To address this and discuss strategies to ensure justice, BLAST organised a roundtable session on 28 July, 2018 in CIRDAP auditorium on the theme “Obstacles of Rape Survivors to Get Justice and What Should be Done”. In this discussion Rina Das Roy from Naripokkho played the role of moderator, while Barrister Sara Hossain, Professor Gulsan Ara Akter, Dr. Aysha Afroz Chowdhury and many others participated as discussants. The session identified key issues in the system and proposed the following suggestions.

- Trials for such cases should end in 90 days. If there is failure to do so, all parties should be held accountable.
- Rape kit should be available in community clinics and Upazila Health centres.
- Hate crimes based on gender and on ethnic minorities should be tackled lawfully.
- The government should bear the expenses of all medical tests.
- Giving political support to the perpetrators should end.
- Law should be made to end marriage between the perpetrator and survivor.
- Health sector should stay neutral .
- Women need to be brave and rebellious.

### **3.8.13 International Day for the Universal Access to Information (commonly known as Access to Information Day) Celebration 2018**

To celebrate the International Day for the Universal Access to Information on 28 September, 2018 Nijera Kori organised 32 events in its 32 sub centres.

At national level Nijera Kori organised a dialogue titled “Relationship between State and Civilians: Accountability and Responsibility”. Civilians’ right to safety and security, right to speak and right to justice, and the implementation of democracy and state’s responsibility were the main themes of this event. This event took place at the CIRDAP auditorium in Dhaka. Many professionals, teachers, journalists, activists and people from different backgrounds were present. They discussed about people’s right to speak and movement, people’s right to raise their voices and to hold the state accountable.

Later, on 30 September, Nijera Kori organised another national event titled “Implementation of well-developed laws and sustainable development for free society”. The programme was designed to encourage journalists to disseminate key message of the Right to Information Act among the general population. A conference was organised at the National Press Club in Dhaka. The programme included a rally, slogans, cultural programme, discussion and a question answer session. Chief Information Commissioner Mortuja Ahmed was invited to act as the moderator of this event and Information Minister Hasanul Huq Inu, MP, was invited as the chief guest. The Secretary, Ministry of Information Abdul Malek was present as a special guest.

### 3.9 Staff Capacity Development



In 2018 staff capacity development has been a strategic priority of Nijera Kori. Right-based techniques, gender, ensuring an environment for open discussions, advocacy activities, and new techniques and methods for cultural activities were the focus of staff development trainings and workshops. A total of 178 (women: 78 and men: 100) staff participated in these trainings and workshops.

To put these trainings and workshop in the right perspective, except for training for newly recruited staff, all sessions were organised after discussion and evaluation of sustainability plan. For these trainings and workshops Nijera Kori invited experienced and well-versed professionals as resource persons. Among others, they included Fawjia Khandaker Eva and Sultana Kamal on gender, human rights and religious fundamentalisms issues and Motahar Hossain for cultural trainings and workshops.

#### Reflection from trainings/workshops

- Use of the Nijera Kori evaluation report (2018) and sustainability plan as resource materials for the training and workshops helped to clearly present the roles and responsibilities to Nijera Kori staff and the landless organisation in initiating and supporting the process of social change. The materials helped the staff to view their roles as workers for change rather than viewing work as simply implementing a task.
- The staff also recognised the importance of undertaking qualitative analyses of their work and concluded that in the future much needed to be done to enhance staff capacity to carryout qualitative analyses of the outcomes of their actions.
- It is recognised that one can gain knowledge from trainings and workshops, but capacity enhancement hinges on the application of acquired knowledge. The staff have drafted a guideline for documenting qualitative change and their own experiences, and have started practicing it.
- Staff capacity regarding analysis of gender, feminism and ideologies has increased. They now have a better understanding of the politics of religion and religious fundamentalisms. The staff were taken through a systematic analysis of issues pertaining to religious fundamentalisms and communalism. This addressed staff's analytical limitations regarding the issues.
- Lastly, staff now have a clear understanding that reports are not only numbers, but a reflection of a process of change of which they are also actors. This encouraged staff to document a story of change each month, and then put it up for group discussions and follow-ups.
- Notwithstanding the above, there is still a lack of understand regarding neo-liberalism and how to conduct analysis of the issue. There is also lack of understanding of "intersectionality" in terms of analysing discrimination. There is also need for further development of capacity regarding feminism and religious fundamentalisms. For these reasons, the capacity development activities require further follow-up.

- A total 17 staff also participated trainings/workshops organised by like-minded organisations such as ALRD, ICCO, and The Swallows India Bangladesh.

### 3.10 Nijera Kori's Programme through the Lenses of External Evaluators

In June 2018 a three-member team (Ms. Klayani Menon Sen, Mr. Suresh KT and Ms. Sudarshana Kundu) carried out a comprehensive evaluation of Nijera Kori's core programme. The evaluation team recorded that the core programme is "highly relevant in terms of the larger political and developmental context of the country, and is well aligned to the economic and social situation of the marginalised communities whose needs it seeks to address". The report noted the success of the programme in achieving its quantitative targets and commitments. It noted the "significant positive impacts" on the lives of individuals in terms of "economic stability and autonomy, enhancement in well-being, a strong sense of dignity and self-worth, and confidence in asserting their rights and entitlements." The evaluation report captured the changes in the lives of the poor in the following words:

"there is no doubt that the engagement with Nijera Kori has brought about **transformational changes in mindsets, relationships and ways of 'being' and 'doing'** for most, if not all, members of the village organisations and federations whom we met. Women and men spoke eloquently about how their lives had changed since they began their journey with Nijera Kori. Some tropes came up again and again each conversation – the sense of **dignity and self-worth** as social actors; the assertion of **collective strength; pride** in standing up for their rights and the **determination** to keep the struggle going.

The older and more seasoned groups shared many stories of **face-offs with local landowners**, many of them involving **violent confrontations**. There are instances where group members have lost their lives while defending their rights to land. They are **honoured as martyrs** and their sacrifices remembered and commemorated". (Menon et. al., 2018,: 11-14, emphasis in the original).

The evaluation team also noted that Nijera Kori's emphasis on gender equality and women's human rights has not only empowered women to assert their rights but has also changed men's attitudes and mindsets. It pointed how the focus on gender equality and stance against violence against women have impacted local communities. It read that notable changes in the communities "include the increasing recognition of violence against women as a violation of human rights; wider acceptance of women's presence in public spaces and involvement in public processes and the growing legitimacy of people's organisations as social and political actors."

The evaluator's report also pointed out that how as an organisation, "Nijera Kori has made sustained efforts to embed its founding values into its organisational norms and practices. ... The sub-centres are vibrant spaces for nurturing an alternative lifestyle based on equality, mutual respect, cooperation, dialogue and trust. They have become sites for subversion and disruption of traditional norms, beliefs and prejudices of both staff and local communities." It mentioned the empowering changes through promotion of women's leadership and the organisation's efforts to recruit differently-abled people and people from the minorities and indigenous communities.

However, the team also noted that despite achievements, "the idea of gender equality, has not yet struck deep structural roots", and despite more women than men elected to federated bodies, women occupy less than half of leadership posts. It noted that in meetings with them, "men generally held the floor while women tended to stay quiet unless directly addressed",

and suggested that discussions on gender equality, while speaking of issues of representation in elected bodies and participation in paid work, had side-stepping complex questions around morality and sexuality. It noted how “conventional morality also appeared to come into play in cases of domestic violence”.

To strengthen Nijera Kori’s strategic intervention and make its outcomes more secure and sustainable, the evaluation team proposed few recommendations:

- Enhancing the **training and capacity building activity** for stimulating the practice of critical reflection and critical questioning as a foundational element of learning. Creating opportunities for reflection and deeper exploration of concepts through open-ended conversations between leaders of people’s organisations and staff from different locations and levels. Review of training methodologies and introduction of new elements that can strengthen critical thinking and understanding of the connections between multiple hierarchies of power, and improve analytical skills and the use of creative methods and tools for social mapping, social analysis and change tracking.
- For **tracking and measuring change** the evaluation team recommended for the development of a knowledge management system that links knowledge creation to knowledge use. This would entail upgrade of MIS to align data collection with the logic framework address information needs at different levels of the system and create appropriate formats for reports including a dashboard showing progress on selected indicators. Ensuring closer links between MIS team, field centres and village groups, and building skills and capacities for qualitative data collection. Enabling and empowering village groups to do their own audio and video documentation of change stories.
- For **networking and public presence**, the report emphasised on the need for senior staff members and leaders of people’s organisations to take on the role of spokespersons at the national level. Mentoring and coaching of younger staff members by the Coordinator and the senior team members. Developing innovative ways to disseminate the critique of religious fundamentalisms and stories of resistance on the ground. Evolving a media strategy to counter mainstream narratives with stories and evidence from the work of people’s organisations. Recommended for engaging with adolescents, and supporting girls to become the next generation of feminist activists, more strategically with adolescent boys who are prime targets for religious radicalisation. Building internal capacities to work with adolescents, drawing from experiences to evolve appropriate strategies and approaches.
- Under **governance and management**, the team suggested for periodic review and benchmarking of the system against accepted standards of democratic institutional functioning and suggested ensuring greater congruence between financial management and programme management, including greater engagement of the finance team in activities on the ground. They also suggested computerisation of administrative processes to ensure harmonisation of financial and administrative records and enhancing the skills of finance and administrative team to this effect.

### 3.11 Sustainability Planning 2018

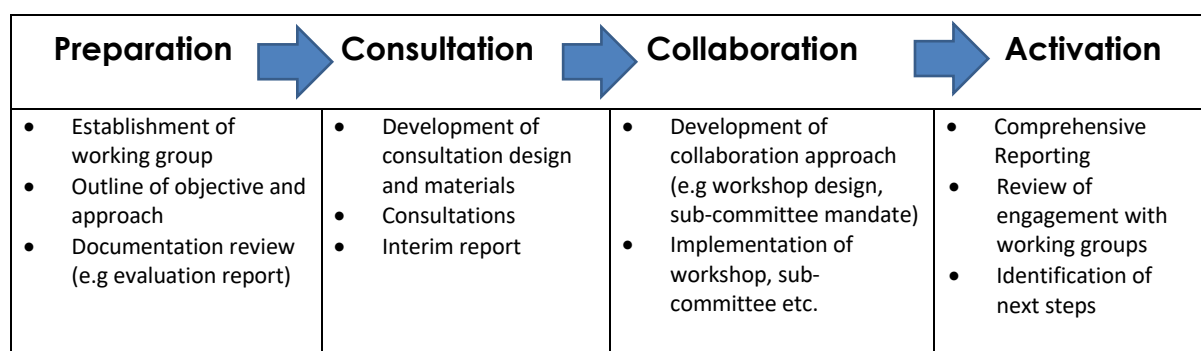
Nijera Kori’s friend, Seth Warren, an independent management consultant, voluntarily facilitated the developing of the Sustainability Plan document. After nearly four decades of continuous operation, this was an appropriate time to reflect on and answer the question: “How can Nijera Kori continue to operate successfully for another 40 years and beyond?”. To answer this question, Nijera Kori launched the Sustainability Planning Initiative.

In developing this Sustainability Plan, we sought to hear from as many voices as possible. A wide group of stakeholders were involved in this process, including our board, staff, partners, supporters and friends. However, most importantly, we wanted to hear and reflect the voices of the landless—our closest allies.

Through involvement in the planning committee, consultations, and in the workshop that ultimately formed this plan, we were able to include over 80 distinct voices, which represented the breadth of our organisation's stakeholders.

Through this participative approach, a comprehensive and holistic Sustainability Plan has emerged, which outlines three distinct, yet mutually supportive objectives:

- **Financial Sustainability**
- **Institutional Sustainability**
- **Managerial Sustainability**



### The methodology

All of these 4 steps work simultaneously and contribute to each other. However, at the preparation level a working group was formed in consultation with Nijera Kori and its Governing Board. The working group comprised of the Coordinator, 1 governing board member, 1 representative from Nijera Kori's partners' network, 3 field staff from three divisions, 1 staff from the report team and facilitator Seth Warren. Through a day-long workshop, the working group formulated an overall objective of the Sustainability Plan taking into consideration Nijera Kori's ideology, value and principles.

At the second phase, the design and different stakeholders were selected through a comprehensive consultation process in a day-long workshop of the working group. In the workshop responsibilities of the working group members were also decided. The facilitator met with a total 80 different professionals who were representatives of network

partners and well-wishers of Nijera Kori. He also sat in a meeting with Nijera Kori's Governing Board and undertook field visits. It is to be noted that, out of 4 divisions, 2 divisions were visited by the facilitator with working group member. All of these consultations, dialogues and focus group discussions comprised of open-ended dialogue and interviews as per schedule.

At the third level, from review of the consultation findings, shared through Power Point presentation, contextual factors and the ways forward were identified. In the fifth week, the working group prepared a draft document and circulated it. At the same time, working groups translated some important issues and shared them with Nijera Kori's staff and landless

members. National level workshops and consultations with broader audiences were formulated.

At the final stage, key findings were presented at the national level workshop with participants including researchers, national and international well-known human right activists and academics, General Board members of Nijera Kori, representatives from network partners, and Nijera Kori's staff and landless members from 4 divisions. In the group and plenary sessions, there was debate regarding how to keep Nijera Kori's ideology, values, principles etc. intact. However, through the day-long debate and consultation process, the whole planning process was consolidated.

**Internal Stakeholders:** Governing Board members, Elected Representatives of Nijera Kori, Central Office Staff, Field Staff.

**Community Members:** Landless Union committee representatives, Landless Area committee representatives, Landless Village committee representatives.

