

Annual report 2019

NIJERA KORI





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খাসজমিতে
অবৈধ দখলদার
উচ্ছেদ করা
করতে হবে।

ভূমিহীন স্বাস্থিমাথা

Landless members in Saghata demand eviction of illegal occupiers of *khas* (government-owned) land through mobilisation.

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EXECUTIVE summary

Established in its present form in 1980, Nijera Kori is a social mobilisation focussed, activist NGO in Bangladesh. Since inception, Nijera Kori has worked in rural Bangladesh with the objective of building a strong autonomous organisation of the rural poor and deprived, rejecting micro-credit and other service delivery approaches. Composed of local-level landless groups, the landless organisation is a collective through which members develop themselves as critical citizens, mobilise for their rights and participate in the broader political and economic processes. At present, Nijera Kori is working in 1,168 villages, 147 unions, 31 upazilas and 14 districts.

This annual report presents the landless organisation's and Nijera Kori's key activities and achievements for the period of January to December 2019. Representative examples of achievements and events are also highlighted throughout the report. The first chapter of the report presents a brief overview of the history, mission, goals and objectives of the organisation.

The planned and achieved targets for the year are presented in the second chapter, while the third takes a more qualitative look at the programme's achievements in terms of four key outcomes. All relevant supporting data is presented in the annexe section.

The foundation of Nijera Kori's programme in any working area is the formation of landless groups. In 2019, 159 new groups were formed, with the inclusion of 3,068 new members. The conscientisation process for these groups involves regular meetings at various levels through which members critically discuss and analyse socio-political, economic and cultural issues impacting their lives through feminist and class perspectives, and take decisions regarding group activities. In the reporting year, 93,102 group meetings were organised.

As groups mature, they get involved with mobilisation activities to establish their rights as citizens and challenge corruption in government service delivery and social injustices. This involves filing RTI applications and participation in the legal process, cultural activities, advocacy and awareness building. Landless groups filed 137 new RTI applications to collect information regarding social safety-net programmes, local development projects, education and health services, existence of sexual harassment complaint committees in schools, *khas* land status and distribution, among other issues. They were party to 60 new cases, 77 percent of which were regarding violence against women. During the year, 35 cases from 2018 were resolved, with 32 in favour of the groups.

For capacity development of members, Nijera Kori facilitates trainings throughout the year on issues of human rights, discrimination, land rights, women's rights, patriarchy, fundamentalism, feminism, class, production systems etc. In 2019, 975 members participated in 46 core trainings and 1,168 members in 56 capacity building trainings.

Members, along with children and adolescents from members families and the communities, are also involved in raising awareness and challenging patriarchal norms and practices through cultural events. In 2019, they organised a total of 411 dramas and 228 *gana sangeet* (people's songs) performances. A new dimension of Nijera Kori's activities involves working with adolescents and children through engaging them in dialogues on issues such as sexual harassment and child marriage, and providing them with forums for expressing their creativity, including facilitating the formation of girls' football teams in religiously-conservative areas. They, alongside landless members, were also involved in 29 events as part of One Billion Rising day in 2019, including a marathon for girls and boys to raise awareness against child marriage and violence against women in Ramgoti.

Landless members also participated in various advocacy activities in 2019, including in 6,921 meetings with various government bodies and local representatives to express their demands. The growing ability of these groups to represent their communities and their recognition is evident from the fact that over forty percent of these meetings were initiated by the authorities themselves.

The long-term results of Nijera Kori's activities are evaluated in terms of four outcomes: a. Collective action and access over natural resources; b. Ensuring accountability and representation; c. Women and girls' empowerment; and d. Challenging fundamentalism through mass awareness and advocacy networks.

Firstly, in terms of collective action, it is seen that groups were successful in 94 percent of the 1,173 mobilisations undertaken in 2019.

This is indicative of not only the groups' strength in working areas but also the cumulative results of their activities. Groups are becoming increasingly capable of successfully establishing their rights over resources and services, and challenging injustices through strategies involving RTIs, legal cases, mobilisations and advocacy.

Access to natural resources, especially land, remains highly contested in rural Bangladesh, and forms a central part of group activities. Through mobilisation, groups were able to gain possession of 2,978 acres of land and 13 acres of waterbodies in 2019, as well as recover 9.75 acres of land as women's rightful inheritance.

Firstly, in terms of collective action, it is seen that groups were successful in 94 percent of the 1,173 mobilisations undertaken in 2019. This is indicative of not only the groups' strength in working areas, but also the cumulative results of their activities.

Access to land also translates to production on land, leading to increased food sufficiency and control over the production process. Groups cultivated paddy, pulse, fish and vegetables in recovered land in 2019, the total economic benefit of which was Tk 45,117,089 (USD 531,135). This benefit was shared by a total of 45,876 households. Food security of 33,946 households was ensured for four months, while 11,930 families benefited over the entire year from the produce.

Members also benefited from collective economic activities undertaken with group savings, which led to employment for 5,551 members and a total income of Tk 10,134,740 (USD 119,335). In 2019, 193 new groups started such collective initiatives.

In terms of the second outcome, a key dimension is increased representation of members in local government bodies. In 2019, 320 members participated in 276 elections of local institutions and committees and 186 were elected. One member was elected as a Union Parishad member. A further 177 were nominated for local level committees.

Landless members, through their regular activities, also monitored the government service delivery processes to ensure transparency and accountability. In 2019, 66,168 men and women received safety-net cards, including women from women-headed households, people with disabilities, and individuals from *dalit* and indigenous communities. The economic value of these services was Tk 146,018,350 (USD 1,724,988). 54 percent of the benefits was shared by women beneficiaries. Challenging corruption, which is highly endemic in Bangladesh, members were able to recover or save Tk 37,906,758 (USD 447,811).

Through participation in *shalish* as judges and observers, landless members also ensured justice in violence against women cases and land-related disputes. While *shalish* proceedings are traditionally controlled by local powerful elites, this participation of members has been key in ensuring equity and fairness in the informal dispute-resolution mechanism.

The cumulative effects of in-group consciousness development and activities challenging patriarchal norms have resulted in significant gains in terms of empowerment of women and girls, the third outcome. Now, within the organisation, 500 open committee posts (for which both men and women contest) are held by women. Outside the organisation, 70 women were elected in local level committee elections. Now, within the organisation, 500 open committee posts (for which both men and women contest) are held by women. Outside the organisation, 70 women were elected in local level committee elections.

These reflect both the confidence of women members to take up leadership roles, as well as the acceptance of their leadership within the organisation and the broader community.

Regular group activities also focus on violence against women as a critical intervention issue. In 2019, there were 867 mobilisations on such issues, through which groups were able to stop, prevent or ensure justice for 1,056 incidents of domestic violence, 322 sexual harassment incidents, 227 dowry and violence incidents, 92 bigamous marriages, 103 forcible divorces, 121 child marriages and ensure maintenance allowances in 123 incidents. Groups also filed 46 cases related to various forms of violence against women.

Women's empowerment is also reflected in the way member households view traditional gender roles. Because of long-term awareness building activities, there have been household-level changes. In 2019, 8,094 male members reported their participation in household chores, while women reported greater participation in household decisions, both of which challenge traditional gender norms.

Reproductive rights, a taboo in socially and religiously conservative rural Bangladesh, have also been added as a new dimension of Nijera Kori's work. Thus, from this year's report, data on decisions over conception, gynaecological healthcare, birth control etc. are also being collected.

In 2019 too, landless women were recognised through the Joyeeta Onneshone Bangladesh, a government programme which awards women for their exemplary experiences in various categories, including overcoming trauma, as successful mothers, and for entrepreneurial.

30 women landless members were selected for the Joyeeta Award at the Upazila Level, and 2 at the division level in Rangpur and Chattogram.

159

new groups
formed

1,173

collective
mobilisations

297.8

acres of land
recovered



Landless members from Khulna commemorating Karunamoyee Sarder's 29th death anniversary

Lastly, in terms of actions and advocacy against fundamentalism there are two dimensions to the landless organisation's activities. Because of their activities against fundamentalisms and religious-militancy, groups have been able to convince 1,032 students to enrol in mainstream education over madrasa education. Recognition of their activities, including 20 movements against fundamentalisms in 2019, is also reflected in the government authorities' invitations to landless members to participate in meetings about combatting fundamentalism and nomination of members in local anti-militancy committees.

At the same time, group activities regarding women's role, participation, mobility, access to resources, etc.—that is, activities directly related to the other outcomes—have been important to

challenge fundamentalist and patriarchal norms and practices, leading to changed outlooks within the landless groups and communities

The activities and outcomes described in this report reflect the continuity of Nijera Kori's programme throughout the years. The organisation has focussed on deepening coverage in existing working areas rather than expanding. The success of Nijera Kori's approach—compared to service delivery—is reflected in the increasing strength and capacity of members to participate critically in the political, economic, cultural and social spheres, the sustainability of their activities in establishing their rights, the changes in discriminatory power structures in their communities and the economic benefits from these activities leading to improved lives and livelihoods of members.

At a glance

Nijera Kori is a social mobilisation focussed, activist NGO in Bangladesh. 'Nijera Kori', in English, means 'We do it ourselves'. Nijera Kori in its present form was reorganised in 1980.

The organisation believes in creating a strong, autonomous organisation of the rural poor (the landless organisation, formed of local level landless groups), so that they are able to assert their rights and ensure their entitlements as citizens, rejecting the use of micro-credit or any other service delivery approach. It is guided by the belief 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. The staff think of themselves as facilitating agents whose main goal is to support the collective efforts of the poor.

Nijera Kori primarily works with landless rural people whose main source of livelihood is the selling of their labour. It also prioritises the involvement of the indigenous communities of Bangladesh within its programme. From 2018, Nijera Kori expanded its target population to also include those who are differently-abled.

In sum, Nijera Kori aims to work with those who live under extreme poverty, deprivation and whose basic human rights and needs are largely ignored by the society and the state.

The defined target population is faced with multidimensional constraints. Economically, they rely on direct or indirect sale of labour power to meet their needs but lack bargaining power.

Nijera Kori is guided by the belief that poverty can be addressed through the strength and capacity of those living in poverty

In political terms, they rarely have any voice in local or national, informal or formal structures of decision-making. Socially, they are constrained by powerful norms and beliefs which seek to legitimise their disenfranchisement and prevent them from questioning the status quo. These include cultural norms and practices, which are particularly evident in undermining the rights and position of women and girls.





Mission, Vision, Objective

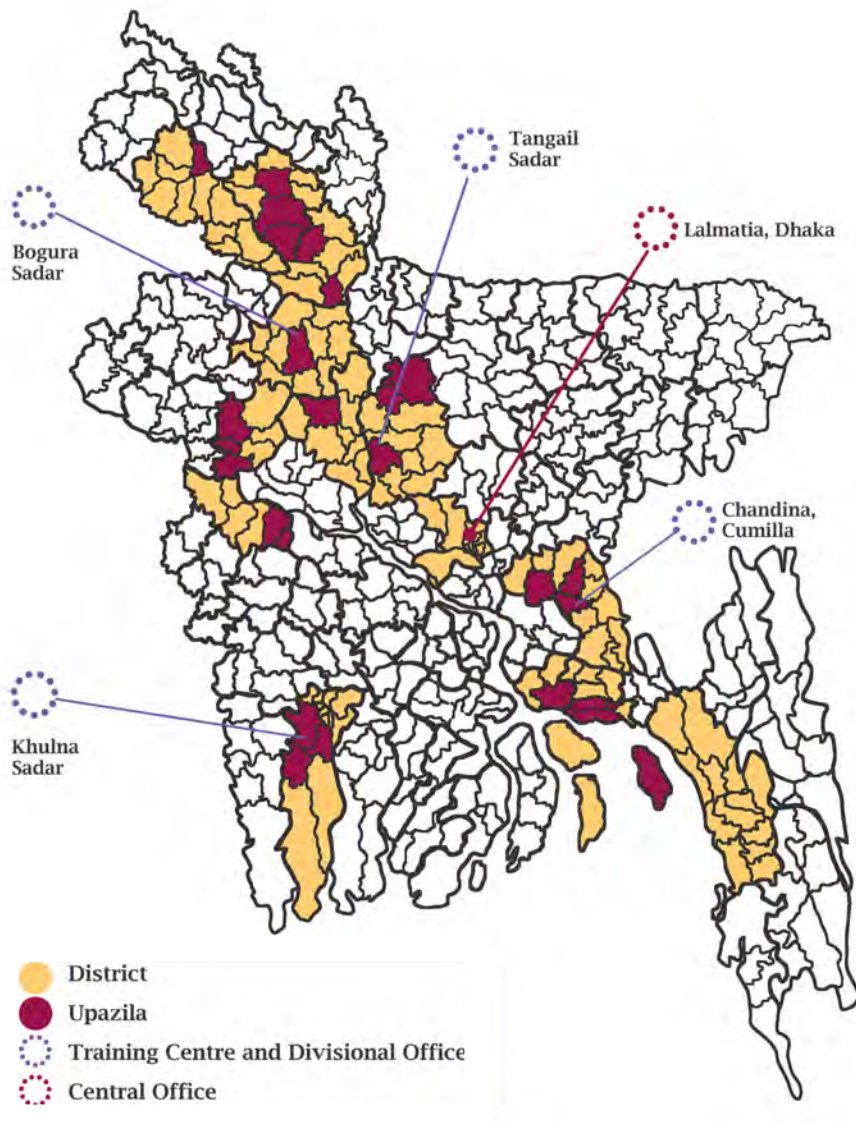
Nijera Kori's **mission** is to empower the rural excluded women and men through facilitating the formation of their own independent landless groups and supporting them through awareness raising and capacity building initiatives, so that they can take up challenges for a better life for themselves and their immediate community, and establish their rights over the institutions that decide on the allocation of natural resources and services.

Nijera Kori's **goal** is to create a society free from oppression and deprivation in all their manifestations, including in terms of class and gender. 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 community, regional and national levels, encompassing the socio-economic and political spheres.

Nijera Kori's **objective** is to raise awareness and unite the rural poor and excluded, empower them to voice their opinions, and to involve them in the decision-making processes.

Where we work

At present, Nijera Kori is working in 1,168 villages, 147 unions, 31 upazilas and 14 districts in Bangladesh (Annexe B, Table-1). This covers the administrative divisions of Dhaka, Rajshahi, Chattogram and Khulna*. Rather than expanding into other parts of Bangladesh Nijera Kori, at present Nijera Kori plans to continue working within the existing working areas, deepening its coverage within them. In these areas, there are 11,026 landless groups with a total membership of 223,773, of whom 125,378 are women and 98,395 are men.



14
districts

31
upazilas

147
unions

1,168
villages

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF NIJERA KORI

Social mobilisation

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, rather than depending on others to act on their behalf.

Gender equality

Nijera Kori recognises that patriarchy perpetuates inequality, injustice and exclusion of women and girls. Thus, they face gender-specific forms of discrimination and violence, restrictions in terms of mobility and discriminations within the labour market. Nijera Kori also believes that male-female relations need not be inherently antagonistic, and men can become allies in the struggle against patriarchy.

Autonomy

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.

Partnership

The organisation believes in the 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, which also promotes participatory decision-making and accountability.

Democracy

Participatory democracy shapes Nijera Kori's management structure and decision-making process. Nijera Kori aims to infuse democratic principles in the management of the people's organisation. Nijera Kori believes that democratic management is key to the successful establishment of the rights of the poor.

Organisational structure

The overall governance of the organisation rests with the General Body (Annexe 1: Organogram of Nijera Kori), composed of 39 members, which elects a Governing Body every two years.

The role of the Governing Body is to ratify policies and programmes, evaluate progress reports, approve audited financial reports and budgets, and appoint the Coordinator who is responsible for coordinating the overall programmes and management.

For linking the grassroots, Nijera Kori has a structure consisting of 13 *anchals* (area) and 29 *upakendras* (sub-centre). Each area office has 3-4 sub-centres with female and male field staff, who live collectively in the centres. The Dhaka Office consists of the office of the Coordinator, the Documentation and Communication team, the Central Team, finance and administrative sections, and other support staff.*

** For further details about the organisational governance and decision-making structure, see the 'About Us' section at www.nijerakori.org*

ACTIVITIES

2019



159

new groups were
formed

Organisation building

The formation of groups (*shamity*) at the village level is the starting point of Nijera Kori's programme in an area. When it decides to work in a new village, its programme organisers carry out participatory analysis to identify households which fall within the target group. Each organiser takes responsibility for overseeing around 55-60 groups in a village area. They act as catalysts for group formation and training, and once groups begin to function, households from neighbouring areas or villages usually come forward themselves to form their own groups.

Initially, groups are formed separately for women and men, with each group consisting of 16-30 members. The reason for formation of separate women's and men's groups is to ensure that 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 members are more aware, receptive and able to work together as equals, committees are formed with both male and female representation.

