

# ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 2009 - JUNE 2010



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# PREFACE

Nagorik Uddyog (The Citizens Initiative) has begun its activities in 1995. Over the years we have gained valuable experiences and strengthened the capacity of the organisation. We are confident now to move forward to achieve mission of our organisation. have

This annual report contain activities of our organisation within the period between July 2009 and June 2010. We hope this report will provide a deep sense of impact that NU made. We, the implementation team of Nagorik Uddyog, are grateful to the Board of Directors, people for whom we work and to our supporters (Bread for the world, EED, Christian Aid, One World Action and Manusher Jonno Foundation). We hope to have their continued support in future.

We are happy to publish this annual report for wider circulation and to celebrate our achievements.

Zakir Hossain  
Chief Executive  
Nagorik Uddyog

# Nagorik Uddyog - introduction a brief

Nagorik Uddyog (Citizen's Initiative) is a non profit national development organization working for promotion and enhancement of fundamental human rights of the excluded poor, underprivileged and minorities through implementation of community demand driven development initiatives. Its prime focus is on greater and effective participation of citizen's especially women irrespective of class, culture, or creed in its development initiatives. The target population government and civil society representatives and development practitioners constitute its stakeholders and have been actively participating in its activities to enrich the lives of the target population through creating a just society. Commitment to its vision and mission has been the prime mover of NU to achieve excellence in performance

In course of its long experience of about two and half decade (since 1995) of working with and learning from the people propelled NU to develop its approach in development that directly reflects people's perception, aspiration, need, involvement and leadership for desired positive changes in livelihood, governance and growth potentials. Nu has gained prominence as a prominent and leading development entity and actor. An active member of many important national and international development forums and networks, it is actively involved in advocacy and lobbying to establish Human Rights and good governance at the national and international level.

The name "Nagorik Uddyog" (*"The Citizen's Initiative"*) was chosen hence because it was believed to best capture the organization's emphasis on people-centered, bottom-up development processes. Specifically, since its inception, NU has worked not only to strengthen local government in Bangladesh via the raising of the general masses' awareness of people's basic human rights but, just as critically, building people's capacity to 'take initiative' – to pursue and realize these rights on their own. This entails engaging the people at the level at which they carry out their day-to-day lives; empowering them and helping to provide an enabling condition by which they can set up institutions and mobilize themselves. It also entails challenging those prevailing social customs which inhibit genuine human development. Toward this end, NU implements, carries out and/or undertakes action research workshops, human rights awareness and training programs, and legal aid to the poor, marginalized and disadvantaged in Bangladesh, in particular rural women. NU also provides logistical and technical support to various groups and movements, such as those involving Bangladesh's Dalit community and youths and students.

NU recognizes that democratic elections are by themselves insufficient in fulfilling democracy; that the poor and marginalized must be given power to participate in and contribute to decision-making processes that affect their lives. Accordingly, NU holds special interest in democratizing "*Shalish*", Bangladesh's traditional rural dispute-resolution system. Bangladesh's formal court and judicial systems are just too far out of reach for most rural people. A fair and equitable *Shalish* thus entails unprecedented access to justice for rural Bangladeshis, especially women – the 'poorest of the poor' in this country.

## **Vision**

NU holds a vision of a Bangladesh without poverty where socially and environmentally conscious citizens have the ability to achieve their full potential as human beings irrespective of gender or social status.

## **Mission**

Mission of NU is to build and promote capacities of the community institutions through human resource development creating sustainable livelihood opportunities instituting and institutionalizing fundamental rights for mainstreaming the family members of excluded poor underprivileged and ethnic minorities

## **Goals and Objectives**

- Establish accessible justice through mediation and legal aid support
- Promote popular participation to ensure a fair, open, participatory and accountable electoral system
- Raise human and women's rights consciousness at the grassroots level
- Create an environment conducive to the exercising of democratic rights
- Support the struggle of women at the grassroots level, ensuring their effective and broad participation in the electoral process
- Conduct training programmes on human rights for community leaders, activists, and NGO workers
- Establish and consolidate a network of national and international organizations in the field of human rights and
- Conduct research on various aspects of Bangladeshi society and the global order relevant to local human rights situations.