**Partners and Supporters:** Evaluation team members of 2018, other NGO's, Academic community and Legal community

### Context

- Rising religious fundamentalisms is impacting global politics, challenging secularism, and polarising our communities.
- Increasingly hierarchical functioning of government has shrunk the space for democratic participation.
- Patriarchal attitudes remain deeply entrenched at all levels of Bangladesh society, disproportionately impacting women labourers.
- Single-minded focus on economic development has eroded the rights-based movement.

### Key Learnings

Consultations yielded a wide variety of insights and viewpoints.

- People are incredibly proud of and passionate about the work that Nijera Kori does. It will be important to nurture this passion, and to find ways to unleash it to attract even more supporters to our cause.
- Participants described Nijera Kori as not only an organisation, but a movement. Moving forward, Nijera Kori will have to consider how best to attract more like-minded people and organisations both internationally and domestically.
- Participants attributed much of Nijera Kori's success to its commitment to its ideology—in particular, the four pillars of the Bangladesh Constitution—and how it both embodies it inside and encourages it outside the organisation. Moving forward, it will be critical to nurture this understanding among junior staff and among the youth in our communities.
- While landless groups expressed significant pride in and ownership over their accomplishments, they also signalled that there will be a continuing role for Nijera Kori. Even so, Nijera Kori may be able to unleash new capacity if it can find ways to shift an increasing amount of responsibility and agency to longstanding autonomous groups.
- Many participants acknowledged the important role that the Coordinator, Khushi Kabir, plays in Nijera Kori's success. It will be important for Nijera Kori to find ways to decrease its reliance on the Coordinator, while enhancing its own ability to act as the vocal defender of the rights of the landless.



- While participants expressed concern about changes in society and the world at large, they expressed a resounding confidence in Nijera Kori's ability to adapt. While maintaining a sense of optimism internally is critically important, Nijera Kori should also actively evaluate the nature and severity of risks as they emerge and take appropriate precautions.

### **Sustainability Model**

Through the sustainability planning process, three major areas of sustainability—or Sustainability Objectives—have emerged. These three objectives are mutually supportive and interdependent. In some cases, an initiative that supports one, may also contribute to another. Additionally, through heightened sustainability on one objective, other sustainability objectives of Nijera Kori will also be strengthened.

**Financial Sustainability:** Financial sustainability—and in particular, stable funding—was acknowledged as Nijera Kori's foremost sustainability concern. With an increasingly challenging fundraising environment, Nijera Kori will take steps to ensure consistent and adequate funding that aligns with our ideology.

**Institutional Sustainability:** The strength of our organisation comes from our commitment to transparent, accountable, democratic and participative systems and processes, along with a deep commitment to our ideology. Nijera Kori will build upon our strong fundamentals to ensure the highest standards of risk management and of excellence in our work.

**Managerial Sustainability:** Our staff—in particular, those who rise to leadership positions through our open election process—are the future of our organisation. Nijera Kori will take steps to equip emerging leaders with a high degree of managerial expertise and to safeguard the organisation from the loss of key talent.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. Outcome

The key outcomes of work during 2018 can be categorised under four key areas:

- **Social action**
  - Access to government services
  - Fighting against corruption
- **Governance and accountability issues**
  - Representation in local level institutions
- **Economic action**
  - Establishing rights over natural resource such as *khas* land and open water bodies
- **Gender issues**
  - Establishment of women's rights and empowerment

#### 4.1 Social Action

##### 4.1.1 Access to government services

To lift the poor out of the poverty trap and address their vulnerabilities, the Bangladesh government, alongside regular public services such as education and health, has undertaken several programmes under the Social Safety Net Programme (SSNP).

For this, the government allocated Taka 54,206 crores, around 13.28% of the total budget, for the SSNP in fiscal year 2017-18. This allocation was raised to BDT 64,656 crores for FY2018-19, which is 2.55% of GDP and 13.92% of the total budget. In total there are about 130 programmes under 4 types of social safety net programmes.

These are (i) cash transfer allowances programme and other activities, (ii) food security programme: social protection, (iii) micro-credit programme and miscellaneous funds: social empowerment, and (iv) development sector programmes: social empowerment.

A set of criteria is used to select households to be enrolled under the SSNP. Among others, these include those who are landless or own less than 10 decimals of land; families with destitute women and illiterate members; those with a daily income of less than Taka 30 (USD 0.36) per head; and those whose debt amount is Taka 2,500 (USD 30) more than their savings as per financial profile. However, due to corruption, political influence, poor monitoring and lack of coordination, the selection process often gets distorted and the actually deserving/qualified families are denied access to the SSNP.

Thanks to credible field research and interventions by international lending institution such as The World Bank, a number of irregularities have been addressed, albeit partially, through subsequent corrective actions. According to the official documents, the government has indeed cancelled 218,865 beneficiary cardholders; this was about 4.5% of the total number of enlisted beneficiaries. Of this, 2,07,000 beneficiaries have been "changed/ corrected". This is indicative of inclusion of non-eligible or ghost beneficiaries in the Food Friendly Programme (FFP) with connivance of vested groups ("State of the Bangladesh Economy in FY2016-17", Centre for Policy Dialogue-CPD, 7 January, 2017).

Nijera Kori, believes that proper access to social services could offer significant relief to the misery of the poor. In view of this Nijera Kori provides relevant information and necessary technical support to the landless group members to make them aware of their entitlements and strengthen their capacities to access the government services and establish their fundamental rights. In this pursuit, over the reporting period, Nijera Kori organised and supported a series of trainings, workshops, cultural programmes and the monitoring of the SSNP by the Watch Committees of the landless groups. These programmes significantly contributed in increasing transparency and accountability in the implementation of the SSNP. The landless organisation, under the RTI Act, submitted 118 applications asking for detailed information regarding the selection of beneficiaries. The groups organised 250 protests against corruption and mismanagement of the SSNP. Due to such protests and demonstrations, Union Parishad representatives and other concerned authorities invited the landless groups for dialogues and for submission of alternative list of beneficiaries to be included in the SSNP.

As presented in **Table 9**, during the reporting period, a total 65,040 (women: 30,548 and men: 34,492) were enrolled under the various SSNPs. This is 13% more than last year (57,452). In total, 21,874 members received safety net benefit cards due to the groups' pressure, which is 34% of total. Of

Division and description	Total Card	Women	Men	Disable	Single Women/ headed
Rajshahi	36,464	17,110	19,536	125	914
Dhaka	1,517	802	715	3	257
Chittagong	23,914	10,937	12,977	42	961
Khulna	2,963	1,699	1,264	27	138
<b>Total Card</b>	<b>65,040</b>	<b>30,548</b>	<b>34,492</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>2,270</b>
<b>BDT</b>	<b>11,86,63,716</b>	<b>5,36,25,066</b>	<b>6,50,38,650</b>	<b>1,16,500</b>	<b>27,24,000</b>
<b>USD</b>	<b>1,429,683</b>	<b>646,085</b>	<b>783,598</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>32,819</b>

them 2,270 are single women/or from women-headed households and 233 people with disabilities. Furthermore, due to protests and demonstrations by the landless groups, 13,172 poor families who are not members of the landless groups were registered under the programme and another 18,394 ineligible names were deleted from the list of safety net beneficiaries. This twin success gave the groups a huge moral boost and the enrolled families minimum food security for a limited period (Details in **Annex Table 14**).

The economic value of the goods and services received by the beneficiaries under the SSNP is equivalent to Taka 11,86,63,716 (USD 1,429,683). Additionally, access to services and opportunities to participate in the local development activities empowered the landless group members. The above evidence clearly demonstrates 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 members' enrolment under the SSNP. Highest number of beneficiaries is reported in the Rajshahi division, followed by Chittagong division (**Table 9**). The reason for this high degree of variance is geographical coverage. Nijera Kori's work in Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions are larger in scope compared to the other divisions. In Rajshahi division, Nijera Kori covers 13 upazilas and is working with 4,822 groups with 97,773 members. Additionally, both Rajshahi and Chittagong divisions are considered more disaster prone, with many *char* areas that are mostly inhabited by the landless poor.

#### **4.1.2 Fighting against corruption**

In Bangladesh, corruption is reported as an endemic problem. This is widely reported and even acknowledged. For example, the Director General (Prevention) of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Mahmud Hasan has stated that the country's gross domestic product (GDP) could increase by 2% if corruption was prevented (*Dhaka Tribune*, 2 July, 2018). In the

2018 report of Transparency International, Bangladesh scored 26 points out of 100 in its Corruption Perceptions Index.

Overall, the rate of corruption in service sectors is found to be higher in rural areas (68.4%) than in urban areas (65.0%). Similarly, the rate of bribery is found to be also higher in rural areas (54.0%) than in urban areas (46.6%). According to a report of August 2018 prepared by Transparency International Bangladesh, some 89% households covered under the research showed that non-receipt of services without paying bribe was the main reason for graft or unauthorised money. This attests to the fact that in some areas corruption has become institutionalised (“Corruption in Service Sectors: National Household Survey 2017”, Transparency International Bangladesh, published 30 August, 2018). The poor are the casualties of this vicious cycle of corruption. The poor's inability to pay the required bribes lead to denial of access to services, which means deprivation from government food-support, access to medical services and education. Often desperate families sell their assets such as cows, goats, poultry and furniture to get access to these services, and in the process their economic position gradually deteriorates further.

To redress the current situation, during the reporting period, the landless organisations mobilised communities to create public opinion in establishing their rights and access to various government services. They organised 292 collective actions, which include street protests, dialogues with concerned authorities, signature campaigning, submissions of memorandum, and demonstrations by forming human chains demanding end of corruption and irregularities in the implementation of various government social welfare programmes and development projects. By virtue of these public actions and close monitoring of the programmes by the Landless Watch Committees, the groups succeeded in stopping various irregularities and corruptions in three areas, namely health, education and local *shalish*. As a result, the landless members were able to ensure access to services without undue expenditure. These successes significantly contributed in improving their economic condition. Some key success data are reported in **Table 10**.

**Table 10: Money saved as a result of collective movements (In BDT)**

Division and description	Saved from prevention of corruption in education sector & student stipend		Saved from prevention of corruption in development project as wages		Increased wages	
	Girls	Boys	Women	Men	Women	Men
Rajshahi	9,639	5,055	1,367	1,474	623	889
Dhaka	126	111	0	3	0	0
Chittagong	8,974	8,256	0	0	315	861
Khulna	1,655	1,003	78	115	230	367
Beneficiary families	20,394	14,397	1,45	1,592	1,168	2,117
<b>Total BDT</b>	<b>1,84,01,504</b>	<b>1,53,15,936</b>	<b>10,62,458</b>	<b>11,70,542</b>	<b>31,50,650</b>	<b>48,80,530</b>
<b>USD</b>	<b>221,705</b>	<b>184,529</b>	<b>12,801</b>	<b>14,103</b>	<b>37,959</b>	<b>58,802</b>

Due to these initiatives, the landless members were benefited in two ways. Firstly, they 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 save Taka 3,37,17,440 (USD 406,235) and also increase their wages by Taka 80,31,180 (USD 96,761) due to better implementation of development projects.

This success was shared by 39,813 landless households. 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.

#### **Box 10: Collective monitoring and action**

**Change:** In the face of collective demands, transparency in construction project, accountability of construction firm to citizens, and re-building of the road according to specifications were ensured.

**Context:** In 2017-18 fiscal year construction of 500-meter herring bone bond road in Motmalia of in Sadki Union of Kumarkhali Upazila was approved under the” Sustainable Rural Earthen Roads project of the Disaster Management Department” for which Taka 18,99,649 was allotted.

**Process of change:** Badshah Traders, a contracting firm from Kushtia Sadar, was awarded the tender for this construction project. The firm started the work on 16 January, 2018 after a considerable delay. The landless organisation at the start of the work demanded that the specifications regarding the project be put up as a signboard. On 18 January, they submitted a memorandum to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer to this effect. As a result, Badshah Traders was forced to put up all the pertinent information in writing on a signboard. The landless organisation started monitoring the work based on the specifications.

Initially the construction firm started the work using top-quality bricks, but after approximately 100 metres, on 8 March the firm started to use sub-standard brick and this was done under the cover of the night. The next morning, the landless organisations heard of this, and on the same evening, they conducted a meeting to determine their course of action to stop this corrupt practice. They decided first to discuss this with the residents of Motmalia, and such discussions were carried out on March 9 and 10. Through such discussions they decided to stop the construction work.

On March 10, more than 100 people marched to the site and demanded an explanation. Having failed to get any clear answer, they forced the firm to stop the construction work. Then, the landless organisation verbally communicated the news of the corruption to the Sadki Union Parishad and the Upazila project implementation officer. As the process was unfolding, the site engineer of Badshah Traders requested for a meeting with the landless organisation. On March 11, the meeting took place at the construction site with the local Union Parishad member and landless members present. Landless leader Robjel Hossain demanded an explanation for the use of low-quality bricks. He also stated they would call a press-conference to bring this corruption to public attention. The engineer responded that they had received a wrong shipment of bricks, and promised that they would remove the sub-standard materials and complete the construction according to the given specifications. He also expressed regret about this error. Landless leader Nazrul Islam proposed setting up a monitoring committee, to which Badshah Traders agreed.

A 5-member committee was formed with the consensus of all present, comprising 1 representative from Badshah Traders, one school teacher, one journalist, and landless leaders Robjel and Najrul. Under the supervision of the committee all the sub-standard bricks were removed, and the reconstruction began. Every week, the committee arranged a meeting regarding the progress with the local residents. In this way, they forced Badshah Traders to remain accountable to the citizens. At the end of the project, the engineer from Badshah Traders, Yunus Mia said: “This has been a big experience of my life. Like this, all projects should include the participation of the people.”