Plans and activities

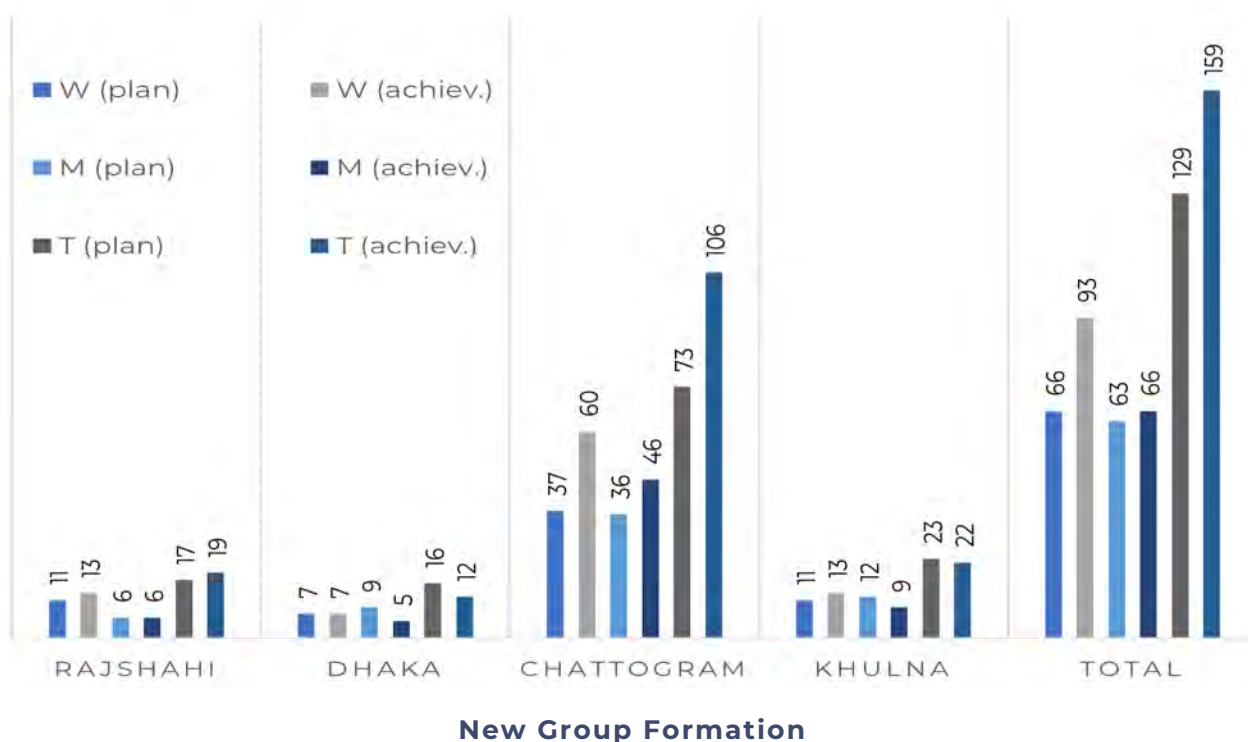
In 2019, a total of 159 new groups were formed, of which 93 were women's groups and 66 were men's groups. The target for new group formation for the year was 129 (66 for women, and 63 for men). So, the achievement rate was 123 percentage of plan. This was because, in Noakhali char areas in Chattogram, due to collective mobilisations for establishing land rights in 2019, more people from landless communities were influenced to join the groups. It is also noteworthy that 41 percent more women's groups were formed than men's groups, indicating that women are seeing incorporation in the landless organisation as meaningful to their lives. As of end of 2019, the number of active landless groups is 11,026 (Annexe B, Table 2).

The target for inclusion of new members for 2019 was 3,159 (1,549 women and 1,610 men) through formation of landless groups. Through this process, 3,068 new members joined the awareness and mobilisation activities of the landless groups, which is 97 percentage of plan. The number of landless members at the end of 2019 was 223,773, consisting of 125,378 women and 98,395 men (Annexe B, Table 3).

Group meetings

Regular group meeting of members is an integral part of the process of developing critical consciousness. Weekly, bi-weekly or monthly, members meet to discuss activities and formulate working plans. Group meetings are also forums for analysing a range of subjects, from members' personal lives to broader political, social, cultural and economic issues. For many villagers, this is the first exposure to the idea that they have rights as citizens and human beings, as well as to issues of gender roles and women's rights. Through regular group meetings members continue to enhance their level of awareness and seek promotion from primary to secondary and tertiary levels.

Landless committee meetings are also held by landless groups at village, area and divisional levels to review achievements, identify problems and decide on 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 visit





Total
37,974
30,941
Women
21,563
18,120
Men
16,411
12,821

Total
25,682
19,981
Women
16,350
11,893
Men
9,332
8,088



Khulna

Total
33,811
29,923
Women
22,003
19,345
Men
11,808
10,578



Rajshahi

Total
14,627
12,257
Women
9,008
6,916
Men
5,619
5,341



Dhaka

Planned meetings
 Actual meetings

other unions for short periods in exchange programmes for evaluating their performance and exchanging experiences.

Besides regular group meetings, landless members also participate in representative meetings, joint group meetings and annual group meetings. In these, representatives from different groups in a working area meet to take strategic decisions related to the organisation and issue-based mobilisations.

Joint group meetings of groups from three or four adjacent villages are organised, especially when some members in these villages have to seasonally migrate to other areas, to ensure continuity of group discussions.

Finally, each group has one annual group meeting to review activities, formulate group

plans and elect leaders.

Plans and activities

In 2019, landless members participated in 93,102 group meetings, against a planned target of 112,094 (83 percentage of plan). Group meetings are either initiated by staff of Nijera Kori or by the groups themselves.

Total group meetings:

93,102

Women's meetings:

56,274

Men's meetings:

36,828

The planned target for staff-initiated group meetings was 58,533 and for group-initiated meetings was 53,561. The achievements for the two were 43,334 and 48,768 respectively (Annexe B, Table 5). On average, group meetings were attended by 13.6 women and 10.4 men.

Immediately after the national elections of December 2018, landless groups could not conduct regular group meetings. At the same time, due to floods in northern Bangladesh,

regular activities of some groups could not be conducted. Primarily for these two reasons, the achievement for group meetings has been less than the planned target in 2019.

Landless groups also organised 607 representative meetings (82 percentage of plan), 2,142 joint group meetings (106 percentage of plan), and 5,857 annual group meetings (89 percentage of plan) in 2019 (Annexe B, Table 6).



Upazila Committee:

The Upazila Committee is formed with 21 members when at least one-third of the unions in an upazila have been covered. Annual conventions of the committees are held 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 3 upazila committees.

Area Committee:

The Area Committee is an interim committee with 11 members which coordinates the activities of village committees in a specific area until the conditions for forming a union or upazila committee have been met. Its tasks include arranging meetings of representatives to organise campaigns on specific issues. There are currently 32 area committees

Union Committee:

The Union Committee is formed with 13 members when two-thirds of the villages (at least groups in the village must exist if village committees are absent) are covered in the union. There are currently 21 union committees.

Village Committee:

The Village Committee consists of 7 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 meets once a month. There are currently 282 village committees.

Group

Group federation and committee structures

Nijera Kori emphasises the need to strengthen organisational capacity through a phased process of federation. Groups graduate by stages as coverage expands at each level. Committees are only established when a majority of targeted households in an area are incorporated.

At times, to give impetus to organisational activities, members decide to form *ad-hoc* coordination committees called area committees in areas where membership coverage is less than two-thirds.

Plans and activities

In 2019, 5 new area committees were formed: 4 in Rajshahi and 1 in Chattogram.

At present, 32 area committees are active.

Principles and roles of committee structures

- **Democratically elected for one year at annual conference of group members**
- **Gender equity in participation and representation**
- **Forums for decision-making and evaluating learning through a process of review**
- **Accountable through leadership structure, annual conference, and regular discussions**
- **Leadership role in social movements and action programmes at local level**
- **Forums for solving internal issues and facilitating coordination of group activities**
- **Platform for conducting liaison with other organisations to generate greater impact**

In 2019, 2,694 village committee meetings and 252 union committee meetings were organised against a plan of 2,942 and 239 respectively.

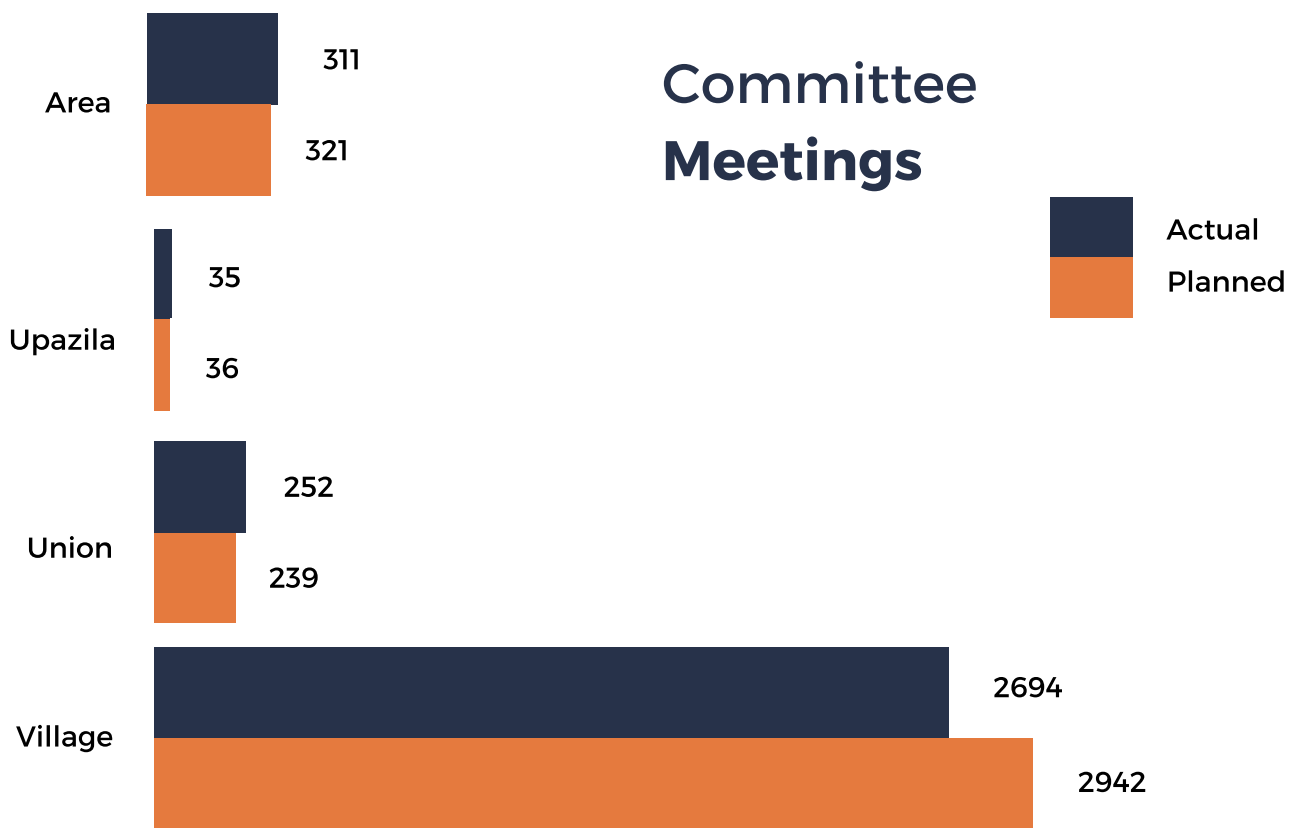
Thus, the achievement for village and union level committee meetings against planned targets were 92 percentage and 105 percentage respectively.

The planned number of meetings for area-level committees was 321 and for upazila level committees was 36. During the year, 311 area committee meetings and 35

upazila committee meetings could be held—that is, 97 percentage of plan for both.

Besides regular meetings, these committees also organise annual conventions through which committee members are elected through a democratic process.

In 2019, 282 village committee conventions, 21 union committee conventions, 3 upazila committee conventions and 27 area committee conventions were held according to plan (Annexe B, Table 7).



282

village committee conventions

21

union committee conventions

27

area committee conventions

At present, there are 6 watch committees. In 2019, a total of 56 watch committee meetings were organised.

Watch committees

For building effective monitoring and information dissemination systems at the grassroots level, watch committees are formed at the union level with 30 members. Each committee is then divided into 6 sub-committees each composed of five members. The subcommittees are formed to cover education, health, access to natural resources (land and water), local development and good governance, religious fundamentalisms, and gender equality.

Group members who are willing and able to contribute their time voluntarily and have the capacity to monitor the issues are selected as watch committee members. 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.

At present, there are 6 watch committees. In 2019, a total of 56 watch committee meetings were organised.

Group savings

As groups gain experience, they take on a range of additional activities such as group savings. Group savings are intended to reduce members' vulnerability to emergency credit needs and dependence on professional moneylenders.

The amount contributed to the collective savings fund and the utilisation of funds is decided by each group, considering the ability of the poorest members. Group savings are also used for undertaking collective economic activities as well as for partly covering costs of landless conventions, legal support of members, workshops, trainings and mobilisation activities. Nijera Kori encourages its groups to save their money in a bank account, partly to familiarise them with banking procedures.

Watch Committee Areas

Number of Meetings

Paiska union,
Dhaka division

11

Sahas union,
Khulna division

9

Char Jubelee union,
Chattogram division

10

Saghata union,
Rajshahi division

9

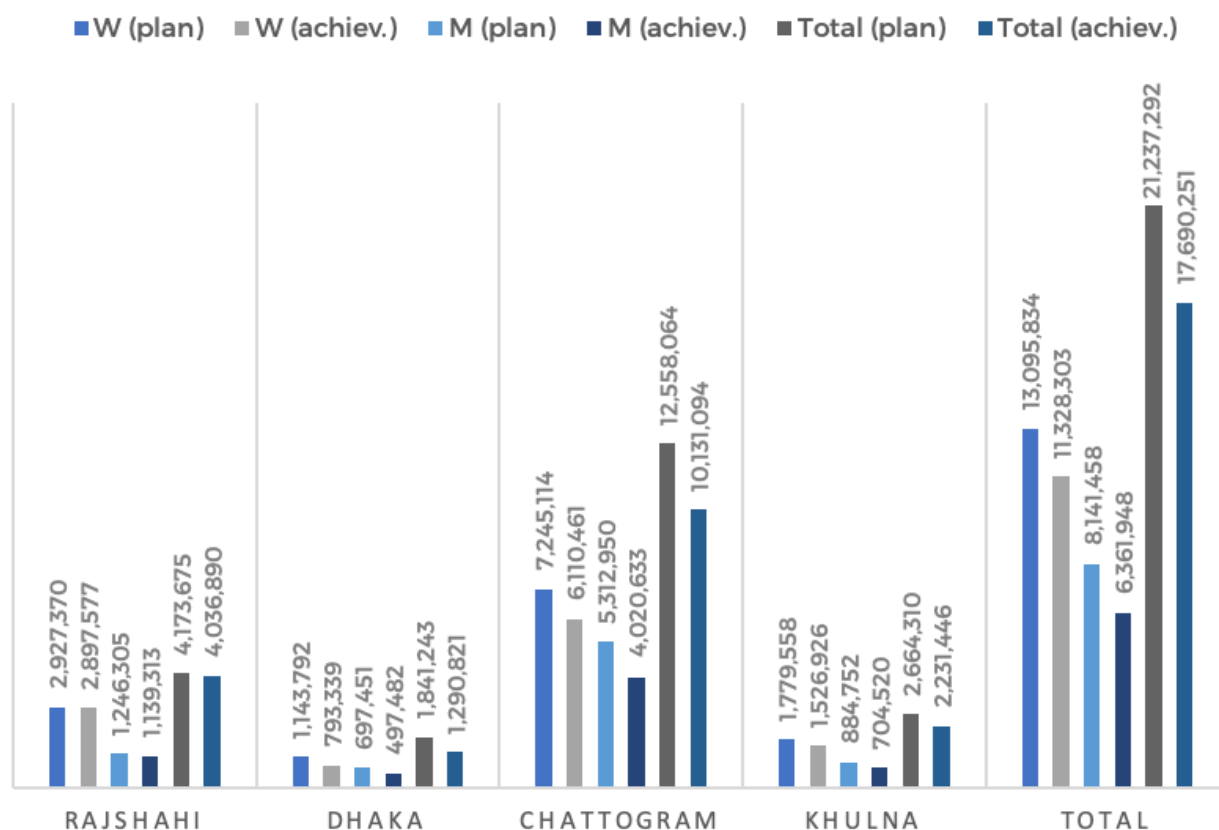
Mahammad union,
Chattogram division

8

Pairabandha union,
Rajshahi division

9

Group Savings



Plans and activities

In 2019, compared to the plan of saving Tk 21,237,292 (USD 250,065), groups saved a total of Tk 17,690,251 (USD 208,300), which is 83 percentage of plan. Women's groups saved Tk 11,328,303 (USD 133,389), while men's groups saved Tk. 6,361,948 (USD 74,910).^[1]

In terms of opening new bank accounts, the target for 2019 was 95. However, during the year 240 new bank accounts (162 for women's groups and 78 for men's groups) were opened for collective savings of groups. Thus, as of 2019, there are a total of 3,666 bank accounts for group savings: 2,529 for women's groups and 1,137 for men's groups (Annexe B, Table-9). At present, 41 percentage of women's groups and 26 percentage of men's groups have bank accounts.

The steadily growing percentage of groups willing to collectively save and the high achievement of opening new bank accounts are indicative of the willingness of landless groups to enhance savings management mechanisms and engage in collective economic activities.

During the same period, based on the decisions of the groups themselves, Tk 6,805,876 (USD 80,138) was distributed for various purposes among members, mostly for input costs of agricultural production. This reduced the dependence of landless members on moneylenders and micro-credit institutions.

The total savings of landless groups in four divisions at the end of 2019 increased by 11 percentage to Tk 112,351,721 (USD 1,321,785) from the previous year's Tk 101,467,346 (USD 1,194,762) (Annexe B, Table-10).

[1] All conversions to USD are rounded approximates.

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RTI APPLICATIONS

2019

29

Social safety-net programme

1

Education

59

Sexual harassment complaint committee

4

Agriculture

1

Local institutions

15

Local development projects

13

Healthcare services

2

Fisheries dept. (on amount of fish fries to be given)

12

Khas land

1

Brick kiln EIA

In 2019, 60 new cases were filed. Of the new cases filed in 2019, 77 percentage were regarding issues related to violence against women.

Right to information

In addition to 21 RTI application pending from 2018, landless groups filed 137 new applications asking for information from government bodies and institutions in 2019. These applications were filed for information regarding social safety-net programmes, local development projects, education and health, existence of sexual harassment complaint committees in schools, *khas* land status and distribution, among others.

During the same period, groups also received information from the 21 pending applications and 110 new applications. Groups also received information from 5 applications for which appeals had been filed and 1 for which a complaint had been filed on non-receipt of information earlier.

In total, landless groups received information from 137 applications, and 21 applications are still pending (Annexe B, Table-14).

Legal support

Till end of 2018, landless members were involved in the legal processes of 632 cases, both criminal and civil in nature. Of these, 210 were related to issues of violence against women. In 2019, 60 new cases were filed. Of the new cases filed in 2019, 77 percentage were regarding issues related to violence against women. Of the 35 resolved cases in 2019, judgements in 32 were given in favour of the landless groups. One of the cases in Dhaka, in which judgement was given in favour of the groups in 2019, was later appealed against by the accused in January 2020.

In 2019, appeals were filed in four cases. Two of the appeals were filed in Rajshahi and Dhaka division on cases related to violence against women where the accused were given bail, even though the cases are non-bailable.

At the end of 2019, the number of legal cases came up to 658. 240 of these were criminal cases, 176 of a civil nature and 242 on violence against women (Annexe B, Table-15).

Capacity building

After selection, new members are offered a basic training course in social development issues as well as group dynamics. As groups mature, more advanced training is provided. Workshops are organised at regular intervals at the village level. These are either about organisational matters or on local issues and perceived needs of the area. At the basic level, trainings are provided to female and male members separately, while at the 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 levels of such trainings, they 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 of organisation building. Eventually as the groups continue to mature, joint sessions are organised at higher and/or advanced levels to create an environment of reciprocal interactions, to develop greater understanding and overcome gender bias.