## **Governance of NU**

At present NU is run by a ten-person General Committee consisting of a Chief Executive Officer and an Executive Committee of 5 male and 4 female members. This General Committee oversees the organization's basic operation and makes decisions as to its strategic agenda.

Below the general Committee NU is broken into seven distinct operational units that handle either the organization's administrative affairs or indeed carry out its projects and programs. These six units are known as:

- Programs
- Technical Support
- Partnership and Networking
- Advocacy, Research & Communication
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Human Resource Management and Development
- Administration and Finance

NU's main office is located in Lalmatia, Dhaka, and the organization has nine field offices operating in five Bangladesh districts: Rangpur, Tangail, Barisal, Pirojpur and Munshiganj. NU holds a total staff of 193 people, 108 male and 85 female. A diagram of NU's organizational structure is enclosed in the Appendix.

## **NU's Basic Strategy**

At the most basic level, NU utilizes a general three-point strategy to meet its objectives. Each of NU's major projects and initiatives, fall under one or more of these three points.

- Awareness-Building
- Capacity-Building
- Networking and Campaigning

## **Major Projects of NU, 2009– 2010**

Since its inception, NU has worked to strengthen local government in Bangladesh via dual imperatives of, in one hand, raising awareness among the general masses of people's basic human rights, building people's capacity to pursue and realize these rights on the other. NU recognizes that democratic elections are by themselves insufficient in fulfilling democracy; that the poor, marginalized, and disadvantaged must be given the power to participate in and contribute to decision-making processes

that affect their lives. Accordingly, NU strives to provide an enabling condition for the people to set up institutions and mobilize themselves.

NU's project areas are manifold, but largely concentrate on empowering people at the grassroots level and strengthening those institutions that form the pillars of good governance. NU holds special interest in democratizing the historically gender-imbalanced "*Shalish*", Bangladesh's traditional rural dispute-resolution system. A fair and equitable *Shalish* especially entails unprecedented access to justice for rural women – the 'poorest of the poor' in this country – and in turn a new and exciting horizon in Bangladesh's development journey.

These are NU's major project areas and initiatives for 2007-2008, with descriptions of the directions each project took in the past year as well as, when applicable, an outline of progress made and challenges faced by each project.

## Project Run by NU: 2009-2010

Sl.	Name of the project	Main feature of the project	funding organization	Duration	Budget (in BDT)
<b>Project operated by direct supervision</b>					
1.	Access to Justice through Human Rights Education & Community Mediation	The project aims to uphold human rights, especially to promote women's rights based on the principles of equality and justice.	Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED), Germany Bread for the World, Germany Christian Aid, UK	July 2007 to June 2010	28,665,000
2.	Promoting Women's Access to Justice and Human Rights		Manusher Jonno Foundation	September 2008 to June 2011	3,42,90,666
3.	Strengthening Citizen's Participation in Improving Local Governance	The project aims at strengthening the existing mechanism of local governance.	European Commission	March 2010 to February 2013	3,69,77,666
<b>Project operated through partnership and networking approach</b>					
4.	Strengthening Urban Poor Women's Organizations in Dhaka	Build a coalition of women's organizations working with informal sector women laborers and Dalits for joint campaigning and policy advocacy activities.	One World Action	April 2009 to March 2011	70,49,200
5.	Building National Campaign to protect and promote the Rights of Dalits in Bangladesh	A country free of caste based discrimination in which Dalits and all excluded groups can live with dignity, prosperity, and security.	One World Action	Jan 2008 to December 2010	55,52,856
6.	Right to Information	An inclusive and sustainable campaign that promotes, protests and popularises the rights to information in the project area as well as national level	One World Action	January 2009 to December 2010	43,35,991

## Legal Status

NU is registered (Reg. No -1240, dated 23/2/98) as a public organizations in NGO Affairs Bureau. It is also registered with Joint Stock Company (Reg. No.360 (17)/95.