## **4.2 Governance and Accountability**

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

Presently, at the local level development administration, the Members of the Parliament (MPs) have an oversight role, but often this role extends beyond oversight, and almost all of the local committees are constituted in consultation with the MPs and/or individuals with strong political connections. Therefore, actual community representation is under challenge.

This weakness is recognised and currently being addressed in the Seventh Fifth Year Plan of Bangladesh. It is anticipated that the plan will propose a fresh approach to decentralisation and the local governance structure of Bangladesh.

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

Engagement in these committees offers excellent opportunities to the landless organisation 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 bodies such as school, market, sluice gate committees. Nijera Kori provided training and organised workshops to make the landless members aware of the existing policies and regulations for 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 different committee elections. An account of these is presented below.

#### 4.2.2 Participation in elections of local committees

During the reporting period, a total of 179 group members (women: 63 and men: 116) contested against the local powerful elite in the election of the school, market and sluice gate management committees (**Annex Table 18.**) Of these 179 candidates, 113 got elected. Among the elected candidates, 40 are women and 73 men. This gives a success rate of 63%; (women: 22% and men: 40%). It is to be noted that due to the National Election, in many of those committees, elections could not be held. Hence, achievement of both contested candidates and elected candidates were 58% less against last year's achievements.

Again, as reported in **Table 11**, the electoral success of landless groups in terms of their representations in local committees varies. The highest representation is recorded for the School Committee followed by the Market Committee.

Division	School				Market				Sluice Gate				Total				%		
	Cont.		Elec.		Cont.		Elec.		Cont.		Elec.		Cont.		Elec.				
	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	W	M	T
<b>Rajshahi</b>	12	19	9	12	0	4	0	2	0	0	0	0	12	23	9	14	75	61	66
<b>Dhaka</b>	1	6	1	4	0	15	0	11	0	2	0	1	1	23	1	16	100	70	71
<b>Chittagong</b>	18	17	11	10	3	18	3	17	1	1	1	1	22	36	15	28	68	78	74
<b>Khulna</b>	25	27	14	13	0	3	0	1	3	4	1	1	28	34	15	15	54	44	48
<b>Total</b>	56	69	35	39	3	40	3	31	4	7	2	3	63	116	40	73	63	63	63

Cont.= Contestant, Elec.=Elected, and T=Total

It is also evident from data in **Table 11** that in the School Committee election, the highest number of members participated in Khulna division, followed by Chittagong, Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions.

**Table 11** shows that the rate of success in the election varies per division. Achievement in Chittagong was 74%, Dhaka 71%, Rajshahi 66% and Khulna, 48%.

During the reporting period, landless members contested in 52 School Management Committee elections and got elected in 49 schools. The rate of success is 94%. The landless organisation contested in 19 Market Management Committee elections, and got elected in 16 committees. The rate of success is 84%. In the Market Management Committee election, the highest number of members, 21 in total, contested in Chittagong, followed by 15 in Dhaka, 4 in Rajshahi, and only 3 in Khulna. The rate of success is 95% in Chittagong; 73% in Dhaka division, 50% in Rajshahi division and 33% in Khulna division.

In the election of the Sluice Gate Management Committees, landless organisations contested in 4 committee elections and succeeded in securing their position in all of those committees. In the Sluice Gate Management Committee election, the highest number of members contested in Khulna (7); followed by Chittagong and Dhaka (2 each). The rate of elected in Chittagong was 100%; Dhaka 50% and Khulna, 29%.

Additionally, in the election of Dharmapur Union in Noakhali district, 2 members of the landless organisation (1 woman and 1 man) contested and the woman candidate was elected as Union Parishad Member.

### Box 11: Jyotish's journey

Jyotish is a fisherman from Kamaler Para village of Kamaler Para Union in Saghata Upazila. By virtue of his birth into the fisherfolk (*jeley*) community, he was marginalised in the society. In Jyotish's words "nobody socialised with us because we are *jeley* but my life changed when I met Tajjul, a landless committee leader. Tajjul talked to me and few fellow members of our community about things or issues that concern us. With Tajjul's support, I formed the fisherfolk landless group."

Soon, Jyotish was voted as chairman of the committee. He participated in various workshops organised by Nijera Kori, which as Jyotish noted, "changed his ideas and perceptions of life. I could see and understand how we were discriminated in the society. It was not just us; I also saw that women were especially discriminated against. The landless organisation opened my eyes. Before, I used to live as a lonely person mostly in an isolated life. But gradually people started to accept me as a leader of the landless organisation. The landless members then elected me as a member of the union committee of Kamaler Para landless organisation. I worked hard for the community. Due to my achievements, my recognition as leader increased. I ran for organising secretary of the upazila fisherfolk committee and then the landless organisation nominated me for the same post in the district fishermen committee—I was elected."

Jyotish was also nominated and elected as the organising secretary of the national fisherfolk committee. Jyotish final words are: "I believe what I have been able to achieve is because of the strength of the landless organisation. The landless organisation is the source of my motivation and my leadership."

### 4.2.3 Representation in Union Parishad Standing Committees

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

Division and Committee	Table 12: Representation in local committees by nomination											
	Rajshahi			Dhaka			Chittagong			Khulna		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
UP Standing Committees	4	5	9	5	6	11	12	8	20	2	0	2
Community Clinic Management Committee	7	9	16	2	2	4	12	11	23	6	10	16
Policing Committee	7	10	17	0	2	2	2	16	18	0	0	0
Jongi protection Committee	13	51	64	0	5	5	4	23	27	0	0	0
Total	31	75	106	7	15	22	30	58	88	8	10	18

But in reality, often representation of local communities in the UP-Standing Committee is decided by the influence of power, which excludes the poor. The landless organisations closely monitor the functioning of the SCs and organise public advocacy to promote transparency through signature campaigning and

submission of memorandum to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (Upazila Executive Officer) on the roles and functioning of the different SCs. As a result of this, during the reporting period, the Upazila administration has taken initiatives to reorganise several SCs. Due to this re-organisation 42 landless members (women: 23 and men: 19) were nominated in 33 Standing Committees. It is to be noted that the rate of nomination is 20% less than last year.

This makes the women's participation rate 55% (Table 12). And importantly, of the total 23 nominated women, 13 are either single woman or from women-headed households. The landless group members also succeeded in ensuring their representation in other committees such as Community Clinic Management Committee, Policing Committees and Jongi (religious militancy) protection committee etc. A total of 197 members were nominated in those committees. The highest numbers of landless members nominated in the various committees were in the Rajshahi division, with a success rate of 45% of the total nominated members. In Chittagong division the landless could secure 38% posts, followed by Dhaka division with 9% and Khulna division with 8%.

When the data on landless members' representation in the UP SCs is compared with the total working area of Nijera Kori, it appears that the landless groups succeeded in securing their positions in 22% unions (33 out of 147) in 2018. In total, at the end of 2018, landless organisation



represents 74% Union Parishads (109 out of 147). This is a significant coverage of the empowerment process of the landless organisation.

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 has 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 organisation's power, and the move towards transparency and accountability in running the affairs of the local government institutions.

#### **4.2.4 Participation in *Shalish* as judge and observer**

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

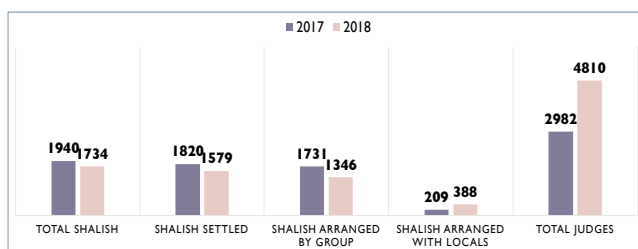
Ruling party leaders attend and dominate *shalish* and usually the UP Chairperson also attends *shalish*. In the peri-urban villages, for example, there are allegations that payment of bribes is a must to receive favourable outcomes. As a result, fewer people seeks justice through *shalish*.

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

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

In the reporting period, landless group members participated in 1,734 *shalishes* for resolution of different issues. Out of total 1,734 *shalish*, in 22% (or 388), the landless group members played the role of judges along with the local leaders, which is 86% more than last year (209). On the other hand, 78% *shalish* were conducted solely by the members (**Graph 4**). Since beginning of 2018, in cases related to women's oppression, the landless groups decided that it was mandatory to have women judges. This has induced a qualitative change in the traditional *shalish* system.

Among the 1,734 *shalish* that were held in 2018, 70% of cases were regarding VAW; 13% concerning land disputes; 17% on illegal physical attacks; and 4 on fundamentalist activities.



Graph 4: Representation in Shalish

In addition to their role as judges, the landless members played an important role in monitoring the cases. As reported in **Table 12**, during the reporting period, 18,179 members (women: 6,852 and men: 11,327) 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, 55%; Rajshahi, 25%; Khulna, 15%; and Dhaka, 6%. Due to active engagement of the landless members in the *shalish*, 17 criminal cases were not entertained, but referred to a formal court of law.

A total 4,810 members (women: 1,562 and men: 3,248) participated as judges in *shalish*. This is

Division	As observers			Mediators/judges		
	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	1,850	2,611	4,461	355	547	902
Dhaka	381	729	1110	137	379	516
Chittagong	3,583	6,351	9,934	859	1,780	2,639
Khulna	1038	1636	2674	211	542	753
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,852</b>	<b>11,327</b>	<b>18,179</b>	<b>1,562</b>	<b>3,248</b>	<b>4,810</b>

in total 61% (women: 74% and men: 56%) more than last year. Participation of landless members as judges by division: for Rajshahi, 19%; Dhaka, 11%; Chittagong, 55%; and Khulna, 16% (**Table 12**). As a result of participation of landless group members, 1,579 (91%) *shalishes* (against a total of 1734) were successfully settled in favour of the real victim. Through the *shalish*, the landless organisation could recover Taka 48,48,755, mainly on account of recovery of dowry payment, as cost of family maintenance, treatment costs, and wage compensation.

### 4.3 Economic Issues

#### 4.3.1 Access to Natural Resources (Government-owned Khas land and Open Water Bodies)

Employment in agriculture in Bangladesh was reported at 39.07% in 2017 according to a World Bank report. For the rural population, access to land and open water bodies are of vital importance to ensure employment and living. But Bangladesh is a land-scarce country, and a large number of people have no ownership of or access to land that they could cultivate. Therefore, they primarily depend on the tenancy market or accessing government *khas* land. In Bangladesh there are 41,28,810 acres of *khas* land. Of these, 20,51,784 acres are agricultural land and 20,70,026 is non-agricultural *khas* land. As per government approved *khas* land distribution policy and guidelines these lands should be distributed among the landless. Unfortunately, the policy implementation is slow and often



ineffective. A large portion of *khas* land (12,00,200 acres as of 27 July, 2017 according to Parliamentary Standing Committee report) is under illegal occupation of the powerful rural/urban elites. On 4 October, 2017, during the 33rd meeting of the National Agriculture *Khas* Land Management Executive Committee asked the Ministry of Land to recover illegally occupied *khas* land and directed the concerned officials to distribute the land among the real landless people.

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

These greatly helped in launching strong collective movements. In the reporting period, 240 collective public demonstrations/marches were organised under the leadership of the landless organisations. The landless cultural groups performed during these marches.

Additionally, 2,018 dialogues with relevant authorities and submission of memorandum were

	<i>Khas</i> Land and Water Bodies (Acres)						Economic Value		
	Reg. of <i>Khas</i> land	Posse. of <i>Khas</i> land	Con. of W.B	Rec. land from Shrimp Farm	Recovered Property for women (Inhe.)	Total	Bene. Household	BDT	USD
Rajshahi	3	56	3	0	5	67	176	1,13,67,000	136,952
Dhaka	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chittagong	401	205	0	0	4	610	625	31,89,76,500	3,843,090
Khulna	0	0	192	6	1	199	5,000	45,75,000	55,120
<b>Total</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>876</b>	<b>5,801</b>	<b>33,49,18,500</b>	<b>4,035,162</b>
Reg.= Registration, Posse.= Possession, Con.= control by landless, Inhe.= Inheritance, Bene-Beneficiary, EV= Economic Value, and WB=Water Bodies									

organised. The RTI Act was used and support from the media was sought for collecting information. All these actions contributed to create a positive enabling environment for the landless people to demand their rights over *khas* land.

The landless members, through their movements, succeeded in obtaining information and eventually clearly demarcating 665 acres of *khas* land. Of this, the landless groups secured ownership over 404 acres, registered it in favour of 520 landless families, and took physical possession over the rest of the 261 acres pending registration (**Table 14**).

Additionally, the landless organisation successfully recovered 195 acres of open water bodies, which were illegally occupied by individuals of vested groups. Of the recovered land, 6 acres were under occupation of shrimp-lords, and the rest were farmlands. 4 acres of agricultural land recovered belongs to marginal farmers and 10 acres of land were inherited by women, but was under occupation of the male members of their families. It is to be noted that recovered property for women (inheritance) and agricultural land from shrimp farming decreased compared to last year. In terms of *khas* land registration, possession, recovery of open water bodies from illegal grabbing, etc. the rates of success are higher than that of last year (**Table 14**).

The economic value of these natural resources in Taka 33,49,18,500 (USD 4,035,162). This gives the landless members some degree of economic freedom, and opens up possibilities to use the natural resources to ensure employment and earn extra income. From the data presented in **Table 14**, it is evident that the success was highest in Chittagong division. The division being the coastal belt is endowed with large tracts of *khas char* land, and thus 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 needing continued organised movements for recovery.

Due to this movement for establishing land rights, in our estimate, 5,801 landless families have benefited in securing food security through access to or regaining ownership of natural resources. This has also motivated these landless households to contribute more in sustaining the organisation that gave them these opportunities.