Trainings and workshops provide members with the opportunity to reflect on and analyse their individual and collective problems as well as the larger political, economic and gender issues. They are also forums for provision of information about rights and entitlements, practical skills for income-generating purposes, legal expertise, and building leadership skills. The channel of information flow starts with designated training courses, lasting between a day to 3 or 4 days. At weekly group meetings, trained members disseminate what they have learnt.

Participants are selected by their groups based on their commitment and aptitude. Usually, the same members tend to get selected and thus develop as the leaders of their groups.

Members selected for training at different levels come together to form a training forum to provide village-based refresher courses to ensure retention and facilitate dissemination.

Plans and activities

In 2019, a total of 46 core trainings (basic, advanced and higher selection) were organised in which 975 landless members (527 women and 448 men) participated against a plan of 47 trainings and participation of 995 members.

Trainings and workshops provide members with the opportunity to reflect on and analyse their individual and collective problems as well as larger political, economic and gender issues.

From the second and third quarters of the year, landless groups in Paikgacha area, the largest area in the Khulna division, were continuously involved in activities against expansion of commercial shrimp farming. Thus, one training could not be held in Khulna.

Besides core trainings, capacity building trainings on laws and policies, khas land distribution, advocacy, land rights and land use, leadership development, feminism, family law, government service etc. are also organised for landless members throughout the year. In 2019, 56 such trainings (against plan of 56) were organised in which 1,168 members participated against a plan of 1,173 members (Annexe B, Table-16).

70 refresher trainings (follow-ups) were also organised in 2019 in which 1,728 members participated (Annexe B, Table-17).

Workshops, which are day-long, were also organised on issues including gender, patriarchy, local government, women leadership development, land rights, use of RTI Act, etc. In 2019, a total of 231 such workshops were organised with

participation of 5,914 members (3,568 women and 2,346 men) (Annexe B, Table-18).

During the same time, 94 Nijera Kori staff received capacity building trainings on advocacy, monitoring and reporting, rights-based approach and mobilisation (for new recruits), cultural activities as well training of trainers (ToT) (Annexe B, Table-19).

Khas land distribution law, policy

8 trainings
155 participants
(f: 78, m: 77)

Advocacy, campaigning for khas land & water

2 trainings
30 participants
(f: 11, m: 19)

Religious fundamentalisms and impact

4 trainings
80 participants
(f: 46, m: 34)

Women's land rights; gender roles

5 trainings
98 participants
(f: 58, m: 40)

Leadership development

6 trainings
134 participants
(f: 70, m: 64)

Capacity building

56 trainings
1,168 participants
(f: 643, m: 525)

Feminism & women leadership

2 trainings
40 participants
(f: 21, m: 19)

Family law, policy & women's rights

6 trainings
135 participants
(f: 83, m: 52)

Land use policy

9 trainings
193 participants
(f: 110, m: 83)

Gender & engendering methodologies

5 trainings
113 participants
(f: 58, m: 55)

Government service policy

9 trainings
190 participants
(f: 108, m: 82)



The 54 cultural groups of the landless organisation, active in all divisions, each year organise drama performances, musical events, long marches and cultural discussions

Cultural activities

The 54 cultural groups of the landless organisation, active in all divisions, each year organise drama performances, musical events, long marches and cultural discussions on specific themes to raise collective awareness of communities.

Nijera Kori believes cultural activities are an integral part of mobilisation process. These events are also expressions of group solidarity and forums where women and girls get to participate in public events.

Cultural trainings and discussions are also organised throughout the year in preparation of these cultural activities by group members.

Plans and activities

During the reporting period, landless groups organised 50 cultural discussions, 411 drama performances, 9 *padajatras* (marches) 228 events of performing *gana sangeet* (people's songs) and 130 events of children and adolescents' drama performances. The achievement for all the activities was close to or more than the plan.

Throughout the year, 549 cultural meetings were also held (Annexe B, Table-20). For capacity development, groups participated in 82 basic cultural trainings and 39 advanced cultural trainings compared to planned targets of 85 and 40 respectively (Annexe B, Table-16).

Education-related activities

Due to absence of public schools in many remote areas, children of 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 have been demanding for the establishment of schools closer to their homes, and were also active in convincing parents of the importance of education to motivate them to send their children, especially girls, to schools. In several working areas of Nijera Kori, where the government has not yet responded, the

the landless organisations have taken the initiative to establish schools with their own resources.

They now run 30 primary schools, 4 junior high schools and 1 high school in Char Jabbar. In 2018, enrolment at these schools was 47,046. In 2019, the total enrolment was 38,392, with 18,886 girls and 19,506 boys. While there was a decrease in the number of students enrolled in primary and junior high schools, the number of students enrolled in the high school increased by 67 percent. The decrease in primary-level students was principally due to relocation of landless households to other char areas.

Students Enrolled

Primary school

21,606

Girls: 12,301

Boys: 9,305

Junior high school

11,428

Girls: 5,446

Boys: 5,982

High school

5,358

Girls: 1,139

Boys: 4,219





Children and adolescents

To sustain and strengthen the landless organisation and group members, Nijera Kori in 2018 decided to include the younger population within its activities. Nijera Kori, in 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 also led to new activities with adolescents, such as formation of young girls' football teams in rural areas, open platforms for children's cultural participation and public events where the youth engage in creative activities. Children and adolescents in some areas have also formed monitoring and prevention

committees to stop sexual harassment and child marriages. Till now, four Child Marriage, Violence Against Women, and Sexual Harassment Prevention Committees are active.

Plans and activities

In 2019, adolescents participated in workshops and dialogues, football and karate training for young girls and other cultural performances. In each division, one workshop on sexual and reproductive health rights and one on gender-based violence were organised. In these workshops, 220 children and adolescents (124 girls and 96 boys) participated.

Besides workshops, 572 children and adolescents (387 girls and 185 boys) also participated in 12 dialogue and opinion sharing meetings on gender discrimination and sexual harassment and 14 dialogues regarding child marriage and violence against women. Against a planned target of 105, children and adolescents performed in plays at 130 events throughout the year (Annexe B, Table-21).

The formation of girls' football teams is a relatively new activity of Nijera Kori which has started in Noakhali and Dhanbari.

Throughout the year, training activities and friendly matches were organised and a professional athlete conducted training camps for these girls. Similarly, karate lessons for young girls has been started in Dhanbari, and training continued throughout the year.

Children and adolescents also participated in various advocacy and awareness raising activities throughout 2019, including One Billion Rising events, a marathon rally, and two cultural protests.

Children's cultural protests against child marriage

On December 22 and 26, in view of the ongoing school vacation, landless groups in Daudkandi and Rasulpur of Cumilla working area decided to arrange cultural events where boys and girls engaged with the child marriage prevention committees to publicly express their demands against these practices and raise public awareness. The theme for the events was reflected in the slogan: "We will not marry as a child; we won't let others be married as children either."

On December 22, around 10 am, the event at Bitessar village of Daudkandi started with the rally of children and landless members, who circled the village and assembled at a field adjacent to the village market. The day before, two children had gone around the village announcing the programme and asking people to attend. Around 600 people, including 300 children attended.

The event started with public oaths by children, committing to not marry before the age of 18, to exercise their freedom of choice.



Event Highlight

Event highlight

Next, the parents who attended took an oath to not marry off their children before the legal age and to unite to stop sexual harassment and all forms of violence against women. The children performed songs, dance performances and a drama, all with messages of equality and against child marriage and other forms of injustice and discrimination.

The event at Rasulpur was held on December 26 around 2:30 pm. Here, 35 children and adolescents participated. The rally assembled at the fields of a Government Primary School, adjacent to a market. Over a thousand people, including around 400 children attended.

After the oath taking and performances, a drama on the theme of child marriage was performed jointly with the landless cultural group. A visiting team of 25 children from Chandina also attended the event and performed for the audience.

Overall, the two events underscored how effectively, given the opportunity, the children can be engaged in the awareness raising process. The adolescents also highlighted their keen understanding and commitment towards ending child marriage and sexual harassment and establishing equality for women. At the same time, such events are opportunities for these children, especially girls, to overcome their social barriers and engage in creative and cultural activities in public.

6,921

dialogues and opinion
sharing meetings with
government authorities
and elected bodies

Advocacy initiatives

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. One strategy by which Nijera Kori seeks to address this is through its advocacy activities, networks and like-minded civil society members/organisations, bureaucrats and media professionals. Participation of landless group members in these forums is actively encouraged and facilitated.

At the local level, in 2019, landless members participated in 6,921 dialogues and opinion sharing meetings with government authorities and elected bodies on issues regarding natural resource distribution and use, local development, health, education, agriculture, violence against women, fundamentalisms and law and order situations. 41 percent of these dialogues were initiated by the authorities themselves. These authorities/bodies included deputy commissioners, Upazila Land Administration, Education and Health authorities, UNO, police, parliament members and Union Parishad (Annexe B, Table-22).

Members also participated in 388 opinion sharing meetings with political parties, civil society groups and professional associations on the same issues (Annexe B, Table-23).

In addition to the opinion sharing meetings with government bodies representatives and civic groups, landless members and Nijera Kori staff jointly participated in various advocacy events throughout the year on issues such as gender, land use, and *khas* land distribution. Against a plan for 1,168 participants, 1,314 landless members and staff participated in 54 advocacy activities on these issues (Annexe B, Table-24).

The coordinator along with Nijera Kori staff and landless members also participated in various national level conferences and dialogues including on: prevention of sexual harassment and necessary measures; role of

NGOs in prevention of violence on women and children, public hearing on making Old Dhaka safe and free of risk of fire-related incidents, on post-election violence (included gang rape of a landless member); the Foreign Donation Act with the NGO Affairs Bureau; making the budget friendly for marginalised communities among others.

Internationally, the Coordinator participated in the “Gender Perspectives in South Asia” conference organised by Bread for the World in Sri Lanka, and two conferences—titled “Committee on World Food Security” and “Civil Society Mechanism on Food Security and Nutrition”—in Rome facilitated by ICCO.

Dialogue on prevention of sexual harassment with the NHRC

In 2009, in response to a writ petition, the Supreme Court of Bangladesh issued a set of guidelines with the aim of addressing sexual harassment at workplaces and educational institutions. However, after 10 years of the court’s judgement, the implementation of the guidelines has been extremely lax and scattered. Most educational institutions in the country have not only failed to create complaint committees, but many are not even aware of the directives at all. Meanwhile, instances of sexual harassment have only become more numerous.

In this context, the landless organisation of Nijera Kori in 2018 decided to prioritise the implementation of the court’s directives—primarily the formation of complaint committees in schools—in all working areas through the strategy of using the Right to Information Act (RTI) to collect information and mobilise to exert pressure on the authorities to ensure compliance.



Advocacy Highlights

From 2018 till 2019, landless groups in Dhaka, Chattogram, Rajshahi and Khulna have been successful in ensuring the formation of complaint committees in 338 schools. On February 6, 2019, at the initiative of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), a dialogue meeting on prevention of sexual harassment was organised. The meeting, chaired by then NHRC chairperson Kazi Reazul Hoque was attended by representatives from Nijera Kori, BNWLA, UNDP, Nari Progoti Shongho, Naripokkho, ActionAid, Broti as well as teachers and students from universities and migrant worker representatives. Government representatives from the labour ministry, education ministry and ministry of women and child affairs were also present.

During the open discussions, the subject of the 2009 guidelines was brought up. The Nijera Kori representative, presenting what the landless groups had been able to achieve, stressed that a sexual harassment law, as recommended by the court, was yet to be formulated. She also mentioned that most schools in the country had not formed complaint committees and were not even aware of the directive in many cases.

The NHRC chairperson agreed that there was a lack of initiative in implementing the directives of the High Court and added that a sexual harassment law needed to be formulated immediately. He also committed that the NHRC would take initiatives for drafting this law.

Women in agricultural production

On March 13, 2019, Nijera Kori's coordinator, participated as the chairperson of a seminar titled "Women's land rights, participation in agricultural production, and security" organized by the Association of Land Reform and Development (ALRD), a network partner of Nijera Kori. The seminar, organised at CIRDAP Auditorium in Dhaka, was attended by the member of parliament Rashed Khan Menon.

Speakers at the seminar, including ALRD's Deputy Director Rowshan Jahan Moni, Executive Director Shamsul Huda and Samakal's deputy editor Abu Sayeed Khan, pointed out how despite participation of almost a million women in agricultural production, they were still subject to stark discrimination.

While the percentage of women involved in agricultural production has been increasing every year, they are still deprived of their land rights. At the same time, violence against women, including incidents of rape, has been increasing. It was pointed out that the situation was even worse for indigenous women.

The speakers at the seminar called for increased solidarity, and the need for both sociocultural and legal reform to establish women's rights over land and as farmers, and to ensure their security in society.

One Billion Rising

One Billion Rising is the biggest global mass action to end violence against women in human history. The campaign began as a call to action based on the staggering statistic that 1 in 3 women on the planet will be beaten or raped during her lifetime. With the world population at 7 billion, this adds up to more than one billion women and girls.

One Billion Rising started its journey globally and in Bangladesh in 2013 and has been continuing to successfully campaign every



year since then through mobilisations, performances, discussions and advocacy. Nijera Kori and the landless groups has adopted One Billion Rising as a key part of its advocacy activities. Thus, besides national level campaigns to end violence against women, each year landless groups from all areas engage in marches, cycle rallies, public paintings, football games, mass gatherings and cultural events to subvert gender norms which seek confine women and demand an end to gender based violence in the country.

In 2019, landless groups participated in 29 such events, including a massive marathon in Ramgoti. Besides, these groups also conducted signature campaigns through which they collected 36,000 signatures in order to exert pressure on Upazila Executive Officers demanding an end to violence against women and child marriages and seeking justice.

Marathon to end violence against women

At the initiative of the adolescent platform of the landless organisation and Nijera Kori, a marathon was organised for campaigning for ending violence against women in Ramgoti. Children and adolescents participated in the marathon with the banner of "Marathon in protest of repression and violence against women". A total of 209 (girls: 112 and boys: 97) participated in the marathon of 2 kilometres.

During this, the adolescents stopped at different markets, schools and government sub-district offices to explain their message and demands. The elected city corporation mayor, upazila cooperative officers and teachers from different schools appreciated this event and expressed solidarity and support to stop sexual harassment, violence on girls and women, and child marriages.

Girls in Ramgoti participate in protest marathon against all forms of sexual violence



OUTCOME ANALYSIS

Broadly, the key impacts and outcomes of Nijera Kori and the landless groups' activities in 2019 can be categorised under four themes with inter-related dimensions

1

Collective action and access over natural resources

Organisation building through group formation, development of critical consciousness leading to collective action and establishment of control of land and water resources

2

Ensuring accountability and representation

Democratic participation in the structures of local governance as well as in the landless organisation structures, demanding accountability and transparency from government services, and ensuring justice through *shalish* proceedings

3

Women's and girls' empowerment

Gender justice in all spheres of life, including leadership and representation in landless committees and local government structures, participation in decision making processes, access to economic opportunities, action against all forms of gender-based violence, and establishment of equal rights

4

Challenging fundamentalisms through mass awareness and advocacy networks

Public engagement with network partners in cultural and advocacy activities regarding secular ideology, education, culture as well as development of linkages at the local level for monitoring of fundamentalist activities

Collective action and access to natural resources

Through the process of development of critical consciousness, knowledge about laws and policies and capacity for collective action, members of Nijera Kori's landless groups start to engage publicly on various issues related to their rights.

Group Stages and Autonomy

Landless groups are categorised according to their increasing capacity, maturity and understanding as primary, secondary or higher-level groups (Annexe B, Table- 4). In 2019, 72 groups graduated from primary to secondary and 17 from secondary to higher levels.

The third stage of group maturity 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 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.

6,601 groups

PRIMARY level

Groups at this level concentrate on organising, developing basic awareness and ensuring regular attendance at meetings. Group savings and account keeping are given importance.

3,839 groups

SECONDARY level

These groups have reached a level of critical awareness at which they can act on behalf of members of their class within the area, irrespective of whether they are group members or not. They have developed accountability and leadership skills and begun initiating collective action.

586 groups

HIGHER 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 and their leadership is established and accepted in the locality. They also ensure access to local and national resources for collective production or use.

Collective Mobilisation

Collective action and movements are undertaken by landless groups on a range of issues concerning their rights, including mobilisation for access to *khas* land and waterbodies, inheritance rights, against gender-based violence, fundamentalist activities and messages and demanding accountability from government institutions.

In 2019, groups undertook a total of 1,173 collective mobilisations. In 1,106 of them (94 percentage) of them, they were able to achieve their objectives and demands. Of the movements, 11.5 percent (135) were against corruption, 12.8 percent (151) regarding access to resources, 73.9 percent (867) regarding violence against women and 1.8 percent (20) against fundamentalist activities. It is also significant that in 777 movements (66 percent), women raised the issues, which were then taken on by the groups (Annexe B, Table-25). This indicates that within the organisation, women's groups are more active and vocal, and that their voice is receiving priority, since issues raised by them are being then developed into organisational mobilisations.

The majority of the movements were against different forms of violence against women, including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dowry, divorce, rape and physical assault. The fact that women are not only becoming more vocal against these forms of injustices, but that the groups are committing themselves in movements against such cases are both important indicators of progress towards establishment of gender justice.

The success of the groups in achieving their demands through mobilisation—manifest in immediate results and in challenging the broader structures of patriarchy, fundamentalism, inequalities and corruption—is also an indicator of the capacity of the groups to act as critical citizens who can collectively demand rights and challenge injustices within and for their communities. The groups are now able to act as a significant power base.

Access to land remains highly-contested, especially in rural Bangladesh, due to the influence and control of the politically powerful. Thus, the groups' success in terms of access to land and natural resources is a crucial dimension in which their strength is reflected. In 2019, groups waged 151 movements to establish rights over natural resources, 13 of which were still ongoing as of end of 2019.

Landless
organisation
undertook

1,173
mobilisations

94%
success rate

11.5%
cases against
corruption

12.8%
cases against
corruption

73.9%
cases on violence
against women

1.8%
cases against
fundamentalism(s)

CASE STUDY

Gang-rape of landless member for exercising her right to vote

Organisation mobilises for support and protests for ensuring justice

On the night after the 11th National Elections in Bangladesh, around 10-12 men cut the fences and entered the house of Parul Akhter of Subarnachar in Noakhali. The men tied up Parul's husband and children and dragged her outside, where she was assaulted and gang-raped. In an election which witnessed widespread incidents of irregularities including compulsion to vote for the nominee from the ruling party, Parul had dared disregard the threats of a party cadre and vote for the candidate of her choice a day before. When the news of this spread through the national media, the uproar was tremendous. The police and administration were bound to act, and arrests were made. Even then, there were attempts to shield the main accused and even to establish that the election had no link with the crime. The landless organisation, of which Parul is a member, also mobilised. The combined effect of national outrage and local mobilisation has yielded some results in the form of administrative action, but given similar incidents of subsequent gang rapes due to similar motives, a significant new dimension might be emerging—a result of the existing sense of impunity—in terms of tackling sexual violence and violence against women.