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

The landless families by securing control and possession over *khas* land and water bodies and putting them under collective farming/utilisation increased their food security. In the reporting period, the landless group members cultivated rice, pulse and vegetables in the *khas* land. The production was enough to ensure domestic consumption and even sell some surplus for extra income.

Description	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chittagong	Khulna	Total
Paddy production (mound)	2,735	0	2,13,587	50	2,16,372
Pulse production (mound)	9	0	420	1	430
Fish production (mound)	470	0	3,037	0	3,507
Economic value in BDT	28,23,700	0	14,89,88,290	39,500	15,18,51,490
Vegetables production (BDT)	21,29,860	1,81,200	25,57,600	50,66,360	99,35,020
<b>Total economic benefits</b>	<b>49,53,560</b>	<b>1,81,200</b>	<b>15,15,45,890</b>	<b>51,05,860</b>	<b>16,17,86,510</b>
Beneficiary families	1,643	132	681	7,370	9,826

As a result of successful recovery of open water bodies, not only the landless members but also the community were able to catch fish for consumption. Recovery of water bodies also created alternative source of income for landless families through vegetable cultivation in dry season.

All of these activities significantly contributed to the sustainable economic empowerment of the landless members through gradual increase of income. **Table 15** shows that the economic value of agriculture produces such as paddy, pulse and vegetables is equal to Taka 16,17,86,510 (USD 1,949,235). AT total of 9,826 families were benefited from the collective use of *khas* land and water bodies.

## 4.4 Gender Issues

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

Bangladesh has topped the South Asian countries in gender equality for the third consecutive year, ranking 48th among 149 nations according to Global Gender Gap Report 2018. Nevertheless, two thirds of women in Bangladesh, around 66%, have been victims of domestic violence and 72.7% of them have never disclosed their experiences to others according to a joint research conducted by Action Aid Bangladesh and Jatiyo Nari Nirjaton Protirodh Forum, titled "Spotlight on Violence Against Women in Bangladesh: Trends and Solution" (2018).

According to a 2016 report of the UNICEF Bangladesh, 52% of girls in the country are married before the age of 18. This is because in rural Bangladesh, be it for poverty or superstition, a

female child is considered to be a burden to her parents. Marriage of a girl is expensive due to the prevalence of dowry. Parents encourage early marriage out of fear that the dowry price will increase as their daughter ages. Hence, a child bride is considered “inexpensive”. The practice of dowry is widespread though in Bangladesh there has been a Dowry Prohibition Ordinance since 1986.

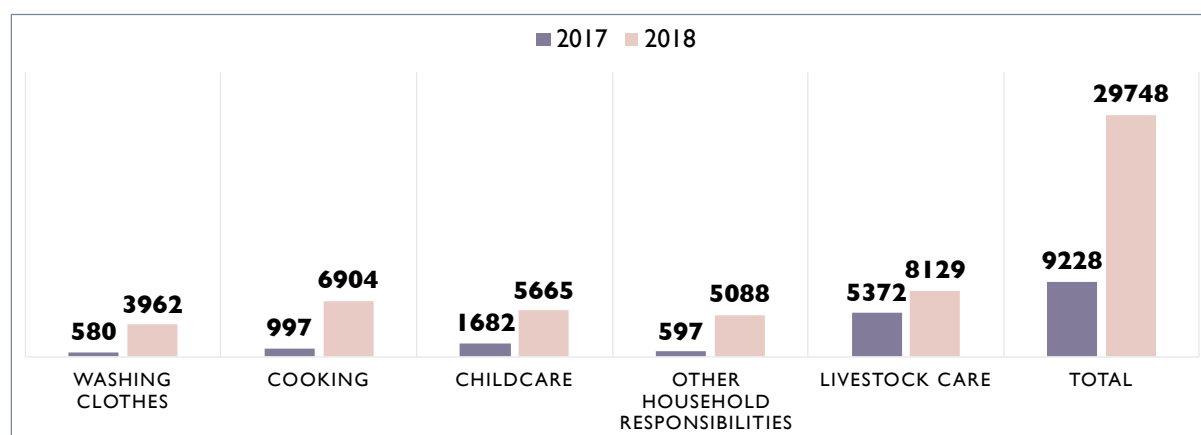
Nijera Kori and the landless organisation recognise that gender inequalities are socially constructed. Women’s empowerment would require transformation of current political and social relations, and control over economic resources. Nijera Kori’s work therefore focuses to enhance women’s dignity and to improve their access to and control over natural resources. The impact of Nijera Kori’s work in this aforementioned area is assessed based on four indicators and they are discussed in the sections below.

#### 4.4.2 Changes within the Household

According to a 2013 survey by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), women do five times more unpaid work in Bangladesh than men. A 2016 report showed that while women in Bangladesh do 8 hours of unpaid household work, men only worked in the household for 1 hour and 20 minutes (Power, Action Aid). The research data shows that, 69% of the female respondents said that they had no one to help them, and 8.7% had their daughters to help them while 7.5% had the support of their husbands. The research also found that the cause of this is that women consider this work to be normally theirs—that *only* women are supposed to do these chores. Without involvement of men in the household chores, meaningful gender equality cannot be achieved and women’s role in the decision-making sphere cannot be increased. For this reason, a change in the patriarchal notions of gender-segregated work and status of women need to be challenged.

Gender relations within the household is an important aspect to consider in order to change patriarchal social values and norms. In this context, Nijera Kori and the landless groups encourage women and men to work together, and carry out a structured programme of sensitising men’s groups alongside women’s group.





This has created some space for women to establish better rights within the home. In many cases, women reported positive changes in their relationships with husbands in terms of increased mutual respect, caring and co-operation and a decline in domestic violence, and spoke of better participation in the household decision-making process.



Graph 5: Participation of Men in Household Chores

According to our data (**Graph 5**), 29,748 landless male members reported on their participation in household work. This is 63% more than last year. Participation in washing clothes was 13%; in cooking, 23%; taking care of children, 19%; and 17% for household's responsibilities (cleaning yard, making bed, hanging mosquito nets); 27% for taking care of livestock. Over the last year, a total of 29,748 male members have engaged in household chores, which is 31% of total male membership.

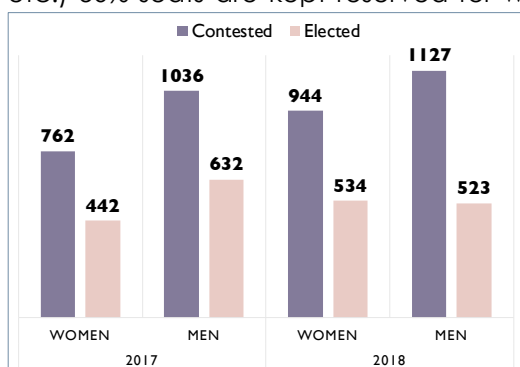
In addition, 2,137 landless member's families reported that presently family decisions are taken through mutual discussions between the men and women. This indicates an increasing level of respect and acceptance of women in the household. This is a much-desired healthy change of the societal norms. Detailed description is given below:

<p><b>Participation in washing clothes:</b> Of all the men who participated in household cleaning chores, 37% washed their own clothes, 23% washed their children's clothes, 13% washed their father's clothes, 10% washed their mother's clothes, 7% washed their partner's clothes and 9% washed blankets, bed sheets, mosquito nets etc.</p>		<p>"Before, I used to watch TV at the market after work. Now I go home and participate in household chores. I help my daughter in her studies, make the beds, set up the mosquito nets, etc. Disagreements in the family have decreased a lot." — Rafiqul Islam (30), Rayeganj, Shirajganj.</p>
<p><b>Participation in household chores (cooking):</b> Male members are taking part in the process of cooking, and that is done in a variety of ways. For example, 4% in fish processing and cutting, 7% in processing and cutting of vegetables, 6% in washing fish &amp; vegetables, 6% in lighting fires for the kitchen, 2% in processing of raw spices, 13% in collecting cooking water, 3% in washing dishes, 3% in cleaning the kitchen, 5% in cooking for the family and 51% in collecting firewood.</p>		<p>"We have to bring water from very far away and that's why I always used to do it. But then I went to a workshop and found out that Kader Bhai cooks, cleans the kitchen and washes the dishes at his home. He asked us to do the same. Upon hearing it I thought I might give it a try. So, I participated with my wife in cleaning the kitchen and washing the dishes. Then slowly I started to do it on my own. I do the housework 3-4 days a week." — Nimai Mallik (50), Dumuria, Khulna.</p>
<p><b>Taking care of children:</b> Among the men participating in childcare, 17% plays with children, 22% helps children with their studies, 17% bathes the children, 19% feeds the children, 16% takes care of sick children and 10% accompanies the children to sleep.</p>		<p>"I have three children. The youngest one is physically disabled. I feed him before going to work. In the afternoon, I give him a bath, feed him dinner &amp; take him to bed. At that time my other two children also comes to sleep with me. I sing to them &amp; they fall asleep." – Mofiz Uddin (38), Modhupur, Tangail.</p>
<p><b>Household Responsibilities:</b> Of the total number of men taking up household chores, 17% dusts the house, 14% cleans the house, 24% collects drinking water, 19% makes the bed and 25% hangs up the mosquito nets.</p>		<p>"Last January when I had fever, my husband washed my clothes. Since then he has been washing our family's clothes." — Kulsum Khatun, Chandina Comilla.</p>

#### 4.4.3 Women Leadership within Landless Organisation

Nijera Kori and the landless organisations recognise that developing collective leadership of women and men within the organisation is a challenge which needs to be addressed seriously. It was observed that though the women actively participate in mobilisation, meetings and all other activities. their voices are 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, gender issues were given high priority in the discussions. Secondly, trainings and workshops on leadership development were organised particularly on gender issues. Issues and concepts such as gender, patriarchy, women's right, VAW 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 1,057 open seats (posts for which both women and men members are eligible to contest), 944 women members contested against 1,127 male members. And of them 534 women were elected in 534 open posts (**Graph 6**). The rate of women's success in the committee election is 51% of total open posts. The highest participation in the

committee election as well as success was in Rajshahi division (241), followed by Chittagong division (134). It is to be noted that, during the reporting period compared with last year, 24%

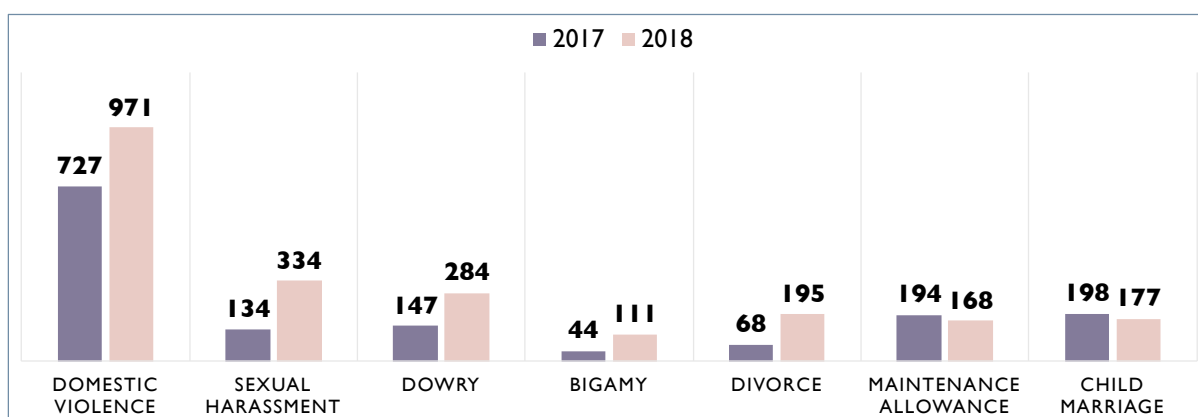
*Graph 6: Women in Open Posts*

more women contested for the open posts and the success rate is 21% higher as well. This is a significant

positive indication of changing mindset of male members and increased acceptance of women leadership in landless organisation. This is another milestone of enhanced women's leadership. It is worth noting that among the elected women members, 13 are from the indigenous communities. Acceptance of ethnic minorities in the leadership position is another signal of positive change.

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

The landless organisation, through regular group meetings, monitor incidents of VAW within the landless groups and 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 VAW. Consequently, an increasing number of women now raise their voices and stand up against violence. This break in the culture of silence is a positive change. The landless groups actively resisted VAW 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.



*Graph 7: Violence Against Women*

Analysis of data presented in the **Annex Table 22** shows that, in the reporting period, a total of 532 collective mobilisations on VAW were organised. Among these, in 502 of the movements (94%), the landless organisations were successful in achieving their demands. It is worth noting

that out of the total movements, 242 movements were initially started by male groups, which is 45%. This is a significant positive change of male members' roles in establishing women's rights.



Collective mobilisation against rape of a school girl in Dhanbari

Due to these mobilisations and *shalishes* (Graph 7), 198 child marriages were stopped (11% less than previous year's 177); 44 bigamies were prevented (152% more than last year's 111); 195 divorces were prevented (187% than previous year's 195); 284 dowry marriages were avoided (93% more than previous year's 147); 334 harassments were stopped, (149% more than previous year's 134); and

971 cases of domestic violence were stopped (25% more than previous year's 971). In addition to that, 194 women recovered maintenance allowances from husband or husband's family, which is 13% less than last year (168).

#### 4.4.5 Ensuring Access to Inheritance Property

Unequal social and economic structures (based on class and gender) is one of the major obstacles towards ensuring women's right and empowerment. On the other hand, political use of religion often undermines women's rights. Violation of women's rights in rural Bangladesh seems to be on the increasing trend. To redress this, Nijera Kori and the landless organisation emphasise the power of collective mobilisation described above. In the reporting period, the landless organisation devoted specific attention to ensuring justice and establishment of the right to inheritance. A total of 125 collective mobilisations were organised for establishing women's inheritance property rights. As result of these, 80 women got the title over and access to 10 acres of land, which was previously under the possession of their male family members.

Description	BDT	Beneficiary
Recover treatment cost, dowry and maintenance allowances	1,04,83,000	1,836
Value of inheritance property	18,52,000	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,23,35,000</b>	<b>1,916</b>
<b>USD</b>	<b>1,48,632</b>	

Table 16 shows that, the economic value of inheritance property recovered due to proper justice is equivalent to Taka 18,52,000. Total recovery value is Taka 1,23,35,000 (USD 1,48,632). This shows the economic value of awareness building and mobilisation.



#### 4.4.6 Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

**Table 17: Sexual and reproductive health right**

Description	Parents		Adolescent	
	Mother	Father	Daughter	Son
No. people who received awareness building on SRHR			2,219	1,598
No. of people who got a better understanding on GBV			657	672
Participate in open discussion on GBV and sexual harassment			519	442
Role in birth control				
Sole decision taken by women	4,159			
Men thinking the decision is women's only		2,772		
Use of condom		3,927		
Vasectomy		225		
Use of Norplant	1,414			
Use of injection	3,211			
Ligation/Tubectomy	405			
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,189</b>	<b>6,924</b>	<b>3,395</b>	<b>2,712</b>

Nijera Kori has organised multiple series of workshops to build awareness on sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR). During these workshops numerous topics, such as gender, gender performance, gender-based violence, violence against women and men, and sexual violence in the context of Bangladesh were covered. Due to the nature of these topics, initially a lot of participants were reluctant to engage in discussion participate. However, with trust-building exercises it was possible to draw the participants into the discussions and to share their experiences. Many people were able to provide examples of gender-based violence within their households and communities and many girls came out with their experiences of sexual harassment, which in their views is a regular phenomenon in the life of women and girls in most parts of Bangladesh. Many reported that to their knowledge several teenage girls have committed suicide because they couldn't handle the humiliation they faced in the society. In the words of Riya, a 13-year-old participant, "we are often victims of 'eve-teasing' [sexual harassment/stalking] on the way to school. We used to think it was just what boys did for fun. But when we tried to understand the issue we realised this is not mere mischief but sexual harassment. They want to show their strength over girls. That is not right, it is a crime." However, it was not an easy topic to share in front of a group of people they barely knew. Many girls are thinking about creating a watch group where they will help each other and other girls to fight sexual harassment in their lives.

Instead of eradicating sexual harassment, due to patriarchal practices, more and more people are asking women to stay indoors for their protection. Which is problematic because it not only affects their freedom of movement, but also their right to public space. During these sessions we have also talked about child marriages and why it is still accepted in their communities as a remedy to keep girls safe from sexual harassment. Many parents and adults tend to believe that girls can be kept safe from sexual harassments and social shame if they are married off at a very early age. Because of this believe many girls are forced to drop out of schools and take upon responsibilities of household works within their families within their families or within their in laws' families says, Lucky, a primary school dropout and a child marriage survivor. Hence it was important to have a conversation on child marriage in relation to sexual harassment in order to raise awareness of their rights to choice, access to school, safety and security within their society.

Use of birth control methods was discussed during the training/discussion sessions. Participants were asked to share their knowledge about available birth control options, what they prefer to use and how many of them decide on the choice of the birth control methods. The responses were varied. 4159 women responded that they decide on the birth control options, 2772 men think its solely women's decision, 225 men went through vasectomy, 3,927 men use

condoms, 1414 women use Norplant, 3211 women use injections and 405 women go through ligation or tubectomy. Many of the participants shared that they did not receive information about the side effects, and sometimes got sick and had to be hospitalised.

#### **Box 12: Changing mindset of Faruque**

Nargis Begum of Belashahar village in Chandina upazila shared, "I used Norplant for last two years. After a Nijera Kori staff discussed the harmful effects of using Norplant in the group meeting, I got worried because I often experienced nausea and felt tired since I started to use this method. So, I went to the apas (elder sisters) and told them of the Norplant. The staff then talked to our families. With their support my husband took me to the doctor. We decided to remove the Norplant. Since then, my husband (Faruque) started using condoms. Before this, my body used to feel heavy and lethargic, now I feel better. These sessions not only helped us to know what kinds of contraceptives are available to the people, but also how many of the people resort to which kinds of contraceptive methods."

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

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

In the reporting period, 50 women landless members were selected for the Joyeeta award at upazila level, which is 19% more than last year (42). 11 women were recognised in the category for development in society; 10 in the successful mother category; 12 for economic success; 10 for erasing the trauma of violence against women and starting a new life; and finally, 7 in the education and service category. All of them were honoured by the government through an official ceremony. This recognition of landless women members by the family, society and the government is extremely positive and encourages more women to take part in the development process. It is to be noted that, out of 50 awarded, 2 landless women were awarded at the district level under the category of "Development in Society" in Lakshmipur and of "Erasing Trauma of Violence Against Women and Starting a New Life" in Noakhali.

### Box 13: Jahanara is now a landless leader



*Jahanara Begum working in the field.*

Jahanara Begum, aged 38, is from Madhyambyaga village of Charjubali union in Subarnachar, Upazila, Noakhali. Jahanara was married off just at the age of 13. While looking back at her experience of marriage at such an early age Jahanara stated: "I did not even understand what marriage would mean. For me it only meant torture. My first child was a girl, and that was considered my fault. I cannot recall a single day without physical torture of some kind. In such a state of life, I gave birth to three more children."

At that stage of life, Jahanara joined the landless organisation. She started to attend meetings and participate in the discussions. That impacted her. She started to think differently. As she stated "Now I am no longer alone. The brothers and sisters of the landless

organisation are all there for me. One day, when my husband tried to assault me, I protested and told him I do not want to live with him anymore. I asked for a divorce and this was secured. I went back to my father."

But when her father passed away, her brothers would not let her stay in the parental home. At that time the landless organisations were regularly bringing out procession land rights for the landless in the Leskir Char. Jahanara joined this movement, and took part in the marches and raising slogans. Due to her status as divorced woman, the local people used to bad-mouth her behind her back. But no one had the courage to say anything in front of her. Within a year, she was recognised, and given a leadership role.

When in the char the government started distributing khas land, Jahanara applied. But her application was declined on the ground of being a single woman. The landless organisation took up her issue, and ultimately, she was awarded an acre of land. Jahanara cultivates this land and rears poultry to earn a living.

Jahanara remained engaged with the activities of the landless organisation, continued to demonstrate her commitment. This was recognised and she was elected as a member of Landless Union Committee. Jahanara now represents the landless also in shalish, and if there are cases of violence against women, she goes to the police and file cases. Everyone recognises Jahanara as a landless leader now, and is greatly respected in society. In Jahanara's own words, "more strength and unity are needed to redress oppression against women. Although the government wants it, the rural society does not seem to consider women as human beings."

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. Administration and Finance

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

However, the main operational decision-making of the organisation is done through the Central Staff Convention, which is held every alternate year and attended by all staff of Nijera Kori. Here they constitute a three-tier council for two years for overall management and coordination by electing their representatives (except the Coordinator) from among the staff. These councils are 1) Anchal Parishad (Area Council), 2) Bibhagiya Parishad (Divisional Council) and 3) Nirbahi Parishad (Executive Council). The overall activities of Nijera Kori are planned and monitored through weekly sub-centre meetings, monthly Anchal Parishad meetings, bi-monthly Divisional Parishad meetings, quarterly Nirbahi Parishad meetings, annual divisional staff convention and finally at central staff convention/council. On behalf of the above councils the Coordinator regularly consults the Governing Body.

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

According to group structure, the groups, through annual group meetings, village, union, Upazila and area committee meetings, annual group conventions and groups' representative meetings, evaluate their previous activities, discuss problems and remedial measures and formulate their next plans of action. Nijera Kori staff become part of the decision-making process by participating in these meetings. Later on, they share experiences in Nijera Kori's internal meetings/forums as per the organisational structure. This process of synthesising opinions from group level to central staff convention/council and its subsequent reflection in the formulation of a concrete plan shapes Nijera Kori's participatory management system.

#### 5.1 Staff strength

A total of 38 (women: 11 and men: 27) employees joined the organisation in the reporting period. On the other hand, 21 employees (women: 6 and men: 15) left the organisation. The total number of staff working in Nijera Kori in December 2018 was 174 (women: 80 and men: 94). It should be mentioned that 65 employees (women: 11 and men: 54) are performing their duties as service staff.

#### 5.2 Statement of Financial Accounts

During the reporting period of January to December 2018 Nijera Kori received financial assistance totalling Taka 93,437,786(USD 1,072,919). Of this Taka 68,036,097(USD 1,072,919) was received from different partner organisations and Taka 25,041,689 was opening balance. The total amount of the money spent during the reporting period was Taka 91,283,982 (USD 841,061).

## Annexes

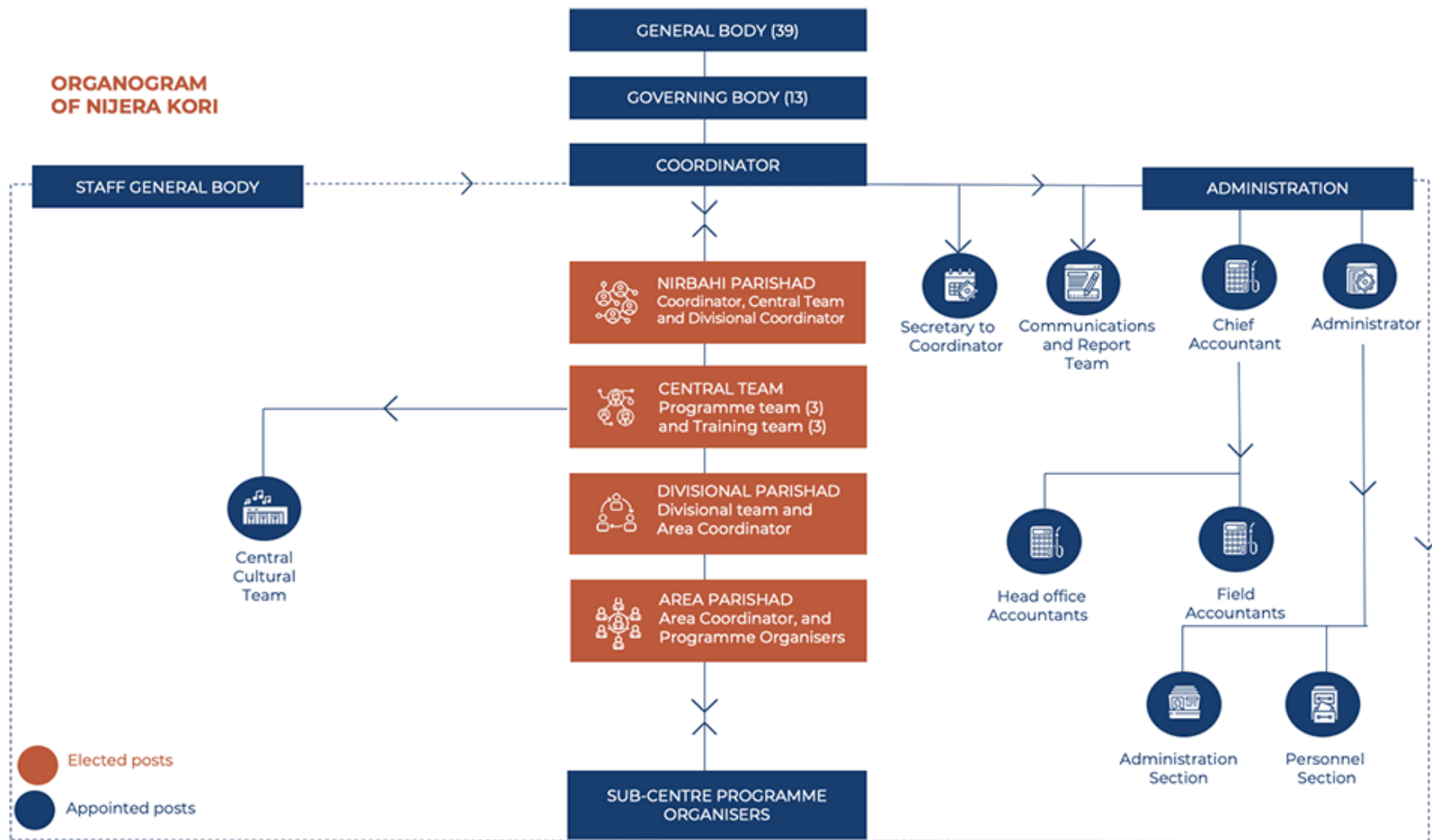
### Members of Governing Body 2018

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1.	Prof. Kazi Madina	Chairperson
2.	Prof. Rowshan Ara	Vice Chairperson
3.	Khushi Kabir	Secretary
4.	Ira Rahman	Treasurer
5.	Dil Monowora Monu	Assistant Treasurer
6.	Mohammad Shahid Hossain Talukder	Member
7.	Abdul Majid Mallik	Member
8.	Shaheen Islam	Member
9.	Biren Shome	Member
10.	Prof. Syed Abul Barq Alvi	Member
11.	Afzalun Nessa Chowdhury	Member
12.	Salma A Shafi	Member
13.	Advocate Mohammad Zahedul Bari	Member