Parul Akhter, aged 36, is a member of the landless organisation of Madhyam Charbagya in Subarnachar, Noakhali. On the day of the election on December 30, 2018, she had gone to her designated polling centre. As an outspoken woman who believes in the ideals of democracy and political freedom, she was adamant in exercising her right to vote. At the voting centre Ruhul Amin, publicity affairs secretary of the Subarnachar Awami League and a former member of Char Jubilee Union Parishad—who was working as a polling

agent at the booths—and his associates stopped her and insisted that she vote for “boat”, the electoral symbol of the Awami League. When she retorted that she would cast her vote for the candidate of her choice, he tried to snatch the ballot paper from her. But Parul had already marked the “sheaf of paddy”, the symbol of the opposition BNP party, and put it inside the ballot box.

In a later interview with the National Human Right Commission (NHRC), Parul said: “I told the men that I will vote for who I want, and they said, ‘Leave now, you will be put in your place in the evening.’ Then Soheli said, ‘See you tonight.’” Soheli was one of the men Parul later recognised as one of her rapists.

The night after the election, on December 31 around 12:30 am, when Parul and her family consisting of her husband and four children had finished eating and gone to bed, they heard loud banging on their door. Voices outside claimed that they belonged to people from the police station. As she opened the door, 10-12 people rushed in, among them Soheli, who had made the threat a day earlier. She was dragged outside and gang-raped.

The men also took away Tk 40,000, some gold ornaments and other valuables with them. Parul's husband managed to take the bleeding Parul to the hospital sometime later.

Incidents of voter intimidation and other election-time irregularities such as ballot stuffing, preventing opposition participation, and even violence at polling centres are not new phenomenon in the context of Bangladesh irrespective of the party in power. In the days after the election, news reports of various irregularities surfaced from all over the country.

The name of the main accused, Ruhul Amin, was dropped from the charge sheet at one point. There were clearly some efforts to delink the case from its political context and to shield the party member.

The climate of the voting centre where Parul had cast her vote can also be judged from news reports later which highlighted how Ruhul Amin had been going around supervising voters and agents throughout the day. An assistant presiding officer, seeking anonymity, told a journalist that “polling agents did not let the voters go behind the curtain to cast their vote—and whoever was voting for any party but the ruling party was being made to vote on ‘boat’ on another ballot.” (Star Weekend, *The Daily Star*, January 18, 2019). But, despite the almost normalisation of electoral irregularities and violence, what happened in the case of Parul certainly marked a new dimension of politically-motivated violence.

As the news of what had happened spread through the national media, on January 6, 2019, Ruhul Amin was expelled from the Awami League. However, a NHRC team sent to investigate the matter, after concluding its investigation, claimed that the victim’s allegation of being raped for voting for BNP was not true—it apparently failed to establish any connection between the elections and the crime. This echoed the statement of Elias Sharif, the superintendent of police in Noakhali, who while confirming that the rape did happen, claimed that it was not related to voting. Even the Divisional Commissioner, on January 8, tried to link the rape to some “previous enmity”. The name of the main accused, Ruhul Amin, was dropped from the charge sheet at one point. There were clearly some efforts to delink the case from its political context and to shield the party member.

Alongside this national condemnation, the landless organisation too took up the matter. Standing by Parul, the organisation immediately called an emergency meeting when it learned of what had happened. They visited Parul in the hospital, and started to exert pressure to ensure that the case was taken by the police when her husband went to file it. The organisation also submitted a memorandum to the district commissioner and the police super after mass signature collection demanding justice.



Protesters holding placards expressing solidarity with rape survivor

Protest marches were organised in all working areas immediately, and it was decided that a big assembly would be organised on January 7, 2019 in Subarnachar. On the day of the assembly, people from all working areas assembled at Pankhar Bazar High School field. The Subarnachar upazila committee chairman Sejarul Haque Khokon chaired the assembly, and alongside the members, journalists, local students and teachers, Nijera Kori's coordinator Khushi Kabir, National Women's Lawyers Association's Salma Ali, and Mahmudul Hasan, an activist against sexual violence, were also present.

During the assembly, members spoke out decrying the gang-rape and demanding justice for Parul. An 80-year-old man, father of one of the accused in the rape, came up on stage, and demanded punishment for his son's actions: "My son is a rapist. I want him tried and hanged. I don't care whether he is hanged or he goes to hell." Fathers of seven other accused also got up on stage and declared that they want punishment for their son's crimes.

Khushi Kabir met with the local DC and SP to further advocate for proper investigation and justice. After the assembly, the people marched out in procession from the school field, through the area. After the incident, police have arrested many of the accused including Ruhul Amin. The government has allocated a plot of *khas* land for Parul, and has been more cooperative in helping her pursue justice. The NHRC's initial report which tried to claim that the rape had no connection with the events of the election day was met with country-wide with condemnation. The headmaster of Pankhar Bazar school made assurances that Parul's children would be guaranteed free education. Two lawyers have been engaged for her, who are currently closely following the investigation. At the same time, there have been attempts to pressure Parul to settle the case out of court.

While the widespread national publicity and condemnation and local level mobilisation

An 80-year-old man, father of one of the accused in the rape, came up on stage, and demanded punishment for his son's actions: "My son is a rapist. I want him tried and hanged. I don't care whether he is hanged or he goes to hell."

of the landless organisation has been able to achieve some immediate results so that the law enforcement and administration have been compelled to act, the incident has wider repercussions. It clearly marks a new dimension: that of open use of rape as a political weapon. Soon afterwards, more such cases were reported in the media, including that of a 48-year-old woman who was gang-raped on March 31 evening in Char Jabbar in Noakhalia because she had "campaigning for an upazila vice chairman candidate".

And while even in that case arrests have been made, the political and social climate where such incidents are increasing is concerning—that the rapists in the second case were so sure of impunity, political or otherwise, even after the first case was gaining such widespread condemnation. These wider cultural, political, governance and justice system factors need to be critically examined—alongside mobilisation to ensure justice, addressing those is crucial.

Access to natural resources: *khas* land and inheritance property

A central issue of the landless organisation's mobilisations is access to *khas* land and waterbodies. Although government-owned land and waterbodies, in policy, are there to be distributed among the landless, in practice, such land is usually controlled or occupied by politically influential people. Thus, for landless groups, gaining access to these common natural resources, getting them registered in their own names and keeping control over these resources against illegal occupation are significant achievements with implications for food security and livelihood.

In 2019, landless groups were successful in getting an additional 1.8 acres of *khas* land registered in their names and gain possession of a further 297.8 acres. In Rajshahi, members established control over 13 acres of waterbodies for use as common resources.

Through 130 movements, groups were also successful in recovering 9.75 acres of land as inheritance property. There were three movements for recovery of land legally owned by members, through which 0.08 acres of land was recovered, benefitting four

member households. Thus, in total, members gained access, control or registration of 322.43 acres of land and waterbody worth Tk 523,776,000 (USD 6,166,090). Through this, 328 households were benefited (Annexe B, Table-26). On the issue of land, groups were also party to 176 civil legal cases, nine of them filed in 2019. This shows how members have been active in demanding their rights through the legal process (Annexe B, Table-27).

An example from Rajshahi is indicative of the process through which members mobilised to gain access over land and waterbodies. Kumirdoho Beel on the bank of Mora Bangalee river is located at Jumarbari and Ghuridoho Unions, covering the two villages of Chinirpotol and Bangapar Village of Saghata Upazila under Gaibandha district in Rajshahi. This waterbody covers an area of 38.10 acres. Around 450 households of local landless fisher folks earned their living by fishing in this *beel* under the government's open waterbody policy of common use. In 2010, a locally powerful individual called Shamim Miah and his supporters illegally occupied this waterbody.

Since the occupation, local fisher folks have struggled to get back their rights for a decade. In 2010, they formed a cooperative



and submitted an application for lease of the body, paying the tender money from their group savings. They were given lease for three years from the Upazila Nirbahi officer's (UNO) office. But Shamim Miah instead filed a case against the cooperative claiming that the waterbody was part of his inheritance property. The upazila landless committee fought the case for 2 years. Ultimately, the verdict was given in favour of the landless committee. But even then, the occupiers were reluctant to accept the verdict and appealed at the High Court. The High Court's verdict also went in favour of the landless. Following the order from the court, Gaibandha's District Commissioner along with other officials fixed the boundary of that *beel* and handed it over to the landless fisher folks in 2015. After legal efforts failed, Shamim Miah and his supporters resorted to force to occupy the *beel*.

In December 2018, landless members submitted a memorandum to the UNO claiming their rights. The Deputy speaker of the National Parliament Fazle Rabbi Miah, also the Member of Parliament (MP) of Gaibandha, came to know about the matter. He along with the Saghata Upazila Chairman sat on a meeting with the Upazila landless Committee in May 2019. After a long negotiation, the Deputy Speaker mediated the issue and told the Upazila land and water authority to fix the boundary and hand it over to the landless members. Thus, the landless fisher folk cooperative was legally ensured access of 13 acres of fixed boundary of Kumirdoho Beel at the end of May 2019. At present, 450 families are being economically benefitted through fishing in this waterbody.

The process highlights some important dimensions. Firstly, it shows that members employ a mix of legal processes, awareness raising and mobilisations to establish their right over natural resources. This strategy of mobilisation combined with advocacy to generate public opinion about their rights, and formally establishing that right through legal means and obtaining lease has been a key factor in the success. Secondly, as repeated attempts by Shamim Miah to

Members employ a mix of legal processes, awareness-raising and mobilisations to establish their right over natural resources.

reoccupy the land and the decade-long struggle over establishing control shows, retention of access is as crucial as gaining access or allocation.

As of December 2019, groups have managed to retain control of 1309.13 acres of land owned by themselves, 1,182 acres of land and 1,122 acres of waterbodies recovered from commercial shrimp farming, and 43.92 acres of land recovered as inheritance property (Annexe B, Table-28).

Production in recovered *khas* land and waterbodies

Landless members cultivated paddy, pulse, fish and vegetables in the recovered land and waterbodies, which they then sold to the market and used for personal consumption. The total economic value of the produce (sold and consumed) from recovered land and waterbodies was Tk 45,117,089 (USD 531,135), shared by a total of 45,876 households. Through this, the food security of 33,946 households was ensured for four months, while 11,930 families benefited over the entire year.

Thus, the value of mobilisation over *khas* land can be seen in terms of economic, food security and nutritional outcomes. Households have control over the production process, can improve their economic status through selling their produce, and consume their own produce, leading to better food security outcomes over significant periods—all of which serve to reduce their overall vulnerability.



Public hearing for establishing rights over *khas* land

Allocation of land for landless families in Dinajpur now under process

For over two decades, 20 landless families have lived on the *khas* (government-owned) lands on the banks of the Malo river in Balapara Ward of Khamarpara union in Khansama, Dinajpur. Having no land of their own, most of them work as agricultural labourers.

Around 18 years ago, during a road construction project, the *khas* land adjacent to the river and to the land where these families live was dug up, thus creating a channel. This pond-like waterbody, being connected to the river, abounds in fish during the monsoon. The landless families, as well as the neighbouring households, lived off these fish and used the water from the channel for their everyday use.

Abul Munshi, a wealthy farmer (*jotedar*) in the area wanted to take control of the waterbody. He is known in the area for having taken illegal control of many plots of land for himself. He forged lease documents from 2017 and in order to bolster his claim, built a temporary building near the waterbody as an orphanage. He claimed that he wanted to use the income from selling the fish to run the orphanage. Paying Tk 7000, he managed to get a new lease for the waterbody from the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (Upazila Executive Officer). When the waterbody went under the illegal control of Abul Munshi in 2016, the landless organisation started protesting, and in 2017 managed to regain control over it. Over the years, the landless families living on the *khas* land had thrice applied for allocation of the land. They had also submitted memorandums to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer six times for allocation of the land to these families—without any result.

In July 2019 Abul Munshi again released fish in the pond and started attempts to regain control over the waterbody by putting up bamboo poles for fishing purposes. Seeing this, the landless organisation through a

representative meeting decided to remove the poles themselves, and again submitted a memorandum to the Upazila Nirbahi Officer. In response, Abul Munshi submitted a complaint to the Nirbahi Officer against the names of nine landless members living on the *khas* land.

The landless organisation decided to demand a public hearing regarding the matter. In this context, on July 31, 2019, a public hearing was arranged at the office of the Upazila Nirbahi Officer. The landless members submitted a memorandum to the Upazila Chairman when the date for the hearing was fixed. 60 landless men and women, and supporters of Abul Munshi were present at the hearing. The members had already collected the necessary information about the land through the Right to Information Act (RTI). So, on the day of the hearing, they challenged the forged lease documents from 2017 and submitted the information they had collected to the Nirbahi Officer. Their argument, put forward by landless leader Momtaj Begum (38), was: the waterbody is part of the river as it had been created due to road works and its water flows with that of the river. So, is the lease for the river itself? Is there any provision for leasing rivers?

Hearing both sides' arguments, the Nirbahi Officer directed the surveyor to carry out an on-site investigation. The surveyor found that in the temporary house, a few boys had been living for around 15 days. Landless leader Shafiqul Islam on the other hand showed in a map that the channel was marked as *khas* land, and that the channel has been created because of digging near the river. At this, Abul Munshi started accusing the landless members of lying and told the surveyor to go back to his office, saying that he would talk to him later. The landless members again protested: if the investigation is going to be on-site, why would he talk to the surveyor back at the office? The surveyor concluded from his investigation that the channel was in fact a part of the river, and not a separate pond.

So, there was no legal scope of leasing it out to anyone. He also added that the boys living in the orphanage were only housed there temporarily. The Nirbahi Officer decided to cancel the lease and declared that the waterbody will be kept open. He also called his office immediately to find out the status of the 2017 allocation application. He accepted their application for allocation again, and promised that the process would be completed as soon as possible. The process is now underway.

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According to landless leader Hasan Ali, at present the Assistant Commissioner (Land) post is empty in Khansama Upazila. So, the Nirbahi Officer is in charge. He says that the officer has assured him that at the moment the surveyor was engaged in some other work, but the allocation would be completed as soon as he was available. The public hearing and its successful outcome are further proof of the landless organisation's collective strength, resilience and strategic planning. Their efforts have resulted in the freeing of the *khas* land from the illegal possession of Abul Munshi. This is not only good news for the 20 families who should soon receive formal allocation of the land, but for the organisation as well, in terms of its acceptance and recognition in the areas.

Collective economic activities

The access to capital that members gain through collective savings not only reduces their dependency on moneylenders and micro-credit, but is also a sign of maturity and developing autonomy of groups. Groups, based on their own decisions, start to use collective savings, for financing expenses of group activities, supporting fellow members at times of crisis and for undertaking collective economic activities.

Landless groups in 2019 used group savings for undertaking collective economic activities (agricultural, fisheries, livestock or small businesses) as well. In the year, 193 groups newly started these economic activities while 133 groups had to stop due to various reasons including decision to not renew leases. Thus, during the reporting period, 5,862 groups were engaged in collective economic initiatives compared to 5,802 groups at the end of 2019. These initiatives created employment for 5,551 members and earned a total income of Tk 10,134,740 (USD 119,335) in 2019 (Annexe B, Table-12). At present, 56.1 percent of all groups are engaged in collective

economic activities, with the highest proportion, 71 percent, in Chattogram, followed by 63 percent Rajshahi. In 2019, members used savings for expenses of workshops, refresher trainings, movements, group conventions, cultural programmes, event celebrations, legal activities, as well as support activities such as medical or education support and contribution for celebration of dowry free marriages. 7,392 members were directly benefited through the spending of Tk 2,086,887 (USD 24,572) from group savings (Annexe B, Table-11).

This self-dependence of members in economic ventures on one hand decreases their reliance on traditional money-lenders charging high rates of interest and on the other is a sign of ownership of the landless organisation. It reflects that social mobilisation, without resorting to service delivery or micro-credit, can have outcomes in terms of sustainable well-being of member households, on top of developing political consciousness to challenge the structural roots which perpetuate inequality.

GROUPS INVOLVED IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES



Dhaka
124



Chattogram
2,884



Khulna
159



Rajshahi
2,695

Ensuring accountability and representation

Engagement in local level formal and informal institutions and committees in order to establish participatory democratic practice and representation are core activities pursued by the landless organisation. Participation in these institutions offers opportunities to landless members to establish their leadership, voice their concerns and monitor corruption and unjust practices.

Representation in local-level committees

Local level committee elections

In 2019, a total of 320 members (121 women and 199 men) participated in elections of 276 local government bodies and other institutions. Of them, 186 members (70 women and 116 men) were elected as members of the committees. In comparison to the 113 who were elected in 2018, this is a 64 percent increase (Annexe B, Table-29).

One member was elected as a Union Parishad member, 85 in School Management Committees, 63 in Market Management Committees and 37 in Sluice Gate Management Committees.

The fact that members are now not only contesting in these elections for bodies which decide on issues which affect them directly, but are also being elected, is important in terms of ensuring their representation and participation in local government processes.

Local government institutions

177 members (72 women and 105 men) were nominated for various local level committees (Annexe B, Table-30).

Of total nominated members, 59 were nominated for Community Health Clinic Management Committees, 13 for Sugarcane Purchase Committees, 34 for Jongee (militancy) Prevention Committees, 17 for LGSP Committees and 32 for Policing Committees. Another 22 members were nominated as members of various Union Parishad Standing Committees.

This indicates the growing acceptance of landless members' leadership and the strength of the organisation as a whole. They are seen as representing the interests of their community and as a significant power base in these areas.

320

participated
in elections

186

won in
elections

177

nominated for
committees

Access to services (safety-net, health, education)

Alongside mobilisation activities, landless groups filed 29 RTI applications about government safety-net programmes in 2019. As a result of their activities, 66,168 members (32,143 women and 34,025 men) received safety-net cards, including 5,539 women from women-headed households. All these cards are issued to one member per household (excepting maternity allowance cards). It should also be noted that VGF cards are issued on a one-time use basis on various days of celebration or in emergency situations, as a result of which the number of beneficiaries of these cards is highest.