## Members of General Body 2018

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation</b>
1.	Prof. Kazi Madina	Chairperson
2.	Dr. Rowshan Ara Firoz	Vice Chairperson
3.	Khushi Kabir	Secretary
4.	Ira Rahman	Treasurer
5.	Dil Monowora Monu	Assistant Treasurer
6.	Md Shahid Hossain Talukder	Member
7.	Sitara Ahsanullah	Member
8.	Abdul Majid Mallik	Member
9.	Shaheen Islam	Member
10.	Nilufar Ahmad	Member
11.	Mohammad Kamal Uddin	Member
12.	Sara Zaker	Member
13.	Nilufar Sultana	Member
14.	Prof. Sadeka Halim	Member
15.	Biren Shome	Member
16.	Dr. Nawser Alam	Member
17.	Abul Barkat	Member
18.	Md. Shamsul Arifin	Member
19.	Dr. Shafique Uz Zaman	Member
20.	Syed Abul Barq Alvi	Member
21.	Bashirul Haq	Member
22.	Suraiya Rahman	Member
23.	Yasmin Rahman	Member
24.	Syeda Rizwana Hasan	Member
25.	Masuma Khanam	Member
26.	Rukhsana Saida Poppy	Member
27.	Amiya Kanti Mutsuddy	Member
28.	Rahul Raha	Member
29.	Noorjahan Bose	Member
30.	Farida Shawkat	Member
31.	Nigar Sultana	Member
32.	Shipra Bose	Member
33.	Afzalun Nessa Chowdhury	Member
34.	Jyotirmoy Barua	Member
35.	Anjan Kumar Datta	Member
36.	Salma A Shafi	Member
37.	Moniza Biswas	Member
38.	Hasina Khatun	Member
39.	Md. Zahedul Bari	Member

## Organogram of Nijera Kori



## Tables 1 to 23

### Table 1: Geographical Location of Programmes of Nijera Kori

Sl. No	Division	District	Upazila	Area	Sub-center	Total up to December 2017		Expansion		Total up to Dec' 2018		Village Coverage		
						U	V	U	V	U	V	Up to Dec' 2017	New	Up to Dec' 2018
1	Chittagong	Comilla	Chandina	Comilla	3	24	110	0	0	24	110	21	0	21
			Daudkandi											
			Debidwar											
			Muradnagar											
		Noakhali	Sudharam	Char Jabbar	5	9	45	0	0	9	45	6	0	6
			Companigonj											
			Kabirhat											
Lakshmipur	Ramgoti	Ramgoti	1	6	28	0	0	6	28	5	0	5		
Chittagong	Sandwip	Sandwip	2	14	28	0	0	14	28	-	0	0		
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32</b>
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										
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>
3	Khulna	Kushtia	Kumarkhali	Kumarkhali	1	7	51	0	0	7	51	14	0	14
			khoksa											
		Khulna	Paikgacha	Paikgacha	6	19	171	0	0	19	171	41	1	42
			Dumuria											
			Batiaghata											
Dakope														
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>56</b>
4	Rajshahi	Sirajgonj	Raygonj	Raygonj	2	5	82	0	0	5	82	13	0	13
			Bogra											
		Rangpur	Rangpur Sadar	Rangpur	2	9	81	0	0	9	81	24	0	24
			Mithapukur											
		Dinajpur	Khanshama	Dinajpur	1	4	22	0	0	4	22	5	0	5
		Kurigram	Rowmari	Rowmari	1	8	84	0	0	8	84	21	0	21
			Rajibpur											
		Gaibandha	Saghata	Gaibandha	2	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													
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>1,168</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>1,168</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>282</b>



**Table 2: Formation of Landless Group**

Description	Total up to December 2017			Plan			Achievement			Total up to December 2018		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	2,671	2,129	4,800	37	39	76	16	6	22	2,687	2,135	4,822
Dhaka	438	330	768	10	12	22	7	4	11	445	334	779
Chittagong	2,269	1,591	3,860	18	13	31	49	28	77	2,318	1,619	3,937
Khulna	835	478	1,313	17	15	32	10	6	16	845	484	1,329
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,213</b>	<b>4,528</b>	<b>10,741</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>6,295</b>	<b>4,572</b>	<b>10,867</b>

**Table 3: landless group members**

Description	Total up to December 2017			Plan			Achievement			Total up to December 2018		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	52,411	44,959	97,370	740	624	1364	304	99	403	52,715	45,058	97773
Dhaka	8,424	7,508	15,932	200	192	392	124	74	198	8,548	7,582	16130
Khulna	16,819	10,120	26,939	360	208	568	177	104	281	16,996	10,224	27220
Chittagong	44,321	33,725	78,046	340	240	580	999	537	1536	45,320	34,262	79582
<b>Total</b>	<b>121,975</b>	<b>96,312</b>	<b>218,287</b>	<b>1,640</b>	<b>1,264</b>	<b>2,904</b>	<b>1,604</b>	<b>814</b>	<b>2,418</b>	<b>123,579</b>	<b>97,126</b>	<b>220,705</b>

**Table 4: Landless group meeting attended by staff and groups**

Description	Plan for Group Meeting									Achievement of landless groups Meeting								
	Attended by Staff			Meeting Initiated by Group			Total plan			Meeting Attended by Staff			Meeting Initiated by Group			Total Achievement		Total
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	
Rajshahi	14,530	5,539	20,069	16,358	13,836	32,194	30,888	19,375	50,263	8,521	5,997	14,518	14,552	11,535	26,087	23,073	17,532	40,605
Dhaka	2,914	1,457	2,548	2,320	1,609	3,752	5,234	3,066	8,300	2017	1,107	3,124	2,715	1,622	4,337	4,732	2,729	7,461
Chittagong	6,721	3,356	10,077	14,337	8,272	22,609	21,058	11,628	32,686	6,079	5,067	11,146	13,179	4,568	17,747	19,258	9,635	28,893
Khulna	5,984	5,190	11,174	5,374	3,746	9,120	11,358	8,936	20,294	5,868	2,652	8,520	3,982	2,651	6,633	9,850	5,303	15,153
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,149</b>	<b>15,542</b>	<b>43,868</b>	<b>38,389</b>	<b>27,463</b>	<b>67,675</b>	<b>68,538</b>	<b>43,005</b>	<b>111,543</b>	<b>22,485</b>	<b>14,823</b>	<b>37,308</b>	<b>34,428</b>	<b>20,376</b>	<b>54,804</b>	<b>56,913</b>	<b>35,199</b>	<b>92,112</b>

**Table 5: Representative, Joint group meetings and annual group meetings**

Description	Representative Meeting		Joint Group Meeting		Annual group Meeting Plan			Achievement		
	Plan	Achievement	Plan	Achievement	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total
Rajshahi	252	299	390	889	1,600	1162	2,762	1,510	1054	2,564
Dhaka	52	31	18	58	163	96	259	206	148	354
Chittagong	310	245	90	792	1,633	1027	2,660	1,640	957	2,597
Khulna	120	95	150	175	475	295	770	663	348	1,011
<b>Total</b>	<b>734</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>1,914</b>	<b>3,871</b>	<b>2,580</b>	<b>6,451</b>	<b>4,019</b>	<b>2,507</b>	<b>6,526</b>

**Table 6: Description of workshops**

Description of workshops	Rajshahi						Dhaka						Chittagong						Khulna						Total								
	Plan for			Achievement			Plan for			Achievement			Plan for			Achievement			Plan for			Achievement			Plan for			Achievement					
	Participants						Participants						Participants						Participants														
Gender	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	T
Right to Information Act & its use	91	84	175	99	64	163	38	37	75	42	35	77	71	54	125	81	43	124	89	86	175	112	63	175	289	261	550	334	205	539			
Ethnic and Land rights	52	48	100	61	53	114			0			0			0			0			0			0	52	48	100	61	53	114			
Household work and mane role	104	96	200	115	93	208	52	48	100	54	46	100	89	61	150	86	56	142	64	61	125	69	56	125	309	266	575	324	251	575			
Impact of Patriarchy and Religious Fundamentalisms	26	24	50	26	24	50	13	12	25	13	12	25	15	10	25	16	9	25	13	12	25	15	10	25	67	58	125	70	55	125			
Women access to Market	78	72	150	113	54	167	39	36	75	39	36	75	56	44	100	65	41	106	51	49	100	67	33	100	224	201	425	284	164	448			
Agriculture and Women role	104	96	200	124	79	203	52	48	100	50	51	101	86	64	150	83	70	153	66	59	125	71	54	125	308	267	575	328	254	582			
Kashland distribution & women rights	39	36	75	41	37	78	26	24	50	28	23	51	13	12	25	14	11	25	26	24	50	33	17	50	104	96	200	116	88	204			
Leadership Development of Women	78	72	150	90	58	148	50	0	50	48	0	48	45	30	75	47	32	79	13	12	25	10	15	25	186	114	300	195	105	300			
Management of Collective Production	104	96	200	117	84	201	52	48	100	52	48	100	87	63	150	92	64	156	65	50	115	74	51	125	308	257	565	335	247	582			
Workshop with Watch Committee	0	0	0	28	20	48	33	34	67	29	29	58	60	60	120	66	49	115	30	30	60	26	28	54	123	124	247	149	140	289			
<b>Total</b>	676	624	1,300	814	566	1380	355	287	642	355	280	635	522	398	920	550	375	925	417	383	800	477	327	804	1,970	1,692	3,662	2,196	1,562	3,758			

**Table 7: Formation of structural committee meetings and landless group conventions**

Division	Total No. of Committee				Committee Meetings								Group Convention							
	up to December 2017				Plan				Achievement				Plan				Achievement			
	Name of the Committee				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	Village	Union	Upazila	Area
Rajshahi	167	11	1	8	1,448	130	12	61	1,315	126	12	46	129	10	1	4	121	10		6
Dhaka	28	6	1	1	238	57	12	11	295	66	11	12	27	3	1	1	22	6		1
Chittagong	58	3	1	13	660	35	11	146	685	36	5	151	53	2	1	12	51	3	1	11
Khulna	50	3	0	8	516	36	0	90	502	35	0	98	51	2	0	7	49	3	0	8
<b>Total</b>	303	23	3	30	2,862	258	35	308	2,797	263	28	307	260	17	3	24	243	22	1	26

**Table 8: Landless group savings**

Division	Total up to March 2017			Plan			Implementation			Distribution			Total up to December 2018		
	W	M	Total	W	M	Total	W	M	Total	W	M	Total	W	M	Total
Rajshahi	14,687,631	14,365,596	29,053,227	2,909,063	1,725,955	4,635,018	2,828,453	1,523,032	4,351,485	3,437,584	245,020	3,682,604	14,078,500	15,643,608	29,722,108
Dhaka	1,558,908	849,861	2,408,769	1,104,463	694,492	1,798,955	874,920	428,867	1,303,787	1,594,528	113,500	1,708,028	839,300	1,165,228	2,004,528
Chittagong	27,604,661	21,484,101	49,088,762	7,086,386	5,100,400	12,186,786	5,671,516	3,619,582	9,291,098	2,146,340	590,900	2,737,240	31,129,837	24,512,783	55,642,620
Khulna	7,164,335	6,350,349	13,514,684	1,716,962	844,210	2,561,172	1,528,086	702,720	2,230,806	1,201,100	446,300	1,647,400	7,491,321	6,606,769	14,098,090
<b>Total</b>	51,015,535	43,049,907	94,065,442	12,816,874	8,365,057	21,181,931	10,902,975	6,274,201	17,177,176	8,379,552	1,395,720	9,775,272	53,538,958	47,928,388	101,467,346

**Table 9: Landless group bank accounts**

Description	Up to March 2017			Plan			Increases in 2018			Total up to December 2018		
	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total	Women	Male	Total
Rajshahi	854	371	1,225	16	2	18	20	2	22	874	373	1,247
Dhaka	276	213	489	9	7	16	8	1	9	284	214	498
Chittagong	616	325	941	8	4	12	15	4	19	631	329	960
Khulna	592	160	752	5	1	6	4	1	5	596	161	757
<b>Total</b>	2,338	1,069	3,407	38	14	52	47	8	55	2,385	1,077	3,462

**Table 10: Awareness and capacity building trainings for landless group members**

Description of Trainings	Rajshahi						Dhaka						Chittagong						Khulna						Total					
	Plan			Achievement			Plan			Achievement			Plan			Achievement			Plan			Achievement			Plan			Achievement		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Basic	100	60	160	88	50	138	64	44	108	60	40	100	80	60	140	80	60	140	40	80	120	39	80	119	<b>284</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>497</b>
Advance	22	18	40	25	15	40	20	20	40	22	18	40	20	20	40	22	18	40	21	19	40	21	18	39	<b>83</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>159</b>
Higher Selection	0	20	20	0	19	19	0	20	20	16	4	20	0	20	20	0	20	20	0	20	20	0	20	20	<b>0</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Total Core</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>768</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>735</b>
Khas land distribution law, policy	21	19	40	21	19	40	10	10	20	11	9	20	10	10	20	13	7	20	10	10	20	13	7	20	<b>51</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>
Capacity Building Training on Advocacy, Campaigning and Strategy focusing on Kashland-Water Issues	30	30	60	30	30	60			0			0			0			0			0			0	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>60</b>
Land use policy	11	9	20	11	9	20	10	10	20	10	10	20	10	10	20	10	10	20	10	10	20	8	12	20	<b>41</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>80</b>
Leadership Development	11	9	20	14	6	20	10	10	20	10	10	20	10	10	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	6	20	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>60</b>
Impact of religious fundamentalisms	8	6	14	3	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	6	14	3	3	6	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>
Family Law, Policy & Women rights	22	18	40	23	17	40	10	10	20	11	9	20	10	10	20	11	9	20	10	10	20	13	5	18	<b>52</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>98</b>
Government service policy	22	18	40	24	16	40	10	10	20	10	10	20	20	20	40	20	20	40	30	30	60	41	19	60	<b>82</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>160</b>
Gender planning methodology	22	18	40	26	13	39	10	10	20	10	10	20	10	10	20	11	9	20	10	10	20	13	7	20	<b>52</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>99</b>
Citizen rights, secularism and constitutional guarantee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10	20	10	10	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>
Agriculture, market and its impact	11	9	20	12	8	20			0			0			0			0			0			0	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>709</b>
Cultural training (Basic)	8	12	20	8	11	19	8	12	20	8	11	19	8	12	20	9	11	20	10	10	20	7	13	20	<b>34</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>78</b>
Cultural training (advance)	4	6	10	4	6	10	4	6	10	4	6	10	4	6	10	4	6	10	3	7	10	3	7	10	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>Total Nijera Kori</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>824</b>	<b>1,616</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>1,562</b>