66,168

men and women
received safety-
net cards

In a context where nepotism and irregular selection of beneficiaries is pervasive, the regular monitoring and mobilisation of members acts as a check against corruption and ensures proper selection of beneficiaries

In 2019, 713 people with disabilities, 21 individuals from the indigenous community, 17 individuals from *dalit* households and 406 fisherfolk received safety-net cards. The total number of card-recipients increased by 1.7 percent from 2018. It is significant that due to the activities of the groups in ensuring proper targeting, their immediate communities are also benefitting as the number of beneficiary households shows (Annexe B, Table-31).

The total economic value of safety-net benefits received in 2019 was Tk 146,018,350 (USD 1,724,988), an increase of 25 percent from the previous year. 54 percent of the economic benefits was shared by women beneficiaries (Annexe B, Table-32). At the same time, throughout the programme areas, 11,361 children (5,385 girls and 5,976 boys) of landless members received government education stipends of Taka 100 per month, up from 10,347 in 2018.

The activities of the landless groups in ensuring access to these services ensure transparency and accountability within the system and impact the nature of government service-delivery. In a context where nepotism and irregular selection of beneficiaries is pervasive, the regular monitoring and mobilisation of members act as a check against corruption and ensures proper selection of beneficiaries. As seen from the data, the most deprived such as indigenous communities, *dalits* and people with disabilities are now receiving the government services they are entitled to as citizens.

Action against corruption

Trace, a globally recognised anti-bribery business association, identified Bangladesh as the riskiest country in terms of bribery threats in South Asia in its 2019 report. In its Bribery Risk Matrix, Bangladesh was found to have deteriorated compared to 2018, ranking 178th globally.

In the Transparency International's Global Corruption Perception Index, Bangladesh ranked 14th among the most corrupt countries in the world in 2019. Despite a crackdown on corruption in 2019, the TIB (Transparency International Bangladesh) executive chairmen suggest there is still a "deficit in the trust" among people (*New Age*, Jan 23, 2020).

The actions of landless members in monitoring and challenging corruption through movements throughout the year is therefore significant in ensuring accountability at the local level, which is an important aspect of their political participation. Landless groups stopped graft and irregularities in the education and health sectors and in local infrastructural projects. They also ensured proper wages in development projects (Annexe B, Table-33). The economic value (wages and money saved) of these actions against corruption in 2019 was Tk 37,906,758 (USD 447,811).



Landless members in Dhanbari march with placards displaying anti-corruption slogans

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Right to information

The RTI Act of Bangladesh remains an underused tool for demanding accountability from the state nationally. However, landless groups all over the country have adopted its use as a primary method of demanding information from the state.

Although the achievements from the use of RTI are reflected on a number of issues, from access to social safety-net programmes, a major use of the act by landless groups in 2019 was to obtain information about existence of sexual harassment complaint committees in schools in accordance with High Court directives and then mobilisation to ensure compliance. Formation of such complaint committees were ensured through this process in 318 schools, both within and outside working areas, during the year.

A total of 137 primary RTI application were filed in 2019, while another 21 were pending from the previous year. The landless groups' effective use of this tool is highlighted in the fact that in a majority of the applications (110 from 2019 and 21 from all pending applications), they received information without having to file appeals. In six cases, groups filed appeals on non-receipt of information (Annexe B, Table-14).

An example of how landless groups have incorporated the use of RTI as part of its activities can be seen from Dhanbari upazila.

During the reporting period, the government's 40-day employment programme for the ultra-poor was started in six unions of Dhanbari upazila of Tangail. The circular for the programme specified the number of workers who would be hired and the wages to be paid. Despite some irregularities in terms of nepotism, the landless organisation had ensured that members were included in the programme. However, before completion of 40 days, the workers were told by the administration that the programme duration had ended, and that there would be no more work.

Since the specified 40 days had not ended, landless members started discussing the issue at the union-level. More detailed discussion was taken up at the landless upazila monthly meetings in July 2019. It was decided that three RTI applications would be submitted as a first step. Based on the discussion, RTI applications were filed by members asking for a list of the workers employed by the programme in the six unions, the number of days for which wages

had been paid, and the number of workdays completed.

However, after filing the RTI, applicants were being discouraged in their efforts to collect the information. Members on the other hand maintained that they had the right to the information under the RTI Act. The Upazila Project Implementation Officer still refused to provide the information. Landless representatives were also threatened over phone to stop pushing for the information.

In this situation, the landless organisation started preparing to file an appeal due to non-receipt of information. The discussion and activities led to increased discussion all over the upazila about the mismanagement and refusal to provide information. Because of this widespread public opinion, ultimately, in August 2019, the implementation officer handed over the information to landless members. The information showed that in 5 of the 6 unions, the required 40 days of work was not completed. Thus, due to the use of RTI, members prevented unspent funds from the employment creation programme from being misappropriated, and Tk 1,148,000 (USD 13,610) was retained as government funds.

Shalish

Shalish (alternative dispute resolution) is a form of semi-formal arbitration which plays a very important role in resolving small-scale civil and criminal disputes in Bangladeshi villages and has now emerged as a social institution. Where access to formal courts is often not possible or too costly, and many disputes are viewed as family or community issues, the importance of *shalish* as an institution is critical, especially given its widespread role in land and sexual-harassment issues.

Though *shalish* is recognised by the state as a mediation body, it has limited jurisdiction, and its verdict with reference to criminal cases, marriages 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 do not get justice. The institution mostly favours those with better financial means and contacts. In other words, nepotism and corruption are major impediments to ensuring fairness in traditional conflict resolution mechanisms.

To ensure justice, landless organisations have been increasingly active within their working areas in 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*, landless groups intervene, call for community 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 elites.

During the reporting period, landless members participated in 1,813 *shalish* proceedings. 17,989 members participated as observers (6,825 women and 11,164 men),

while 8,516 participated as judges (1,710 women and 6,806 men). In comparison, in 2018, members participated in 1,734 *shalish*. 72% of the *shalish* were on issues related to VaW and 1,243 were organised by the groups themselves, while the rest were jointly organised with local leaders.

Of the total, 1,609 *shalish* were resolved, while proceedings of 43 were stopped since the matter under discussion was of a criminal nature. In six instances, legal cases were filed with the support of the landless groups. Through *shalish*, Tk 5,258,750 (USD 61,920) was recovered as punishment or compensation (Annexe B, Table-13).

The continued efforts of the landless organisation in monitoring and participating in *shalish* challenges the unequal power relations which usually make the process an ineffective dispute resolution system. At the same time, landless groups conduct their own *shalish* when those involved are members. With the increasing politicisation of local institutions, a recent trend has been that it is difficult to conduct *shalish* without the permission and participation of the chairman or other ruling-party members. In this too, the continued presence of landless members ensures that a degree of depoliticisation can be achieved in the processes.

WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' EMPOWERMENT

Leadership within landless organisation

In 2019, in the annual conventions of landless committees, a total of 709 women and 1,021 men contested for various open posts of the committees. This is a reflection of the participatory democratic values that the landless groups embody in their regular activities. Of the 1,221 open posts of committees, women contested in elections for 693 posts and 500 women were elected (Annexe B, Table-8). Thus, women were elected for 41 percent of the total open posts.

This is similar to the open post elections of 2018, in which 534 women were elected while contesting for 694 posts. This is similar to the open post elections of 2018, in which 534 women were elected while contesting for 694 posts. This increasing participation and success in terms of election have two important dimensions. Firstly, it reflects the growing confidence and ability of women members to participate in leadership roles. Secondly, it reflects that women's leadership is becoming more acceptable within the organisation. Together, these serve to challenge patriarchal norms about women's roles and abilities.



Local level committees

Women's participation in local level committee elections and their nomination for various local institutions are also important indicators of acceptance of women's leadership in society.

In 2019, of the total members participating in elections for various local-level committees (186), 70 were women. Therefore, 38 percent of members who were elected were women. It is also significant that 58 percent of women who contested these elections were elected, which is the same proportion as that of men who were elected (Annexe B, Table-29).

Of the total nominated members, 72 were women. Thus, 41 percent of members nominated to local committees as members were women (Annexe B, Table-30).

Participation in these communities is an important indicator of how women members are participating in the wider social and political processes, beyond the organisation, which is key to their empowerment as critical citizens and for subverting patriarchal norms and institutions.

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Mobilisation

Of the total mobilisation undertaken by landless groups in 2019, 867 were regarding issues of violence against women. In 95 percent of these movements, the groups were successful in realising their demands (Annexe B, Table-34). Thus, through these mobilisations, landless groups were able to put a stop to or prevent 1,056 incidents of domestic violence, 322 sexual harassment incidents, 227 dowry and violence incidents, 92 bigamous marriages, 103 forcible divorces, 121 child marriages and ensure maintenance allowances in 123 incidents.

Such mobilisation activities are crucial as a continuous process through which members come to understand and challenge patriarchal norms. Patriarchal notions are still pervasive, and thus, there is a need to expand the understanding of members regarding women's rights from issues of violence against women to broader cultural and social norms.

Legal action

Of the total cases filed by landless groups in 2019, 46 were related to issues of violence against women. In the same year, they also received verdict in their favour in 14 such cases (Annexe B, Table-15). The high proportion of such cases being filed by landless groups each year is indicative of their collective efforts and strength to challenge violence against women of all forms through all channels, whether legal or through mobilisation.

Inheritance rights

Landless groups were successful in recovering 9.75 acres of inheritance property of 96 women in 2019, through 130 movements (Annexe B, Table-28). The economic value of this is Tk. 17,608,000 (USD 207,209). In a context where women are denied their rightful inheritance properties, this is a significant achievement, not only in terms access to natural resources for women, but also in challenging the unjust practices in society which continue to deprive women of their rights. With the addition of these 9.75 acres, the total amount of recovered inheritance land in 2019 increased to 43.92 acres.

**Recovered treatment cost,
dowry and maintenance
allowances:**

BDT 10,750,200 for
1,502 beneficiaries.

**Value of inheritance
property**

BDT 17,608,000 for
96 beneficiaries

This is significant as despite having legal and religious rights, women in Bangladesh are usually not given access to their inheritance property. Women usually do not demand their rightful inheritance. Thus, increasing number of women members demanding their rightful claims reflects an increasing awareness to challenge previously accepted norms.

Shalish

In terms of *shalish*, there are two important dimensions crucial for women's empowerment. Firstly, the participation of women as judges and observers in *shalish* proceedings is a sign of the increasing acceptance of their participation in institutions which are traditionally male dominated. In 2019, 6,825 women participated as observers in *shalish* proceedings, compared to 11,164 men. It is also important that the highest participation of women (4,451) were in *shalish* on issues of violence against women. 1,710 women also participated as judges in *shalish* in 2019 (Annexe B, Table-13).

The other dimension of *shalish* that is significant is that of ensuring justice for women in these male-dominated proceedings. In 2019, due to the participation of members as judges and observers, it was possible to recover dowry, maintenance allowances and treatment costs worth Tk 10,750,200 (USD 126,507) for 1,502 women.

An important aspect of women's participation is to challenge *shalish* norms that make it difficult for women to get justice. Traditionally women are not allowed to participate directly, and in cases of rape, domestic abuse or sexual harassment, they would give their statements from indoors. Landless women members, by participating in *shalish* on these issues, are able to ensure that women are allowed to speak freely and/or express themselves through them as intermediaries on socially sensitive issues.

Household decision making

Women's participation in the decision-making processes at the household level is a crucial indicator of their empowerment as well as of changing mindsets of male members of the family. In 2019, women members reported participation in taking decisions, either solely, or jointly with their partner (Annexe B, Table-35) on issues including their daughters' education (women alone: 686, jointly with partners: 1,458); daughters' marriages (women alone: 169, jointly with partners: 748); visiting their parents' house (women alone: 373, jointly with partners: 2,644); purchase of land or asset (women alone: 218, jointly with partner: 699); and purchase or selling of livestock

(women alone: 656, jointly with partners: 1,147). Similar to women's participation in decision-making, men's participation in household chores is also a crucial indicator of changing attitudes of male members regarding women's roles and division of labour.

In 2019, a total of 8,094 male landless members reported participation in household chores (Annexe B, Table-36). The highest proportion of members, 33 percent, reported participation in household responsibilities such as dusting, cleaning, collecting drinking water and making the bed. This was followed by 30 percent of members reporting cooking or aiding with cooking in various ways. Another 23 percent reported their participation in washing clothes of household members, and 14 percent of taking responsibility of taking care of children.

It is significant that all these activities are traditionally considered "women's work" for which male members seldom take responsibility. The participation of male members in these activities, therefore, indicates that the ideals of gender equality that groups strive to ensure in the public sphere are also being increasingly internalised by male members within their households.



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Sexual and reproductive health rights

For the first time this year, Nijera Kori has started collecting data from landless group members regarding issues related to sexual and reproductive health rights (Annexe B, Table-37).

Additionally, the data collected in 2019 showed that 182 women took decision about their pregnancy alone, while another 720 decided jointly with their partners. Similarly, 182 women decided on the use of birth control methods alone, while another 2,486 women took decisions regarding contraceptives jointly with their partners. 4,698 adolescents received TT vaccination in 2019. In terms of access to reproductive health services, 2,177 women alone, and another 891 women jointly with their partners received gynaecological treatment. It was also seen that more women accessed hospital facilities (909) or services of trained midwives (520) during child delivery compared to home-deliveries without skilled attendance (511).

In 3,088 households, hygienic latrines were established as well, which is a crucial dimension in terms of access to necessary facilities for women in their households.

Due to social taboos and religious norms, many aspects of sexual and reproductive rights remain under-discussed in Bangladesh. SRHR programme by NGOs and the government tend to focus on various forms of violence and services related to menstrual hygiene. This is evident in the way landless members understand patriarchy as well—while they are very active in challenging violence on women, our experience shows that within communities and members, everyday forms of abuse remain uncontested to some degree.

Adolescent health and sexuality have not been issues we have focussed on in the past. The collection of SRHR data is the first step in focussing on these issues more in terms of not just service delivery, but from a qualitative perspective, taking into account the patriarchal and cultural dimensions which narrow the space for discussion about these issues.



Mim's initiatives to prevent child marriages—her own and in the community



Mim Akhter is a lively young girl of 14. At the cultural protest programme organised by the adolescents' Violence Against Women and Sexual Harassment Prevention Committee on December 22, 2019 in Daudkandi, Cumilla, she sang and acted on stage in a play about child marriage. She is a regular participant in Nijera Kori's activities with children and adolescents, and feels strongly about eradicating child marriage in her community. This commitment was forged through Mim's own experiences.

Mim's family of five members live in Borokota village of Daudkandi. Her father Mosharrof Hossain is retired from the army, and now works in agriculture. Her mother Rehena Begum is a member of the landless group in the village. She is the youngest of three children—she has an older sister, Turna and older brother, Jishan, who worked as a computer operator.

When Mim was in class 5, she saw her sister being married off. At the time, Turna was only in class 8. Mim, being only a child, says that at the time she did not understand much, but was stricken by the fact that her sister no longer attended school. Her father explained to her that Turna was married now, and would no longer continue her education. To Mim, this meant that when one was married, school life was over. She loved going to school, and decided that she would continue her education. In 2018, Mim's mother joined the landless group which had its meetings in their neighbouring house. Seeing that the Nijera Kori staff in the village also sat in meeting with girls her own age, Mim too joined and started going to meeting. There she started hearing about the negative impacts of child marriage and started taking part in discussions regarding

sexual harassment and violence against women. Her brother was against this, and kept trying to stop her from attending these meetings. Mim persisted. In the same year, when she was in class 8, villagers decided that Mim was old enough to be married. They decided to go to Mim's house with the proposal. Hearing of this, and thinking that she would no longer be able to go to school, an idea came to her mind. She thought that if she cut off her own hair, the people coming with the proposal would go away. So, before they were due to arrive, Mim took a pair of scissors and cut her hair short. And it worked. Since then, Mim has done the same thing twice more, thus putting an end to another child marriage.

Mim shared her experience with Nijera Kori staff, and they talked to her parents. They have finally come around to an understanding, and has promised Mim that she will finish her education. At the time of the cultural protest, Mim had just finished sitting for the final exam for class 9. But, even though she now has the support of her parents, her brother continues to pressure her to get married. He does not like the fact that she participates in public events and attends meetings. He tried to stop her from participation in the OBR day events. Mim was determined to attend and participated in the cultural protest, and defying her brother, with support from her parents, she not only attended the event, but participated in the cultural activities as well.

Seeing her act in the play titled *Mukti* (Freedom), her parents again promised that they would support her to follow her dreams of studying and then joining the police. Her father says that he will get her enrolled in the police line after she completes her SSC exam.

National recognition through Joyeeta awards

The Joyeeta Onneshone Bangladesh is a national programme initiated by the Government of Bangladesh that awards women in five categories from the seven administrative divisions of Bangladesh.

In 2019, 32 women landless members were selected for the Joyeeta awards at the upazila level, and 2 at the division level in Rangpur and Chattogram.

The members were awarded in the following categories: 8 for development in society, 8 in the successful mother category, 5 for economic success, 7 for overcoming trauma of violence & starting a new life (including the divisional-level awardee) and 4 in the education and service category.

Development in society

8

Successful mother

8

Overcoming the trauma of violence and starting a new life

7

Economic success

5

Education and service

4

Mousumi Akhter Ranu from Birganj was one of the landless members awarded Joyeeta in the divisional level. The oldest daughter in her family, her life has been a constant struggle against patriarchal norms which demand that a woman forsake her right to education and get married at a young age. When she was a student of class 8, Ranu was married off to a man who could only sign his name. However, with support of her husband, despite her in-laws' objections, Ranu had completed her SSC exam. But this was not easy: she had to bear verbal abuse and derision of her in-laws.

Around the time she was completing her SSC, she discovered the landless organisation through group meetings which took place in the house next to hers. She started attending. As a member of the landless group, Ranu then went on to complete her HSC. With the support of other group

members and Nijera Kori staff, she applied for a job as a teacher. After this, her husband too turned against her when she wanted to continue studying. But she persisted, eventually completing her BSc and master's degree. This led to increased disagreements and abuse from her husband. Subject to various types of abuse, she started retreating into herself. Landless members and Nijera Kori intervened, talking to her husband, as well as encouraging her to continue studying and working.

Today, she works as an assistant teacher at Angarpara Government Primary School. Relations with her husband have improved. As an active member of the landless group, she was told about the Joyeeta programme by Nijera Kori staff and encouraged to submit her name. This led her to open up about the abuse she had faced in her journey.