**Table 11: Refresher Trainings**

Division	Refresher Training							
	Plan				Achievement			
	Number	Participants			Number	Participants		
		Women	Male	Total		Women	Male	Total
Rajshahi	27	351	324	675	26	378	277	655
Dhaka	9	117	108	225	9	125	100	225
Chittagong	28	401	289	690	28	421	262	683
Khulna	19	250	225	475	19	279	199	478
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>1,119</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>2,065</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>1,203</b>	<b>838</b>	<b>2,041</b>

**Table 12: Cultural Activities**

Description	No of Cultural Group	Cultural Workshop				Cultural Activity											
		Plan		Achievement		Plan						Achievement					
		N	P	N	P	N	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
Rajshahi	20	8	160	8	203	184	9	87	1	78	35	172	9	84	2	73	59
Dhaka	9	4	80	4	78	94	7	47	1	53	19	91	7	38	1	34	43
Chittagong	14	5	100	5	113	148	4	75	1	128	12	155	4	88	1	148	15
Khulna	11	4	80	4	80	147	6	51	1	59	17	141	7	58	1	71	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>559</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>141</b>

**Table 13: Collective economic activities by using groups savings**

Description	Agriculture				Fishery				livestock				Small business/rickshaw van				Total					
	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chita	Khulna	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chita	Khulna	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chita	Khulna	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chita	Khulna	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chita	Khulna	Nijera Kori	
Up to Dec' 17																						
Group	W	328	8	184	34	30	5	10	12	169	2	137	5	905	17	993	18	1432	32	1324	69	2,857
	M	273	36	155	39	80	17	90	19	208	14	170	4	625	10	1,115	23	1186	77	1530	85	2,878
	T	601	44	339	73	110	22	100	31	377	16	307	9	1530	27	2108	41	2618	109	2854	154	5735
Member	W	4,733	150	3,680	657	691	327	1882	363	4,475	277	2,864	81	24,401	388	18,141	558	34300	1142	26567	1659	63,668
	M	7,345	731	3,118	772	2,028	425	2,095	603	8,150	315	2,856	76	15,355	1,047	21,295	377	32878	2518	29364	1828	66,588
	T	12,078	881	6,798	1,429	2,719	752	3,977	966	12,625	592	5,720	157	39,756	1,435	39,436	935	67,178	3,660	55,931	3,487	130,256
Employment	W	245	3	29	65	225	3	16	18	253	0	100	1	499	0	460	23	1222	6	605	107	1,940
	M	904	51	167	90	338	7	134	85	168	6	135	0	811	8	555	35	2221	72	991	210	3,494
	T	1,149	54	196	155	563	10	150	103	421	6	235	1	1,310	8	1,015	58	3,443	78	1,596	317	5,434
Investment in Tk Increased 2018		686,500	220,000	221,840	138,000	263,100	0	85,530	0	424,166	20,000	554,285	109,740	413,875	6,300	2019620	352,325	1787641	246300	2881275	600065	5,515,281
Group	W	4	6	3	3	1	0	0	1	29	0	9	0	14	0	44	3	48	6	56	7	117
	M	7	2	3	0	4	0	2	0	4	1	18	0	5	0	15	1	20	3	38	1	62
	T	11	8	6	3	5	0	2	1	33	1	27	0	19	0	59	4	68	9	94	8	179
Member	W	73	108	60	65	17	0	0	20	605	0	181	0	225	0	702	61	920	108	943	146	2,117
	M	139	32	60	0	100	0	38	0	75	21	342	0	90	0	215	20	404	53	655	20	1,132
	T	212	140	120	65	117	0	38	20	680	21	523	0	315	0	917	81	1324	161	1598	166	3,249
Employment	W	3	1	3	1	1	0	0	1	31	0	7	0	8	0	30	0	43	1	40	2	86
	M	7	0	1	0	10	0	2	0	5	0	14	0	1	0	13	0	23	0	30	0	53
	T	10	1	4	1	11	0	2	1	36	0	21	0	9	0	43	0	66	1	70	2	139
Investment in Tk Decreased 2018		623,000	183000	325,000	145,000	342,453		317,500	20000	295,960	18000	656,610	0	188,850	0	2758551	25,000	1450263	201000	4057661	190000	5,898,924
Group	W	2	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	14	0	15	0	16	0	11	0	32	0	30	1	63
	M	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	19	2	5	0	12		11	2	33	3	49
	T	4	2	6	2	0	0	0	0	18	0	34	2	21	0	23	0	43	2	63	4	112
Member	W	39	0	83	20	0	0	0	0	291	0	257	0	336	0	176	0	664	0	516	20	1,202
	M	40	38	45	18	0	0	0	0	76	0	361	40	97	0	180		213	38	586	58	895
	T	79	38	128	38	0	0	0	0	367	0	618	40	433	0	356	0	879	38	1102	78	2,097
Employment	W	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	2	0	28	0	4	0	39	0	7	0	46
	M	2	38	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	2	0	1	0	6	38	5	0	49
	T	4	38	2	0	0	0	0	0	11	0	5	0	30	0	5	0	45	38	12	0	95
Investment in Tk up to Dec' 2018		170,000	212500	94550	60,000	0		0	0	178,900	0	504,760	38000	399,900	0	555,690	38,000	748800	212500	1155000	136000	2,252,300
Group	W	330	14	183	36	31	5	10	13	184	2	131	5	903	17	1026	21	1448	38	1350	75	2,911
	M	278	36	156	38	84	17	92	19	208	15	169	2	625	10	1118	24	1195	78	1535	83	2,891
	T	608	50	339	74	115	22	102	32	392	17	300	7	1528	27	2144	45	2643	116	2885	158	5,802
Member	W	4,767	258	3,657	702	708	327	1,882	383	4,789	277	2,788	81	24,290	388	18,667	619	34,554	1,250	26,994	1,785	64,583
	M	7,444	725	3,133	754	2,128	425	2,133	603	8,149	336	2,837	36	15,348	1,047	21,330	397	33,069	2,533	29,433	1,790	66,825
	T	12,211	983	6,790	1,456	2,836	752	4,015	986	12,938	613	5,625	117	39,638	1,435	39,997	1,016	67,623	3,783	56,427	3,575	131,408
Employment	W	246	4	31	66	226	3	16	19	275	0	105	1	479	0	486	23	1226	7	638	109	1,980
	M	909	13	167	90	348	7	136	85	171	6	146	0	810	8	567	35	2238	34	1016	210	3,498
	T	1,155	17	198	156	574	10	152	104	446	6	251	1	1,289	8	1,053	58	3,464	41	1,654	319	5,478
Investment in Tk		1,139,500	190,500	452,290	223,000	605,553	0	403,030	20,000	541,226	38,000	706,135	71,740	202,825	6,300	4222481	339,325	2,489,104	234,800	5,783,936	654,065	9,161,905
Profit in cash 2018	W	647,078	23,058	336,631	125,604	121,340	480	0	209946	86,790	312	83,700	0	603,237	10,866	521,310	46,640	1458445	34716	941641	382190	2,816,992
	M	1,840,574	72,091	1,795,369	103,515	1,078,220	8,640	83,880	537,225	64,070	9,481	165,300	0	333,253	22,393	292,813	52,200	3316117	112605	2337362	692940	6,459,024
Total	T	2,487,652	95,149	2,132,000	229,119	1,199,560	9,120	83,880	747,171	150,860	9,793	249,000	0	936,490	33,259	814,123	98,840	4,774,562	147,321	3,279,003	1,075,130	9,276,016

**Table 14: Access to Government services**

	Total Division					Krishi Card				VGF Card				VGD Card				Ration card				Elder/Widow Allowances/Disability/					Maternity Allowances	100 Day Employment Generation					Fisherman card						
	W	M	Total Card	D	SW/WH	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	W	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	SW				
Rajshahi	17,110	19,536	36,646	125	914	0	0	0	0	0	31,421	15,469	15,952	109	778	334	334	0	22	4504	1030	3474	10	74	151	139	12	1	8	83	120	47	73	5	29	33	8	25	3
Dhaka	802	715	1,517	39	257	0	0	0	0	0	675	378	297	32	129	19	19	2	15	606	300	306	3	85	103	62	41	0	11	15	69	28	41	2	17	30	0	30	0
Chittagong	10,937	12,977	23,914	42	961	113	16	97	0	3	18,366	8,630	9,736	20	668	340	340	2	40	4455	1607	2,848	16	196	283	166	117	1	45	140	59	38	21	3	9	158	0	158	0
Khulna	1,699	1,264	2,963	27	138	0	0	0	0	0	1,828	1151	677	16	99	18	18	0	0	844	363	481	0	0	82	50	32	0	1	25	166	92	74	11	38	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,548</b>	<b>34,492</b>	<b>65,040</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>2,270</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>52,290</b>	<b>25,628</b>	<b>26,662</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>1,674</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>711</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>10,409</b>	<b>3,300</b>	<b>7,109</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>3</b>

W= Women; M= men; D= Disable; IP= Indigenous peoples; and SW/WH= Single Women, Women=Headed

**Table 15: Legal aid support activities**

Nature of cases	Up to 17-Dec	New cases	Rajshahi				New cases	Dhaka				New cases	Chittagong				New cases	Khulna				New cases	Total				Till Dec,18
			T	I	Ag	A		T	I	Ag	A		T	I	Ag	A		T	I	Ag	A		T	I	Ag	A	
<b>Total</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>632</b>
<b>Criminal</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>250</b>
Groups of the plaintiffs	119	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	3	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	5	5	0	0	116
Groups of the accused	143	0	1	1	0	0	0	9	9	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	10	10	0	0	134
<b>Civil</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>172</b>
Groups of the plaintiffs	100	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	101
Groups of the accused	70	3	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	2	0	0	71
<b>Violence against women</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>210</b>
Groups of the plaintiffs	176	9	3	3	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	5	2	2	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	16	7	7	0	0	185
Groups of the accused	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	25

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

**Table 16: Level of group consciousness**

Description	Rajshahi			Dhaka			Chittagong			Khulna			Total		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
<b>Secondary Level</b>															
<b>Up to December 2017</b>	<b>567</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>1062</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>934</b>	<b>817</b>	<b>1751</b>	<b>1,978</b>	<b>1,707</b>	<b>3,685</b>
Plan	12	11	23	13	13	26	20	14	34	6	4	10	51	42	93
Achievement	11	9	20	5	4	9	24	19	43	7	3	10	47	35	82
<b>Total up to December 2018</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>1082</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>941</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>1761</b>	<b>2,025</b>	<b>1,742</b>	<b>3,767</b>
<b>Third Level</b>			<b>0</b>												
<b>Up to December 2017</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>202</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>553</b>
Plan	4	2	6	0	0	0	3	7	10	2	1	3	9	10	19
Achievement	1	0	1	0	0	0	6	8	14	1	0	1	8	8	16
<b>Total up to December 2018</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>569</b>

**Table 17: Various activities undertaken from group saving and voluntary services provided by group members**

Description	Organisational activities										Cooperation and Support Activities					Beneficiary
	Contribution (In Taka)	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	Total Nijera Kori	
Rajshahi	Within Group	12,435	4,788	900	43,535	24,132	29,280	3,750	0	<b>118,820</b>	78,280	18,390	101,380	<b>198,050</b>	<b>316,870</b>	1,642
	Outside Group									<b>0</b>	13,790	1,720	16,470	<b>31,980</b>	<b>31,980</b>	255
Dhaka	Within Group	5578	1660	295	42,166	23760	3,270	1700	2000	<b>80,429</b>	53,000	2,700	16,000	<b>71,700</b>	<b>152,129</b>	810
	Outside Group									<b>0</b>	7000	500	975	<b>8,475</b>	<b>8,475</b>	208
Chittagong	Within Group	14,844	23,392	15,667	81,360	28,230	88,570	431,900	10900	<b>694,863</b>	390,980	37,900	106,790	<b>535,670</b>	<b>1,230,533</b>	2,147
	Outside Group									<b>0</b>	16,900	43,020	41,500	<b>101,420</b>	<b>101,420</b>	809
Khulna	Within Group	9,188	5,020		14,340	8,470	61,400	70,310	300	<b>169,028</b>	112,610	43200	23,800	<b>179,610</b>	<b>348,638</b>	205
	Outside Group									<b>0</b>	49,880		6,700	<b>56,580</b>	<b>56,580</b>	56
Total	Within Group	42,045	34,860	16,862	181,401	84,592	182,520	507,660	13,200	<b>1,063,140</b>	634,870	102,190	247,970	<b>985,030</b>	<b>2,048,170</b>	4,804
	Outside Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	87,570	45,240	65,645	<b>198,455</b>	<b>198,455</b>	1,328
	Total	<b>42,045</b>	<b>34,860</b>	<b>16,862</b>	<b>181,401</b>	<b>84,592</b>	<b>182,520</b>	<b>507,660</b>	<b>13,200</b>	<b>1,063,140</b>	<b>722,440</b>	<b>147,430</b>	<b>313,615</b>	<b>1,183,485</b>	<b>2,246,625</b>	<b>6,132</b>