Challenging fundamentalisms through mass awareness and advocacy networks

Through their advocacy, awareness building and monitoring activities, landless groups play a vital role in challenging fundamentalist activities and messages in working areas. The impact of their efforts to uphold a secular ideology and challenge patriarchal beliefs can be seen in various aspects of life.

In 2019, due to the monitoring activities of the landless watch committees on religious fundamentalist activities and awareness building initiatives, 1,032 students (255 boys and 777 girls) were newly enrolled in mainstream educational institutions from Qawmi madrasas. The committees were also successful in stopping discussions on religion-based politics in three mosques in Saghata. At the same time, the committees filed a case against a Shibir activist when he tried to carry out terrorist activities in the Payraband area. The activist had been in hiding for some time, and when he had come to his home, the committee handed him over to the police. The committee also challenged a madrasa teacher in Charjabbar, forcing him to leave the area, when he had married a second time.

Groups also conducted 20 movements against fundamentalist activities in 2019, in all of which they were successful in realising their demands. It is also interesting to know, that for 17 of the 20 movements, the issues were raised by women (Annexe B, Table-25).

The growing strength of the groups' stance against fundamentalisms and patriarchal

norms is also evident from the fact that members are now being invited by government institutions and elected representatives in opinion sharing meetings on fundamentalism. For example, 16 of the 23 meetings on fundamentalism (70 percent) and 281 of 630 on law and order situation (45 percent) were initiated by government institutions and representatives. Overall, 27 percent of all such advocacy events were initiated by the institutions and representatives, which is indicative of the growing strength and legitimacy of the groups in voicing their demands (Annexe B, Table-22).

Similarly, 103 of the 388 meetings (27 percent) of landless members with political parties and other civic bodies in 2019 were initiated by the latter. Of the 13 such meetings which were on issues related to fundamentalist activities and ideology, 8 (62 percent) were initiated by the parties and civic bodies (Annexe B, Table-23).

Besides these activities explicitly against fundamentalist activities, the landless organisation's commitment to challenge fundamentalist norms are reflected in terms of the previous outcomes as well. The increasing representations of women in various committees, activities challenging child marriage, dowry, polygamy, gender roles all serve to undermine fundamentalism, alongside patriarchy, within the communities. Challenging the everyday manifestations of fundamentalist in their lives has also enabled them to critically understand and challenge fundamentalist activities in the broader community and society.

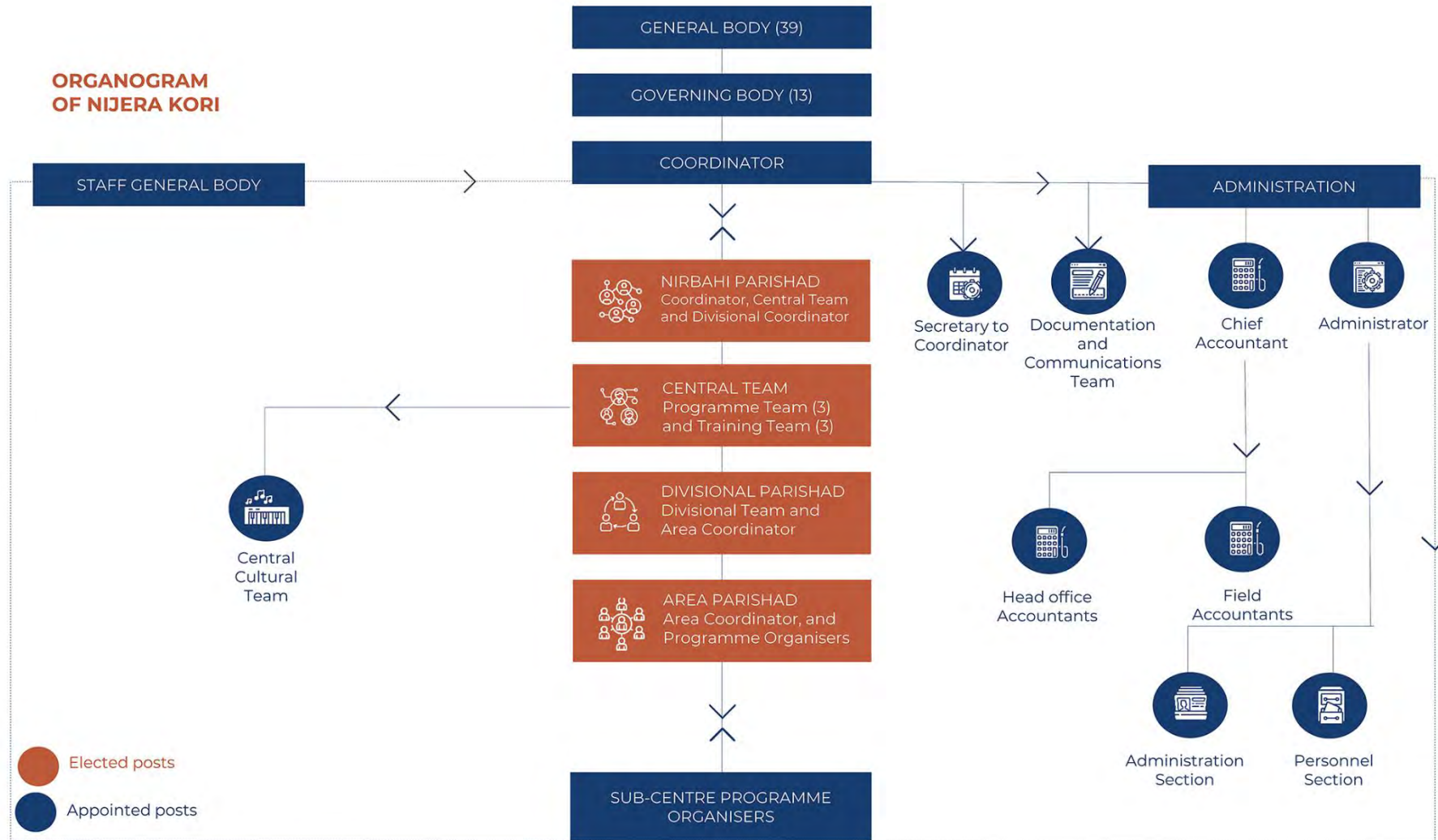
**Groups conducted 20 movements
against fundamentalist activities in 2019**

**1,032 students were enrolled in mainstream
educational institutions from madrasas.**

ANNEXURE

Annexe A

Organogram of Nijera Kori



Governing Body Members

Name	Designation
Prof. Kazi Madina	Chairperson
Prof. Rowshan Ara	Vice Chairperson
Khushi Kabir	Secretary
Ira Rahman	Treasurer
Prof. Syed Abul Barq Alvi *	Assistant Treasurer
Mohammad Shahid Hossain Talukder	Member
Abdul Majid Mallik	Member
Shaheen Islam	Member
Biren Shome	Member
Afzalun Nessa Chowdhury	Member
Salma A Shafi	Member
Advocate Mohammad Zahedul Bari	Member
Gitiara Nasreen	Member

* Dil Monowora Monu, who previously held the post, passed away in October 2019, after which Prof. Syed Abul Barq Alvi was elected for the post. Before that, he was a member of the governing body. Gitiara Nasreen was taken on as a member of the body at the same time.

Annexe B

W = Women, M = Men, B = Boys, G = Girls, T = Total, N = Number (of events/activities)

Table-1: Geographical locations

	Division	District	Upazila	Area	Sub-centre	Total (Dec 2018)		Total (Dec 2019)		Village Coverage Up to Dec 2019 *
						Union	Village	Union	Village	
1	Chattogram	Cumilla	Chandina	Cumilla	3	24	110	24	110	21
			Daudkandi							
			Debidwar							
		Noakhali	Sudharam	Charjabbar	6	9	45	9	45	6
			Companigonj							
			Kabirhat							
			Subarnachar							
Lakshmipur	Ramgoti	Ramgoti	1	6	28	6	28	5		
Chattogram	Sandwip	Sandwip	2	14	28	14	28	0		
Sub total	1	4	9	4	12	53	211	53	211	32
2	Dhaka	Tangail	Tangail Sadar	Tangail	1	4	22	4	22	5
			Madhupur	Madhupur	2	12	127	12	127	20
			Dhanbari							
Sub total	1	1	3	2	3	16	149	16	149	25
3	Khulna	Kushtia	Kumarkhali	Kumarkhali	1	7	51	7	51	14
			Khoksa							
		Khulna	Paikgacha	Paikgacha	6	19	171	19	171	41
			Dumuria							
			Batiaghata							
Sub total	1	2	5	2	7	26	222	26	222	55
4	Rajshahi	Sirajgonj	Raygonj	Raygonj	2	5	82	5	82	13
			Bogura							
		Rangpur	Rangpur Sadar	Rangpur	2	9	81	9	81	24
			Mithapukur							
		Dinajpur	Khanshama	Dinajpur	1	4	22	4	22	5
		Gaibandha	Saghata	Gaibandha	2	16	147	16	147	64
			Sadullapur							
		Rangpur	Pirgonj							
		Natore	Bagatipara	Bagatipara	1	10	170	10	170	42
			Lalpur							
Natore Sadar										
Kurigram	Rowmari	Rowmari	1	8	84	8	84	21		
	Rajibpur									
Sub total	1	8	14	6	9	52	586	52	586	169
Total	4	15	31	14	31	147	1,168	147	1,168	281

* Villages in which majority of the targeted population are members of the landless organisation.

Table-2: Landless groups

	Total up to December 2018			Plan for 2019			Achievement in 2019			Total up to December 2019		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	2,687	2,135	4,822	11	6	17	13	6	19	2,700	2,141	4,841
Dhaka	445	334	779	7	9	16	7	5	12	452	339	791
Chattogram	2,318	1,619	3,937	37	36	73	60	46	106	2,378	1,665	4,043
Khulna	845	484	1,329	11	12	23	13	9	22	858	493	1,351
Total	6,295	4,572	10,867	66	63	129	93	66	159	6,388	4,638	11,026

Table-3: Group members

	Total up to December 2018			Plan for 2019			Achievement in 2019			Total up to December 2019		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	52,715	45,058	97,773	280	198	478	235	115	350	52,950	45,173	98,123
Dhaka	8,548	7,582	16,130	540	516	1,056	132	89	221	8,680	7,671	16,351
Chattogram	45,320	34,262	79,582	585	698	1,283	1,201	909	2,110	46,521	35,171	81,692
Khulna	16,996	10,224	27,220	144	198	342	231	156	387	17,227	10,418	27,607
Total	123,579	97,126	220,705	1,549	1,610	3,159	1,799	1,269	3,068	125,378	98,395	223,773

Table-4: Level of group consciousness

	Rajshahi			Dhaka			Chattogram			Khulna			Total		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Secondary Level															
Up to December 2018	578	504	1,082	107	88	195	399	330	729	941	820	1761	2,025	1,742	3,767
Plan for graduation	22	13	35	16	8	24	14	11	25	3	5	8	55	37	92
Achievement	14	6	20	4	3	7	23	17	40	3	2	5	44	28	72
Total up to December 2019	592	510	1,102	111	91	202	422	347	769	944	822	1,766	2,069	1,770	3,839
Higher Level															
Up to December 2018	110	93	203	7	2	9	54	37	91	152	114	266	323	246	569
Plan for graduation	4	3	7	5	1	6	5	4	9	1	3	4	15	11	26
Achievement	0	0	0	2	0	2	6	6	12	1	2	3	9	8	17
Total up to December 2019	110	93	203	9	2	11	60	43	103	153	116	269	332	254	586

Table-5: General group meetings

	Plan for 2019									Achievements in 2019								
	Attended by staff			Initiated by group			Total plan for 2019			Meeting attended by staff			Meeting initiated by group			Total achievement in 2019		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	11,577	3,494	15,071	10,426	8,314	18,740	22,003	11,808	33,811	8,925	3,791	12,716	10,420	6,787	17,207	19,345	10,578	29,923
Dhaka	4,689	2,159	6,848	4,319	3,460	7,779	9,008	5,619	14,627	3,161	2,359	5,520	3,755	2,982	6,737	6,916	5,341	12,257
Chattogram	12,606	7,953	20,559	8,957	8,458	17,415	21,563	16,411	37,974	9,213	5,313	14,526	8,907	7,508	16,415	18,120	12,821	30,941
Khulna	10,574	5,481	16,055	5,776	3,851	9,627	16,350	9,332	25,682	7,088	3,484	10,572	4,805	4,604	9,409	11,893	8,088	19,981
Total	39,446	19,087	58,533	29,478	24,083	53,561	68,924	43,170	112,094	28,387	14,947	43,334	27,887	21,881	49,768	56,274	36,828	93,102

Table-6: Representative, joint group and annual group meetings

	Representative Meeting		Joint Group Meeting		Annual Group Meeting plan			Annual Group Meeting achievement		
	Plan	Achievement	Plan	Achievement	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	189	188	761	747	1,488	967	2,455	1,200	778	1,978
Dhaka	53	32	16	11	240	168	408	214	165	379
Chattogram	395	292	1,132	1,255	1,234	1,230	2,464	1,282	1,129	2,411
Khulna	116	95	120	129	779	467	1,246	707	382	1,089
Total	753	607	2,029	2,142	3,741	2,832	6,573	3,403	2,454	5,857

Table-7: Committee formation, committee meetings and group convention

	Total no. of committees up to Dec 2019						Committee meeting								Group convention							
							Plan				Achievement				Plan				Achievement			
	Committee type						Name of the committee				Name of the committee				Name of the committee				Name of the committee			
	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	New area committees in 2019	Total area committee	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Village	Union	Upazila	Area	Village	Union	Upazila	Area
Rajshahi	146	9	1	5	4	9	1,401	102	12	57	1,185	106	12	59	146	9	1	5	146	9	1	5
Dhaka	28	6	1	1	0	1	286	66	12	11	297	63	11	10	28	6	1	1	28	6	1	1
Chattogram	58	3	1	13	1	14	670	37	12	153	727	41	12	147	58	3	1	13	58	3	1	13
Khulna	50	3	0	8	0	8	585	34	0	100	485	42	0	95	50	3	0	8	50	3	0	8
Total	282	21	3	27	5	32	2,942	239	36	321	2,694	252	35	311	282	21	3	27	282	21	3	27

Table-8: Women elected in committee open posts

	Open posts for which both women and men can contest	Open posts for which women contested	No. of candidates		Women elected
			W	M	
Rajshahi	549	293	321	468	228
Dhaka	146	82	94	129	62
Chattogram	299	169	161	252	112
Khulna	227	149	133	172	98
Total	1,221	693	709	1,021	500

Table-9: Landless group bank accounts

	Up to Dec 2019			Plan for 2019			Achievement in 2019			Total up to Dec 2019		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	856	355	1,211	38	10	48	36	8	44	892	363	1,255
Dhaka	284	214	498	5	13	18	10	8	18	294	222	516
Chattogram	631	329	960	6	3	9	110	60	170	741	389	1,130
Khulna	596	161	757	17	3	20	6	2	8	602	163	765
Total	2,367	1,059	3,426	66	29	95	162	78	240	2,529	1,137	3,666

Table-10: Landless group savings

	Total up to Dec 2018			Plan for 2019			Achievement in 2019			Distribution			Total up to Dec 2019		
	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T	W	M	T
Rajshahi	14,078,500	15,643,608	29,722,108	2,927,370	1,246,305	4,173,675	2,897,577	1,139,313	4,036,890	1,623,382	266,000	1,889,382	15,352,695	16,516,921	31,869,616
Dhaka	839,300	1,165,228	2,004,528	1,143,792	697,451	1,841,243	793,339	497,482	1,290,821	1,088,178	174,950	1,263,128	544,461	1,487,760	2,032,221
Chattogram	31,129,837	24,512,783	55,642,620	7,245,114	5,312,950	12,558,064	6,110,461	4,020,633	10,131,094	1,134,650	355,700	1,490,350	36,105,648	28,177,716	64,283,364
Khulna	7,491,321	6,606,769	14,098,090	1,779,558	884,752	2,664,310	1,526,926	704,520	2,231,446	1,887,236	275,780	2,163,016	7,131,011	7,035,509	14,166,520
Total (BDT)	53,538,958	47,928,388	101,467,346	13,095,834	8,141,458	21,237,292	11,328,303	6,361,948	17,690,251	5,733,446	1,072,430	6,805,876	59,133,815	53,217,906	112,351,721

Table-11: Activities undertaken and voluntary services provided by group members using group savings

	Contribution (BDT)	Organisational activities									Cooperation and Support Activities					Beneficiary
		Workshops	Refresher trainings	Movement	Landless group convention	Cultural programme	Day celebration	Conducting case	Assistance to family of arrested member	Total	Medical support	Educational support	Contribution in marriage without dowry	Total	Total Nijera Kori	
Rajshahi	Within Group	15,201	3,561	500	36,307	29,335	15,750	1,745	0	102,399	74,541	11,120	151,340	237,001	339,400	382
	Outside Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16,950	0	19,540	36,490	36,490	343
Dhaka	Within Group	6960	2170	2600	38,643	10340	500	500	0	61,713	70,770	6,000	6,062	82,832	144,545	235
	Outside Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7,400	0	0	7,400	7,400	217
Chattogram	Within Group	18,710	6,527	24,200	74,960	61,100	38,400	554,320	0	778,217	98,760	130,495	59,620	288,875	1,067,092	2,669
	Outside Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31,000	37,600	52,040	120,640	120,640	2426
Khulna	Within Group	11,555	3,950	0	18,980	10,450	56,975	58,530	0	160,440	71,030	16650	12,300	99,980	260,420	535
	Outside Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	98,100	8000	4,800	110,900	110,900	585
Total	Within Group	52,426	16,208	27,300	168,890	111,225	111,625	615,095	0	1,102,769	315,101	164,265	229,322	708,688	1,811,457	3,821
	Outside Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	153450	45600	76380	275430	275430	3571
	Total	52,426	16,208	27,300	168,890	111,225	111,625	615,095	0	1,102,769	468,551	209,865	305,702	984,118	2,086,887	7,392

Table-12: Collective economic activities using group savings

Up to Dec' 18	Agriculture				Fisheries				Livestock				Small business/rickshaw van				Total					
	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chatt.	Khulna	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chatt.	Khulna	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chatt.	Khulna	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chatt.	Khulna	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chatt.	Khulna	NK	
Group	W	330	14	183	36	31	5	10	13	184	2	131	5	903	17	1,026	21	1,448	38	1,350	75	2,911
	M	278	36	156	38	84	17	92	19	208	15	169	2	625	10	1,118	24	1,195	78	1,535	83	2,891
	T	608	50	339	74	115	22	102	32	392	17	300	7	1,528	27	2,144	45	2,643	116	2,885	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	1250	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	2533	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	1,226	7	638	109	1,980
	M	909	13	167	90	348	7	136	85	171	6	146	0	810	8	567	35	2,238	34	1,016	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 (BDT) increase in 2019		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	422,248	339,325	2,489,104	234,800	5,783,936	654,065	9,161,905
Group	W	5	3	7	2	1	0	0	0	29	0	5	0	21	1	51	1	56	4	63	3	126
	M	7	4	8	1	3	0	0	0	4	0	23	0	4	0	12	1	18	4	43	2	67
	T	12	7	15	3	4	0	0	0	33	0	28	0	25	1	63	2	74	8	106	5	193
Member	W	95	52	200	26	20	0	0	0	590	0	138	0	434	16	635	18	1,139	68	973	44	2,224
	M	109	67	155	40	58	0	0	0	107	0	328	0	82	0	250	18	356	67	733	58	1,214
	T	204	119	355	66	78	0	0	0	697	0	466	0	516	16	885	36	1,495	135	1,706	102	3,438
Employment	W	4	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	23	0	4	0	17	0	23	0	44	0	29	2	75
	M	12	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	3	0	11	0	2	0	14	0	17	0	27	2	46
	T	16	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	26	0	15	0	19	0	37	0	61	0	56	4	121
Investment (BDT) decreased in 2019		439,500	334,500	533,500	165,000	80,000	0	66,000	6,500	406,103	0	463,450	0	193,000	5,000	2,865,410	33,000	1,118,603	339,500	3,928,360	204,500	5,590,963
Group	W	1	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	16	0	17	0	0	0	44	0	17	0	63	2	82
	M	2	0	2	2	0	0	2	0	3	0	11	0	0	0	29	0	5	0	44	2	51
	T	3	0	4	4	0	0	2	0	19	0	28	0	0	0	73	0	22	0	107	4	133
Member	W	19	0	40	36	0	0	0	0	324	0	406	0	0	0	700	0	343	0	1,146	36	1,525
	M	38	0	40	36	0	0	40	0	75	0	255	0	0	0	442	0	113	0	777	36	926
	T	57	0	80	72	0	0	40	0	399	0	661	0	0	0	1,142	0	456	0	1,923	72	2,451
Employment	W	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	17	0	14	0	31
	M	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	13	0	17
	T	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	21	0	27	0	48
Investment (BDT) up to Dec' 2019		370,000	0	69657	70,000	0	0	27,170	0	162,320	0	633,400	0	0	0	1,258,850	0	532,320	0	1,989,077	70,000	2,591,397
Group	W	334	17	188	36	32	5	10	13	197	2	119	5	924	18	1,033	22	1,487	42	1,350	76	2,955
	M	283	40	162	37	87	17	90	19	209	15	181	2	629	10	1,101	25	1,208	82	1,534	83	2,907
	T	617	57	350	73	119	22	100	32	406	17	300	7	1,553	28	2,134	47	2,695	124	2,884	159	5,862
Member	W	4,843	310	3,817	692	728	327	1,882	383	5,055	277	2,520	81	24,724	404	18,602	637	35,350	1,318	26,821	1,793	65,282
	M	7,515	792	3,248	758	2,186	425	2,093	603	8,181	336	2,910	36	15,430	1,047	21,138	415	33,312	2,600	29,389	1,812	67,113
	T	12,358	1,102	7,065	1,450	2,914	752	3,975	986	13,236	613	5,430	117	40,154	1,451	39,740	1,052	68,662	3,918	56,210	3,605	132,395
Employment	W	249	4	33	68	226	3	16	19	282	0	95	1	496	0	509	23	1,253	7	653	111	2,024
	M	920	13	169	92	348	7	136	85	171	6	144	0	812	8	581	35	2,251	34	1,030	212	3,527
	T	1,169	17	202	160	574	10	152	104	453	6	239	1	1,308	8	1,090	58	3,504	41	1,683	323	5,551
Investment in BDT		1,209,000	525,000	916,133	318,000	685,553	0	441,860	26,500	785,009	38,000	536,185	71,740	395,825	11,300	5,829,041	372,325	3,075,387	574,300	7,723,219	788,565	12,161,471
Profit 2019	W	2,225,181	56,486	11,000	695,200	128,875	0	0	94,200	98,996	0	0	0	597,181	0	394,950	43,020	3,050,233	56,486	405,950	832,420	4,345,089
	M	1,849,140	84,721	36,500	1,043,500	1,118,430	0	673,900	74,000	97,150	0	0	0	361,110	0	425,350	25,850	3,425,830	84,721	1,135,750	1,143,350	5,789,651
Total	T	4,074,321	141,207	47,500	1,738,700	1,247,305	0	673,900	168,200	196,146	0	0	0	958,291	0	820,300	68,870	6,476,063	141,207	1,541,700	1,975,770	10,134,740

Table-13: Participation in *shalish*

	No. of shalish	Observer			Judge			Arranged by		Result			In process	Recovered as punishment (BDT)
		W	M	T	W	M	T	Group	Group and local leader	Settled	Stopped	Cases		
Violence against Women (dowry, divorce, polygamy, rape, physical assault, fundamentalism indictment)														
Rajshahi	244	1,293	1,820	3,113	282	414	696	222	20	228	3	3	13	2,167,000
Dhaka	44	184	334	518	89	203	292	20	24	44	0	0	0	174,400
Chattogram	943	2,568	4,660	7,228	717	1,385	2,102	611	232	843	21	2	79	2,418,700
Khulna	77	406	501	907	88	168	256	57	20	75	2	0	0	170,000
Total	1,308	4,451	7,315	11,766	1,176	2,170	3,346	910	296	1,190	26	5	92	4,930,100
Illegal possession of property														
Rajshahi	24	152	248	400	23	42	65	23	1	21	0	0	3	60,000
Dhaka	1	5	12	17	2	6	8	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Chattogram	92	398	720	1,118	87	188	275	71	21	82	2	0	8	0
Khulna	36	262	430	692	50	119	169	32	4	32	4	1	0	0
Total	153	817	1,410	2,227	162	355	517	127	26	135	7	1	11	60,000
Fundamentalist activities														
Rajshahi	3	25	23	48	2	2	4	3	0	3	0	0	0	0
Dhaka	1	8	5	13	2	3	5	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Chattogram	3	14	24	38	6	17	23	3	0	3	0	0	0	0
Khulna	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	7	47	52	99	10	22	32	7	0	7	0	0	0	0
Issues of injustice and oppression														
Rajshahi	55	212	292	504	29	533	562	44	11	55	0	0	0	11,150
Dhaka	119	185	485	670	185	855	1,040	38	81	65	3	0	51	
Chattogram	85	831	1,054	1,885	75	1,960	2,035	50	35	77	1	0	7	189,000
Khulna	86	282	556	838	73	911	984	67	19	80	6	0	0	68,500
Total	345	1,510	2,387	3,897	362	4,259	4,621	199	146	277	10	0	58	268,650
Total														
Rajshahi	326	1,682	2,383	4,065	336	991	1,327	292	32	307	3	3	16	2,238,150
Dhaka	165	382	836	1,218	278	1,067	1,345	60	105	110	4	0	51	174,400
Chattogram	1,123	3,811	6,458	10,269	885	3,550	4,435	735	288	905	24	2	94	2,607,700
Khulna	199	950	1,487	2,437	211	1,198	1,409	156	43	187	12	1	0	238,500
Total	1,813	6,825	11,164	17,989	1,710	6,806	8,516	1,243	468	1,609	43	6	161	5,258,750

Table-14: Right to Information

	No. of RTI applications		Total	Information received			Total	In process
	Jan' to Dec' 2019	Pending application 2018		2019	From pending application	From complain application		
Local development project	15	6	21	11	6	4	21	0
Education	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
Health	13	1	14	9	1	0	10	4
Complaint committee	59	5	64	48	5	2	55	9
Agriculture	4	1	5	3	1	0	4	1
Khas land	12	1	13	8	1	0	9	4
Local institutions such as village court, rural power association etc.	1	1	2	1	1	0	2	0
Fisheries department	2	0	2	2	0	0	2	0
Brick kiln EIA	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
Total Primary Application	137	21	158	110	21	6	137	21

Table-15: Legal aid support activities

	Up to 2018	New cases	Rajshahi					New cases	Dhaka					New cases	Chattogram					New cases	Khulna					New cases	Total					Till Dec,19
			T	I	Ag	A	A		T	I	Ag	A	T		I	Ag	A	T	I		Ag	A	T	I	Ag		A					
Total	632	13	10	10	0	1	3	14	13	1	1	37	9	8	1	1	7	2	1	1	1	60	35	32*	3	4	658					
Criminal	250	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	8	0	0	4	6	6	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	5	15	14	1	1	240					
Filed by groups	116	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6	0	0	3	4	4	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	4	11	10	1	1	109					
Filed against groups	134	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	4	0	0	131					
Civil	172	3	2	2	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	5	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	9	6	4	2	1	176					
Filed by groups	101	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	5	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	7	4	2	2	1	105					
Filed against groups	71	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	0	0	71					
VaW	210	10	8	8	0	1	3	4	4	0	1	28	2	2	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	46	14	14	0	2**	242					
Filed by groups	185	10	8	8	0	1	3	4	4	0	1	27	2	2	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	45	14	14	0	2	216					
Filed against groups	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	26					

I = In favour, Ag = Against and A = Appeal

* In one of the cases for which the judgement was given in favour of the groups in 2019, an appeal was filed in January 2020. Table shows the status till December 2019.

** Two appeal cases filed in Dhaka and Rajshahi regarding VaW cases by the accused led to them receiving bail, even though the cases are non-bailable.

Table-16: Trainings

Training Type	Rajshahi								Dhaka								Chattogram								Khulna								Nijera Kori							
	P				A				P				A				P				A				P				A											
	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T
Basic	10	120	80	200	9	99	79	178	6	80	40	120	6	57	58	115	12	140	120	260	12	140	120	260	7	80	60	140	7	79	59	138	35	420	300	720	34	375	316	691
Advance	2	20	20	40	2	19	20	39	2	21	19	40	2	23	22	45	3	43	42	85	3	40	35	75	2	21	19	40	2	25	15	40	9	105	100	205	9	107	92	199
Higher Selection	1	10	0	10	1	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	0	15	15	2	25	15	40	2	25	25	50	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	3	55	15	70	3	45	40	85
Total Core Trainings	13	150	100	250	12	128	99	227	8	111	59	170	8	80	95	175	17	208	177	385	17	205	180	385	9	111	79	190	9	114	74	188	47	580	415	995	46	527	448	975
<i>Khas</i> land distribution law, policy	2	21	19	40	2	19	21	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	61	54	115	6	59	56	115	1	11	9	20	0	0	0	0	9	93	82	175	8	78	77	155
Training on advocacy, campaigning and strategy focusing on <i>khas</i> land-water Issues	2	20	20	40	2	11	19	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	20	20	40	2	11	19	30
Land use policy	3	33	27	60	3	33	26	59	1	11	9	20	1	11	8	19	2	32	36	68	3	39	36	75	2	22	18	40	2	27	13	40	8	98	90	188	9	110	83	193
Land rights of women, gender role at family and society	2	22	18	40	2	22	18	40	1	11	9	20	1	10	9	19	1	11	9	20	1	10	10	20	1	11	9	20	1	16	3	19	5	55	45	100	5	58	40	98
Leadership development	2	22	18	40	2	24	20	44	1	11	9	20	1	11	9	20	2	29	26	55	2	26	24	50	1	11	9	20	1	9	11	20	6	73	62	135	6	70	64	134
Feminist concept and women leadership	1	12	8	20	1	11	9	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	12	8	20	1	10	10	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	24	16	40	2	21	19	40
Religious fundamentalism and its impact on personal life and society	1	11	9	20	1	13	7	20	1	11	9	20	1	12	8	20	1	11	9	20	1	10	10	20	1	11	9	20	1	11	9	20	4	44	36	80	4	46	34	80
Family law, policy and women's rights	2	22	18	40	2	26	14	40	1	11	9	20	1	11	9	20	2	21	24	45	2	27	23	50	1	11	9	20	1	19	6	25	6	65	60	125	6	83	52	135
Government service policy	2	22	18	40	2	24	16	40	1	11	9	20	1	11	9	20	4	46	44	90	4	48	42	90	2	22	18	40	2	25	15	40	9	101	89	190	9	108	82	190
Gender and engendering methodology	2	22	18	40	2	23	20	43	1	11	9	20	1	13	12	25	1	11	9	20	1	13	12	25	1	11	9	20	1	9	11	20	5	55	45	100	5	58	55	113
Sub total	19	207	173	380	19	206	170	376	7	77	63	140	7	79	64	143	20	234	219	453	21	242	223	465	10	110	90	200	9	116	68	184	56	628	545	1,173	56	643	525	1168
Cultural training (Basic)	1	9	16	25	1	8	11	19	1	8	12	20	1	8	11	19	1	8	12	20	1	10	15	25	1	8	12	20	1	8	11	19	4	33	52	85	4	34	48	82
Cultural training (Advanced)	1	4	6	10	1	5	5	10	0	4	6	10	0	2	7	9	1	4	6	10	1	4	6	10	0	4	6	10	0	4	6	10	2	16	24	40	2	15	24	39
Sub Total	2	13	22	35	2	13	16	29	1	12	18	30	1	10	18	28	2	12	18	30	2	14	21	35	1	12	18	30	1	12	17	29	6	49	76	125	6	49	72	121
Total	34	370	295	665	33	347	285	632	16	200	140	340	16	169	177	346	39	454	414	868	40	461	424	885	20	233	187	420	19	242	159	401	109	1,257	1,036	2,293	108	1,219	1,045	2,264

Table-17: Refresher trainings

	Refresher Training							
	Plan				Achievement			
	Number	Participants			Number	Participants		
W		M	T	W		M	T	
Rajshahi	19	266	209	475	18	245	207	452
Dhaka	10	140	110	250	10	142	116	258
Chattogram	27	392	283	675	28	423	245	668
Khulna	14	196	154	350	14	203	147	350
Total	70	994	756	1,750	70	1,013	715	1,728

Table-18: Workshops

Training issue	Rajshahi				Dhaka				Chattogram				Khulna				Total																							
	P		A		P		A		P		A		P		A		P		A																					
	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T								
Right to Information Act & its use	9	117	108	225	9	137	92	229	5	65	60	125	5	66	65	131	12	175	125	300	12	221	96	317	7	91	841	932	7	119	56	175	33	448	1134	1582	33	543	309	852
Adivasi and land rights	4	52	48	100	4	51	58	109	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	52	48	100	4	51	58	109
Local Government and its role and functions	7	91	84	175	7	93	84	177	3	39	36	75	3	31	46	77	9	117	108	225	9	139	98	237	5	65	60	125	5	54	71	125	24	312	288	600	24	317	299	616
Household work and men's role	9	117	108	225	9	131	95	226	3	39	36	75	3	49	27	76	10	65	60	125	10	150	103	253	4	52	48	100	4	57	43	100	26	273	252	525	26	387	268	655
Impact of patriarchy and fundamentalisms	9	117	108	225	9	126	100	226	3	39	36	75	3	36	35	71	5	65	60	125	5	80	47	127	4	52	48	100	4	65	35	100	21	273	252	525	21	307	217	524
Women's access to market	9	126	99	225	9	141	84	225	3	42	33	75	3	45	35	80	10	130	120	250	10	174	85	259	4	56	44	100	4	54	46	100	26	354	296	650	26	414	250	664
Agriculture and women's role	9	126	99	225	9	138	90	228	3	42	33	75	3	36	42	78	10	140	110	250	10	166	101	267	4	56	44	100	4	61	39	100	26	364	286	650	26	401	272	673
Land and women's rights	7	98	77	175	7	107	72	179	3	42	33	75	3	41	35	76	8	84	66	150	8	149	65	214	5	70	55	125	5	80	45	125	23	294	231	525	23	377	217	594
Leadership development of women	9	225	0	225	9	131	100	231	3	75	0	75	3	79	0	79	5	125	0	125	5	82	55	137	4	90	10	100	4	92	8	100	21	515	10	525	21	384	163	547
Management of collective production	9	117	108	225	9	134	89	223	3	39	36	75	3	40	39	79	10	130	120	250	10	152	100	252	4	50	50	50	4	50	50	100	26	336	314	650	26	376	278	654
Workshop with Watch Committee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	10	15	25	1	11	15	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	10	15	25	1	11	15	26
Total	81	1,186	839	2,025	81	1,189	864	2,053	30	432	318	750	30	434	339	773	79	1,031	769	1800	79	1,313	750	2,063	41	582	1,200	1,732	41	632	393	1,025	231	3,231	3,126	6,357	231	3,568	2,346	5,914

Table-19: Staff training

Staff trainings	Plan			Achievement		
	W	M	T	W	M	T
ToT	18	18	36	15	18	33
Fundamental training on rights-based approach, mobilisation at primary level	18	17	35	8	10	18
Capacity building training on monitoring and reporting	18	17	35	2	3	5
Capacity building of cultural team on tools and techniques	15	15	30	10	10	20
Capacity building training for staff on advocacy	10	10	20	8	10	18
Total	79	77	156	43	51	94

Table-20: Cultural activities

	Number of cultural groups	Cultural Activity											
		Plan						Achievement					
		Cultural group meeting	Cultural discussion	Drama performance	March Padajatra	People's songs (gana sangeet)	Children's drama	Cultural group meeting	Cultural discussion	Drama performance	March Padajatra	People's songs (gana sangeet)	Children's drama
Rajshahi	20	170	17	102	3	54	29	95	11	91	3	42	23
Dhaka	9	95	10	66	1	34	38	158	13	109	1	56	40
Chattogram	14	155	14	139	3	45	22	160	15	133	3	89	36
Khulna	11	141	11	76	1	48	16	136	11	78	2	41	31
Total	54	561	52	383	8	181	105	549	50	411	9	228	130