**Table 18: A representation in different institutional committees**

Description (January to December 2017)	Gender	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chittagong	Khulna	Total
Number of Contested in Union Parishad election						
Number of Elected Union Parishad						
UP election Contested Member	Women			1		1
	Men			1		1
	Total	0	0	2	0	2
UP election Elected member	Women			1		1
	Men			0		0
	Total	0	0	1	0	1
School Management Committee (Contested candidate)	Women	12	1	18	25	56
	Men	19	6	17	27	69
	Total	31	7	35	52	125
School Management Committee (Elected)	Women	9	1	11	14	35
	Men	12	4	10	13	39
	Total	21	5	21	27	74
Market Management Committee (Contested candidate)	Women	0	0	3	0	3
	Men	4	15	18	3	40
	Total	4	15	21	3	43
Market Management Committee (Elected)	Women	0	0	3	0	3
	Men	2	11	17	1	31
	Total	2	11	20	1	34
Sluice Gate Management Committee (Contested candidate)	Women	0	0	1	3	4
	Men	0	2	1	4	7
	Total	0	2	2	7	11
Sluice Gate Management Committee (Elected)	Women	0	0	1	1	2
	Men	0	1	1	1	3
	Total	0	1	2	2	5
Number of Contested Committee						0
Number of Committee in Elected						0
Total Contested candidate	Women	12	1	23	28	64
	Men	23	23	37	34	117
	Total	35	24	60	62	181
<b>Total Elected</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>41</b>
	<b>Men</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>73</b>

**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	7	2	12	6	27
	Men	9	2	11	10	32
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>59</b>
Joinge protect committee	Women	13	0	4	0	17
	Men	51	5	23	0	79
	<b>Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>96</b>
Policing Committee	Women	7	0	2	0	9
	Men	10	2	16	0	28
	<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Union Parishad Standing Committee (Nominated)</b>						
Social Welfare and Disaster Management Committee (Nominated)	Women	0	0	0	0	0
	Men	0	0	1	0	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Law and Order Situation Control Committee (Nominated)	Women	0	2	0	0	2
	Men	0	1	0	0	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
Committee on Stop Violence against Women (Nominated)	Women	0	0	1	0	1
	Men	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Agriculture and Fisheries Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	0	0	3	1	4
	Men	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
Education, Health Family Planning Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	0	1	0	0	1
	Men	0	1	2	0	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>
Rural Development Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	0	0	0	0	0
	Men	0	0	1	0	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Birth-Death Registration Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	0	0	0	0	0
	Men	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Environment and Forest Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	0	0	0	0	0
	Men	0	0	1	0	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Sanitation and Water Supply Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	0	0	1	0	1
	Men	0	0	0	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Vat and Tax Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	0	0	1	0	1
	Men	1	0	1	0	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>
Cultural and Game Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	2	0	3	1	6
	Men	1	0	0	0	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>
Finance and Establishment Standing Committee (Nominated)	Women	2	2	3	0	7
	Men	3	4	2	0	9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>
Number of Nominated Members	<b>Women</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>76</b>
	<b>Men</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>158</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>234</b>

**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		
<b>Violence against Women : (dowry, divorce, polygamy, rape, physical assault, religious fundamentalism indictment)</b>														
Rajshahi	281	1,275	1,683	2,958	275	386	661	257	24	267	3	7	11	2,267,000
Dhaka	36	131	265	396	60	140	200	18	18	34	0	1	2	0
Chittagong	811	2,524	4,681	7,205	679	1364	2,043	599	212	761	10	1	40	1,879,800
Khulna	86	487	575	1,062	94	203	297	81	5	81	2	2	3	167,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,214</b>	<b>4,417</b>	<b>7,204</b>	<b>11,621</b>	<b>1,108</b>	<b>2,093</b>	<b>3,201</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>1,143</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>4,313,800</b>
<b>Illegal Possession of Property from the Landless</b>														
Rajshahi	27	178	276	454	23	53	76	27	0	22	1	2	4	75,004
Dhaka	3	46	74	120	3	17	20	3	0	3	0	0	0	0
Chittagong	143	677	1,090	1,767	140	331	471	114	29	121	6	0	16	0
Khulna	51	217	466	683	49	149	198	39	12	31	9	0	11	22501
<b>Total</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>1,118</b>	<b>1,906</b>	<b>3,024</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>765</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>97,505</b>
<b>Fundamentalist activities</b>														
Rajshahi	1	0	10	10	0	2	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Dhaka	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chittagong	1	4	8	12	2	3	5	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Khulna	2	20	36	56	1	4	5	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Issue of Injustice and oppression</b>														
Rajshahi	87	397	642	1,039	57	106	163	81	6	64	2	2	21	75,850
Dhaka	61	204	390	594	74	222	296	17	44	61	0	0	0	0
Chittagong	51	378	572	950	38	82	120	33	18	45	1	1	5	322,000
Khulna	93	314	559	873	67	186	253	73	20	86	3	1	4	39,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>1,293</b>	<b>2,163</b>	<b>3,456</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>596</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>437,450</b>
Rajshahi	396	1,850	2,611	4,461	355	547	902	366	30	354	6	11	36	2,417,854
Dhaka	100	381	729	1110	137	379	516	38	62	98	0	1	2	0
Chittagong	1,006	3,583	6,351	9,934	859	1,780	2,639	747	259	928	17	2	61	2,201,800
Khulna	232	1038	1636	2674	211	542	753	195	37	199	15	3	18	229101
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,734</b>	<b>6,852</b>	<b>11,327</b>	<b>18,179</b>	<b>1,562</b>	<b>3,248</b>	<b>4,810</b>	<b>1,346</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>1,579</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>4,848,755</b>

**Table 20: Registration, lease and possession of Khas land and water**

Subject		Khas land (Acre)						Water Body (Acre)			Total (Acre)			
		Land Registered		Land Possession		DCR		Water Body Leased			Amount of land	Beneficiary	Amount of water body	Beneficiary
		No of member	Amount of land	No of member	Amount of land	No of group member	Amount of land	No of member	Amount of water body	Amount of water body opened				
Up to December 2017	Rajshahi	7,383	5,396	1,814	455	2	0	847	37	151	5,851	9,199	188	847
	Dhaka	9	11.05	24	3	0	0	551	1	67	14	33	68	551
	Chittagong	14,479	12,873	5,696	16,774	0	0	39	14	139	29,647	20,175	153	39
	Khulna	1,227	3,359	860	391	23	12	2,545	42	309	3,762	2,110	351	2,545
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23,098</b>	<b>21,639</b>	<b>8,394</b>	<b>17,623</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3,982</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>666</b>	<b>39,274</b>	<b>31,517</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>3,982</b>
Increase in January to December 2018	Rajshahi	46	2.52	56	3.5	0	0	74	3.33	0	6	102	3.33	74
	Dhaka	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Chittagong	520	401	205	142	0	0	0	0	0	543	725	0	0
	Khulna	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,000	0	192	0	0	192	5,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>403.52</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>145.5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5074</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>195.33</b>	<b>5,074</b>
Total December 2018	Rajshahi	7,429	5,399	1,870	459	2	0	921	40	151	5,857	9,301	191.33	921
	Dhaka	9	11.05	24	3	0	0	551	1	67	14	33	68	551
	Chittagong	14,999	13,274	5,901	16,916	0	0	39	14	139	30,190	20,900	153	39
	Khulna	1,227	3,359	860	391	23	12	7,545	42	501	3,762	2,110	543	7,545
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23,664</b>	<b>22,043</b>	<b>8,655</b>	<b>17,769</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9,056</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>39,823</b>	<b>32,344</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>9,056</b>

**Table 21: Regaining of properties of the landless and marginal farmers from illegal possessors**

Description		Won in the Movement for Own Land and Quantity of Regained Land			Won in the Movement against Commercial Shrimp and Quantity of Regained Land			Recover Inheritance Property			
		No. of Movement	Amount of land (Acre)	Beneficiary	No. of Movement	Amount of land (Acre)	Amount of Water Bodies (Acre)	Beneficiary	No. of Movement	Amount of land (Acre)	No. of Movement
Up to December 2017	Rajshahi	13	262.78	615	0	0	0	0	95	11.78	67
	Dhaka	4	19	461	0	0	0	0	4	3.7	10
	Chittagong	22	892	1063	0	0	0	0	57	6.16	42
	Khulna	18	135.27	250	59	1,176	1,122	8,028	18	2.35	23
	<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>1309.05</b>	<b>2389</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>1176</b>	<b>1122</b>	<b>8028</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>23.99</b>	<b>142</b>
Increased establishing of rights	Rajshahi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	69	5.01	45
	Dhaka	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Chittagong	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	4.38	27
	Khulna	0	0	0	8	6	0	0	15	0.79	8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>10.18</b>	<b>80</b>
Total December 2018	Rajshahi	13	262.78	615	0	0	0	0	164	16.79	112
	Dhaka	4	19	461	0	0	0	0	4	3.7	10
	Chittagong	22	892	1063	0	0	0	0	98	10.54	69
	Khulna	18	135.27	250	67	1182	1122	8028	33	3.14	31
	<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>1309.05</b>	<b>2389</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>1182</b>	<b>1122</b>	<b>8028</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>34.17</b>	<b>222</b>

**Table 22: Issue of mobilisation/struggle**

Issue of Collective mobilisation /Struggle	Issue raised by organisation of women/men	Division wise movement/struggle in-2018					No. of movement won					Ongoing movement December 2018
		Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chittagong	Khulna	Total no. of movement in current year	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chittagong	Khulna	Total No. of movement won	
<b>Movement on stopped Violence against women:</b>	Women	204	28	263	37	<b>532</b>	192	24	257	29	<b>502</b>	30
Violence against women such as dowry, divorce, polygamy, rape, physical assault, kidnapping, religious fundamentalisms and religious indictment	Men	98	1	129	14	<b>242</b>	91	1	130	14	<b>236</b>	6
<b>Religious Fundamentalisms</b>	Women	2	0	1	5	<b>8</b>	2	0	1	3	<b>6</b>	2
	Men	3	1	1	0	<b>5</b>	3	1	1	0	<b>5</b>	0
<b>Establishment of rights on local natural resources:</b>	Women	11	27	18	8	<b>64</b>	10	27	16	6	<b>59</b>	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	36	21	29	20	<b>106</b>	29	21	27	12	<b>89</b>	17
<b>Resistance against corruption:</b>	Women	32	8	11	7	<b>58</b>	26	8	11	3	<b>48</b>	10
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	29	5	48	8	<b>90</b>	27	5	48	7	<b>87</b>	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>662</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>47</b>
	<b>Men</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>26</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>1,105</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>1,032</b>	<b>73</b>

**Table 23-A: Opinion Sharing, dialogue between landless group & Government Authority-Elected Bodies on following Issue**

Description	Initiative by Government/Group	Natural Resource (land & water body)	Commercial shrimp Aquaculture	Local Development	Health	Education	Agriculture	Violence on Women	Paddy Harvesting	False Cases	Religious Fundamentalisms	Law and Order situation	Total
										and Harassment			
Deputy Commissioner	Govt.	6	0	7	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	4	18
	Group	46	0	15	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	73
Upazila Land Administration	Govt.	131	0	2	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	140
	Group	324	4	8	0	0	23	0	0	0	0	0	359
Education Authority	Govt.	0	0	162	11	77	0	0	0	0	0	0	250
	Group	0	0	58	9	281		12	2				362
Health Authority	Govt.	0	0	4	129	19							152
	Group	2	0	1	239	2		11					255
Upazila Administration (UNO)	Govt.	174	0	177	3	26	7	11		7		43	448
	Group	350	0	454	14	56	4	77		11	2	46	1014
Police Administration	Govt.	65	0	29			9	85		172	1	90	451
	Group	58	0	67			13	130		219	4	65	556
Parliament Member	PM	16	0	65				20		9		10	120
	Group	0	0	23			1	1				7	32
Union Perished	UP	71	0	405	8		3	77	5	58	2	23	652
	Group	176	0	436	18	5	8	149	11	93	3	351	1250
<b>Total</b>	Government and elected Authority	463	0	851	151	122	26	194	5	246	3	170	2231
	<b>Group</b>	<b>956</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1,062</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>469</b>	3901
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1,419</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1,913</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>586</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>569</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>639</b>	6132

**Table 23-B: Opinion Sharing, dialogue between landless group and different Stakeholders on following Issue**

Description	Initiative by CBO's/ landless Group	Natural Resource (land & water)	Commercial shrimp Aquaculture	Local Govt. Corruption	Local Development	Health	Education	National/International Day Celebration	Violence on Women	False Cases and Harassment	Religious Fundamentalisms	Law and Order situation	Total
Political Party	Party	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	7
	Group	35	0	8	85	0	10	13	2	7	0	17	177
Press Club	Press Club	8	0	0	0	1	0	16	10	3	2	5	45
	Group	45	0	1	1	1		41	19	4	4	2	118
Bar Council (BC)	B.C	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	8
	Group	2	0	2	3	0	0	10	16	22	4	0	59
Women Organisation	WO	0	0	0	1		0	3	12	5	3	1	25
	Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	22	5	4	8	55
<b>Total</b>	Stakeholders	15	0	0	3	1	0	20	23	8	5	10	85
	<b>Group</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>27</b>	409
	<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>37</b>	494

Party = Political Party, B.C = Bar Council, and WO = Women Organisation