Table-21: Activities with adolescents

	Dhaka				Chattogram				Rajshahi				Khulna				Total																							
	P		A		P		A		P		A		P		A		P		A																					
	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T												
Workshops	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T												
Sexual and reproductive health rights	1	13	12	25	1	15	12	27	1	13	12	25	1	14	13	27	1	13	12	25	1	13	12	25	1	14	13	27	4	52	48	100	4	58	50	108				
Gender-based violence	1	13	12	25	1	16	12	28	1	13	12	25	1	17	11	28	1	13	12	25	1	16	12	28	1	17	11	28	4	52	48	100	4	66	46	112				
Sub total	2	26	24	50	2	31	24	55	2	26	24	50	2	31	24	55	2	26	24	50	2	26	24	50	2	31	24	55	8	104	96	200	8	124	96	220				
Dialogues	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T	N	G	B	T				
Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment	2	25	25	50	2	32	23	55	8	125	45	170	8	127	46	173	1	15	15	30	1	18	14	32	1	13	12	25	1	17	9	26	12	178	97	275	12	194	92	286
Child Marriage and VaW	2	25	25	50	2	29	24	53	10	125	45	170	10	129	43	172	1	15	15	30	1	17	15	32	1	13	12	25	1	18	11	29	14	178	97	275	14	193	93	286
Sub total	4	50	50	100	4	61	47	108	18	250	90	340	18	256	89	345	2	30	30	60	2	35	29	64	2	26	24	50	2	35	20	55	26	356	194	550	26	387	185	572
Total	6	76	74	150	6	92	71	163	20	276	114	390	20	287	113	400	4	56	54	110	4	66	53	119	4	52	48	100	4	66	44	110	34	460	290	750	34	511	281	792

Table-22: Opinion sharing and dialogue meetings with government bodies and elected representatives

Meetings with	Initiative by	Land & water body	Shrimp aquaculture	Local development	Health	Education	Agriculture	Violence on women	Paddy harvesting	False cases and harassment	Fundamentalisms	Law and order situation	Total
Deputy Commissioner	Govt./Authority	0	19	2	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	2	29
	Group	32	0	4	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	4	49
Upazila Land Administration	Govt./Authority	105	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	10	120
	Group	271	0	7	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	15	296
Education Authority	Govt./Authority	0	0	22	6	243	0	5	0	0	7	14	297
	Group	0	0	68	15	300	0	14	0	0	0	23	420
Health Authority	Govt./Authority	0	0	0	173	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	179
	Group	0	0	10	0	271	0	13	0	0	0	22	316
Upazila Administration (UNO)	Govt./Authority	105	83	61	3	90	16	30	68	13	0	68	537
	Group	262	3	325	4	36	19	76	129	12	1	65	932
Police	Govt./Authority	19	25	125	12	16	8	140	63	165	2	118	693
	Group	52	1	25	0	4	25	163	0	175	3	128	576
Parliament Member	Govt./Authority	4	1	46	11	7	5	11	5	3	0	7	100
	Group	18	1	60	10	5	8	5	3	2	1	8	121
Union Parishad	Govt./Authority	71	4	273	42	56	65	99	129	70	7	62	878
	Group	190	6	631	22	2	182	167	18	74	2	84	1,378
Total	Gov. or elected authority	304	132	533	247	421	94	288	266	251	16	281	2,833
	Group	825	11	1,130	51	618	234	450	150	263	7	349	4,088
	Total	1,129	143	1,663	298	1,039	328	738	416	514	23	630	6,921

Table-23: Opinion sharing and dialogue meetings with political and civic stakeholders

Meeting with	Initiative by CBO's/landless group	Issues											Total
		Natural resource (land & water)	Shrimp aquaculture	Local govt. corruption	Local development	Health	Education	National/Intl. day celebrations	Violence on women	False cases and harassment	Fundamentalism	Law and order situation	
Political party	Party	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Group	1	0	3	3	0	0	0	25	0	0	3	35
Press Club	Press Club	1	0	22	8	2	0		4	17	5	0	59
	Group	27	0	5	4	5	0	27	31	34	8	9	150
Bar Council (BC)	BC	0	0	3	7	0	0	4	0	5	0	0	19
	Group	9		1	5	5	0	0	20	13	0	6	59
Women's organisations*	WO	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	11	8	0	3	25
	Group	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	13	0	7	41
Total	Stakeholders	1	0	25	18	2	0	4	15	30	5	3	103
	Group	37	0	9	12	10	0	27	97	60	8	25	285
	Total	38	0	34	30	12	0	31	112	90	13	28	388

* Non-government and activist groups such as Mahila Parishad and Sammilita Nari Samaj.

Table-24: Advocacy events

Issue/ Activity	Rajshahi								Dhaka								Chattogram								Khulna								Total											
	P				A				P				A				P				A				P				A				P				A							
	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T	N	W	M	T
Land use and share cropping and challenges	4	50	50	100	4	45	39	84	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	50	50	100	4	45	39	84
Dialogue with Union Parishad	18	300	200	500	18	307	192	499	0	0	0	0	3	25	51	76	5	90	123	213	9	79	151	230	0	0	0	0	4	35	55	90	23	390	323	713	34	446	449	895				
Dialogue with Upazila Land, Water, Fisheries depts.	9	125	75	200	9	122	61	183	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	15	20	35	1	14	28	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	140	95	235	10	136	89	225				
Dialogue with local secular activists	1	10	15	25	1	8	14	22	1	5	20	25	1	3	19	22	1	15	10	25	1	11	8	19	1	10	15	25	1	6	14	20	4	40	60	100	4	28	55	83				
Advocacy through journalist visits on land and water issues	2	0	20	20	2	0	27	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	20	20	2	0	27	27				
Total	34	485	360	845	34	482	333	815	1	5	20	25	4	28	70	98	7	120	153	273	11	104	187	291	1	10	15	25	5	41	69	110	43	620	548	1168	54	655	659	1314				

Table-25: Collective mobilisation

Issue	Issue raised by (group)	Movements initiated					Movements won					Ongoing movements as of Dec 2019
		Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chattogram	Khulna	Total no. of movements	Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chattogram	Khulna	Total no. of movement won	
Violence against women: Dowry, divorce, polygamy, rape, physical assault, kidnapping etc.	W	219	38	358	28	643	211	37	338	18	604	39
	M	65	1	151	7	224	63	1	149	4	217	7
Fundamentalism	W	7	0	8	2	17	7	0	8	2	17	0
	M	1	0	2	0	3	1	0	2	0	3	0
Rights on <i>khas</i> land, water bodies, and resistance against commercial shrimp aquaculture, use of chemical fertiliser and pesticides, eviction of landless from land, looting of paddy, physical assault etc.	W	15	21	10	7	53	14	21	10	5	50	3
	M	33	34	19	12	98	31	34	17	6	88	10
Resistance against corruption in Local Govt., misappropriation of public resources, graft, unequal wages etc.	W	38	3	13	10	64	35	2	13	10	60	4
	M	23	1	41	6	71	21	1	41	4	67	4
Total	W	279	62	389	47	777	267	60	369	35	731	46
	M	122	36	213	25	396	116	36	209	14	375	21
	Total	401	98	602	72	1,173	383	96	578	49	1,106	67

Table-26: Access and control over natural resources

	Khas land and water bodies (acres)					Economic Value			
	Registration of khas land	Possession of khas land	Control over water bodies	Recovered land from shrimp farms	Recovered inheritance property (women)	Total	Beneficiary households	BDT	USD (approx.)
Rajshahi	0.75	0.4	13	0	6.11	20.26	60	10,70,90,000	12,59,882
Dhaka	0	0	0	0	0.17	0.17	2	27,20,000	32,000
Chattogram	1.05	297.48	0	0	3.05	301.58	259	40,72,46,000	47,91,129
Khulna	0	0	0	0	0.42	0.42	7	67,20,000	79,058
Total	1.8	297.88	13	0	9.75	322.43	328	52,37,76,000	61,62,070

Table-27: Cases and settlements

Case type	New cases	2019				2018	
		Resolved cases			Appeal	New cases	Resolved cases
		T	I	Ag			
Criminal	5	15	14	1	1	3	15
Groups as plaintiffs	4	11	10	1	1	2	5
Groups as accused	1	4	4	0	0	1	10
Civil	9	6	4	2	1	5	3
Groups as plaintiffs	7	4	2	2	1	2	1
Groups as accused	2	1	2	0	0	3	2
Violence against Women	46	14	14	0	2	16	8
Groups as plaintiffs	45	14	14	0	2	16	7
Groups as accused	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	60	35	32	3	4	24	26

I = In favour, Ag = Against and A = Appeal

Table-28: Control over land recovered from illegal occupation

	Division	Movements for recovery of owned land		Beneficiary	Movement against commercial shrimp culture			Beneficiary	Inheritance property		
		No. of movements	Land (acres)		No. of movements	Land (acres)	Water bodies (acres)		No. of movements	Land (acres)	Beneficiary
Up to Dec 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
	Chattogram	22	892	1,063	0	0	0	0	98	10.54	69
	Khulna	18	135.27	250	67	1,182	1,122	8,028	33	3.14	31
	Total	57	1,309.05	2,389	67	1,182	1,122	8,028	299	34.17	222
Increase in 2019	Rajshahi	3	0.08	4	0	0	0	0	65	6.11	52
	Dhaka	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0.17	2
	Chattogram	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	47	3.05	35
	Khulna	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0.42	7
	Total	3	0.08	4	0	0	0	0	130	9.75	96
Total Dec 2019	Rajshahi	16	262.86	619	0	0	0	0	229	22.9	164
	Dhaka	4	19	461	0	0	0	0	9	3.87	12
	Chattogram	22	892	1,063	0	0	0	0	145	13.59	104
	Khulna	18	135.27	250	67	1,182	1,122	8,028	46	3.56	38
	Total	60	1,309.13	2,393	67	1,182	1,122	8,028	429	43.92	318

Table-29: Election in local-level committees

		Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chattogram	Khulna	Total
Contested in UP election*	W	0	0	1	0	1
	M	0	0	2	0	2
	T	0	0	3	0	3
Elected in UP election	W	0	0	0	0	0
	M	0	0	1	0	1
	T	0	0	1	0	1
School Management Committee (Contested)	W	10	4	41	10	65
	M	11	8	44	12	75
	T	21	12	85	22	140
School Management Committee (Elected)	W	9	2	25	7	43
	M	8	3	22	9	42
	T	17	5	47	16	85
Market Management Committee (Contested)	W	17	4	0	9	30
	M	60	4	4	21	89
	T	77	8	4	30	119
Market Management Committee (Elected)	W	5	1	0	6	12
	M	33	2	2	14	51
	T	38	3	2	20	63
Sluice Gate Management Committee (Contested)	W	0	1	20	4	25
	M	0	2	27	4	33
	T	0	3	47	8	58
Sluice Gate Management Committee (Elected)	W	0	0	13	2	15
	M	0	1	18	3	22
	T	0	1	31	5	37
Number of committees contested for		54	9	186	27	276
Number of committees elected in		29	9	52	21	111
Total contested	W	27	9	62	23	121
	M	71	14	77	37	199
	T	98	23	139	60	320
Total elected	W	14	3	38	15	70
	M	41	6	43	26	116
	T	55	9	81	41	186

* By-election in one union.

Table-30: Nomination in local-level committees

		Rajshahi	Dhaka	Chattogram	Khulna	Total
Community Health Clinic Management Committee (Nominated)	W	2	3	15	6	26
	M	3	0	25	5	33
	T	5	3	40	11	59
Sugarcane Purchase Committee	W	0	0	6	0	6
	M	0	0	7	0	7
	T	0	0	13	0	13
Jongee Protection Committee	W	2	0	5	5	12
	M	4	5	10	3	22
	T	6	5	15	8	34
LGSP Committee	W	3	0	0	0	3
	M	8	0	6	0	14
	T	11	0	6	0	17
Policing Committee	W	13	0	5	0	18
	M	8	2	3	1	14
	T	21	2	8	1	32
Union Parishad Standing Committee (Nominated)						
Social Welfare and Disaster Management Committee (Nominated)	W	0	0	0	0	0
	M	3	0	0	0	3
	T	3	0	0	0	3
Law and Order Situation Control Committee (Nominated)	W	0	0	0	0	0
	M	1	0	0	0	1
	T	1	0	0	0	1
Agriculture and Fisheries Standing Committee (Nominated)	W	1	0	0	0	1
	M	3	0	0	0	3
	T	4	0	0	0	4
Education, Health Family Planning Standing Committee (Nominated)	W	2	1	0	0	3
	M	2	0	0	0	2
	T	4	1	0	0	5
Birth-Death Registration Standing Committee (Nominated)	W	1	0	0	0	1
	M	0	0	0	0	0
	T	1	0	0	0	1
Environment and Forest Standing Committee (Nominated)	W	1	0	0	0	1
	M	3	0	0	0	3
	T	4	0	0	0	4
Sanitation and Water Supply Standing Committee (Nominated)	W	1	0	0	0	1
	M	3	0	0	0	3
	T	4	0	0	0	4
Number of Nominated Members	W	26	4	31	11	72
	M	38	7	51	9	105
	Total	64	11	82	20	177

Table-31: Access to government services

	Total					Krishi Card					VGF Card					VGD Card				Ration Card				
	W	M	Total Card	D	SW/WH	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	D	SW
Rajshahi	19,454	20,161	39,615	567	3,290	86	11	75	9	4	32,298	15,727	16,571	454	2,656	1,210	1,210	63	368	3,297	300	2,997	19	84
Dhaka	687	562	1,249	12	43	12	1	11	0	0	133	88	45	6	0	121	121	6	21	0	0	0	0	0
Chattogram	8,959	11,041	20,000	56	1,921	572	32	540	0	9	15,351	6,841	8,510	32	1,672	405	405	3	42	2,695	1,034	1,661	13	114
Khulna	3,043	2,261	5,304	69	285	0	0	0	0	0	4,284	2,404	1,880	22	198	157	157	0	57	648	372	276	47	15
Total	32,143	34,025	66,168	713	5,539	670	44	626	9	13	52,066	25,060	27,006	514	4,526	1,893	1,893	72	488	6,640	1,706	4,934	79	213

D = Person with disability, SW = Single women and WH = Women-headed household

	Elder/Widow Allowances					Maternity Allowances	100 Day Employment Generation Programme					Food for Work			
	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	W	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	SW
Rajshahi	511	346	165	28	101	106	74	29	45	3	21	129	73	56	30
Dhaka	24	23	1	0	1	9	910	409	501	0	21	36	36	0	0
Chattogram	422	248	174	5	32	86	50	45	5	0	45	0	0	0	0
Khulna	58	37	21	0	11	8	133	55	78	0	4	0	0	0	0
Total	1,015	654	361	33	145	209	1,167	538	629	3	91	165	109	56	30

	Krishi Subsidy					Indigenous Community Card				Dalit Card				Shelter Home			
	Total Card	W	M	D	SW	Total Card	W	M	SW	Total Card	W	M	SW	Total Card	W	M	SW
Rajshahi	28	4	24	0	0	21	10	11	2	3	2	1	1	15	5	10	1
Dhaka	4	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chattogram	54	7	47	3	0	0	0	0	0	14	0	14	0	61	18	43	7
Khulna	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	7	3	0
Total	86	11	75	3	0	21	10	11	2	17	2	15	1	86	30	56	8

	Fish Fry Distribution				Disability Card			Sanitary Napkin	Other	
	Total Card	W	M	SW	Total Card	W	M		Tube well	Toilet
Rajshahi	376	195	181	22	61	36	25	1,400	105	115
Dhaka	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0
Chattogram	30	2	28	0	35	16	19	225	36	0
Khulna	0	0	0	0	6	3	3	0	4	0
Total	406	197	209	22	102	55	47	1,625	155	115

Table-32: Economic value of government services

	Total Cards	W	M	Person with disability	Single Women/Women-headed household
Rajshahi	39,615	19,454	20,161	567	3,290
Dhaka	1,249	687	562	12	43
Chattogram	20,000	8,959	11,041	56	1,921
Khulna	5,304	3,043	2,261	69	285
Total Card	66,168	32,143	34,025	713	5,539
BDT	146,018,350	79,135,713	66,882,637	1,758,449	13,636,996
USD	1,717,862	931,008	786,854	20,687	160,435

Table-33: Money saved as a result of collective movements against corruption *

	Prevention of corruption in education sector and student stipends		Prevention of corruption in development project as wages		Prevention of corruption in health sector		Prevention of corruption in local infrastructure development	
	G	B	W	M	W	M	W	M
Rajshahi	2,565	2,085	162	80	12,885	10,183	0	0
Dhaka	22	17	420	480	5,139	4,482	5	5
Chattogram	6,440	5,457	0	0	16,524	13,373	48	142
Khulna	37	29	40	40	12,628	8,751	20	12
Beneficiary families	9,064	7,588	622	600	47,176	36,789	73	159
Total BDT	10,543,058	12,043,500	5,501,00	393,500	8,820,550	4,108,650	267,700	1,179,700
USD	124,035	141688	6,471	4,629	103,771	48,337	3,149	13,878

Table-34: Mobilisations against VaW

Year	Domestic violence	Sexual harassment	Dowry	Bigamy	Divorce	Maintenance allowance	Child marriage	Total
2018	971	334	284	111	195	168	177	2,240
2019	1,056	322	227	92	103	123	121	2,044

* Money saved as a result of prevention of graft for access to services and safety net benefits or payment of due wages.

Table-35: Women's participation in household decision-making

	Daughter's education		Daughter's marriage		Visit to parents' house		Purchase/sell of land or asset		Purchase/sell of livestock		Grocery purchase	
	Women alone	Jointly	Women alone	Jointly	Women alone	Jointly	Women alone	Jointly	Women alone	Jointly	Women alone	Jointly
Rajshahi	274	583	68	299	149	1,058	87	298	262	459	127	690
Dhaka	69	146	17	75	37	264	22	67	66	115	148	127
Chattogram	240	510	59	262	131	925	76	234	230	401	217	603
Khulna	103	219	25	112	56	397	33	100	98	172	222	259
Total	686	1,458	169	748	373	2,644	218	699	656	1,147	714	1,679

Table-36: Men's participation in household chores

	Participation in washing clothes	Participation in cooking	Taking care of children	Participation in household chores	Total
Rajshahi	778	980	416	1,059	3,233
Dhaka	164	220	207	265	856
Chattogram	617	876	364	927	2,784
Khulna	296	372	156	397	1,221
Total	1,855	2,448	1,143	2,648	8,094

Table-37: Reproductive health

	Decision about pregnancy		Use of birth control		Adolescent vaccination	Gynaecological treatment		Place of delivery			Education on SRHR		Hygienic latrine received (household)
	W	Jointly	W	M	G	W	Jointly	House	Presence of midwife	Hospital	G	B	
Rajshahi	73	288	3,285	994	1,879	914	374	204	208	364	508	312	1,235
Dhaka	18	72	821	249	470	217	104	51	52	91	127	78	309
Chattogram	64	252	2,874	870	1,644	734	317	179	182	318	445	273	1081
Khulna	27	108	1232	373	705	312	96	77	78	136	191	117	463
Total	182	720	8,212	2,486	4,698	2,177	891	511	520	909	1,271	780	3,088