# 1. Community Activism for Justice and Human Rights

NU believes without the development of alternative institutional structure-which will be equitable and sustainable in the long run, realization of rights, access to justice will never be materialized. NU thus strives to see an increase in administrative participation and stronger representative structures at the grassroots level, giving poor people improved access to justice and other social services irrespective of gender or social class.

The adoption of international human rights instruments by Bangladesh at first glance shows its strong constitutional commitments to protect human rights with provisions confirming the primacy of these rights over existing laws. Yet, despite this commitment at the formal level, there is widespread violation of human rights coupled with the absence of a general 'culture of rights', i.e. a general understanding and acceptance that all people have equal rights regardless of their ethnicity, class or gender, and are entitled to claim these rights under the law.

Government institutions are not perceived to be committed to meeting their obligations, or upholding the human rights, good governance as they are prone to the influence of political parties and groups with vested interests, and lack capacity, transparency and accountability. This is particularly so at the local level, where provision of basic services by local authorities is marked by pervasive corruption and indifference to violations of the rights of people especially vulnerable groups in society.

Access to justice is a fundamental means of establishing human rights. But there lies immense gap between formal entitlements and actual access and it makes justice within the formal state system beyond the means of poor people. As a result, informal dispute resolution practices remains popular alongside formal judicial institutions in Bangladesh. But the structure of this alternative dispute resolution also reflects the unequal class and gender hierarchy that characterize social relations in rural Bangladesh. It is male dominated especially by the elite and powerful people, women are not only prevented from making their voices heard in a traditional shalish, their presence even on the margins of a public hearing is strongly discouraged.

The human rights situation in Bangladesh calls for a greater awareness of human rights at all levels of society. A stronger citizen's activism is needed in promoting the human rights values not only in relation to the state, but also equally important, in the daily life of the individuals within the community and family.<sup>1</sup> It is in this context that Nagorik Uddyog answers the call to promote human rights, especially women's rights.. NU's method and strategy in this regard are manifold but essentially consists of following initiatives-

- 1.1. Strengthening people's organization at community level
- 1.2. Empowering women
- 1.3. Strengthening capacity of local government

## 1.1. STRENGTHENING PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION

NU emphasizes on building and strengthening people's organization with monitoring capacity for meaningful access to justice of marginalized people as well as development human rights activism. It has initiated Human Rights Monitoring Groups (HRMG) which observes and watches human rights situation at the community level, bring violations of human rights to the attention of *Shalish* and helping mediate subsequent *Shalish* hearings. It works using three wings at different layers in the community-

- a) Ward *Shalish* Committee
- b) Union level Human Rights Monitoring Group
- c) Upazila level Human Rights Monitoring Group

### **a) Ward-level *Shalish* Committees (WSC)**

WSCs are formed to ensure appropriate practice of state law and to reduce the incidence of harassment and intimidation of individuals during mediation processes. The members are chosen after a thorough canvassing of local opinions. Individuals with high social acceptability and reputation for their integrity and neutrality are identified as potential members of the committees. The members are provided legal-aid training for enhancing their comprehensive understanding of existing state laws, thereby helping to ensure that *Shalish* verdicts conform to the State's legal framework.

## Activity of HRMG

Event	Event done	participant		Total
		Female	Male	
Quarterly Union level meeting of HRMG	176	1023	1591	2614
Six-monthly Upzaila level meeting of HRMG	18	128	241	369
HRMG annual conference	9	590	898	1488
Quarterly meeting of WSC	1013	5189	7542	12731
Training on law and mediation for HRMG	23	247	456	703
Training on law and mediation for WSC	6	37	87	124

The WSC consists of 4 male and 2 female in each ward and a total of 4752 members (1584 female; 3168 male) are representing in 792 WSC in 88 unions of nine working areas. The WSC meets on quarterly basis to outline their activities, describe *Shalish* participation and discuss the human rights situation in the community. The members follow up on the decisions taken in the previous meetings, identify strategies for overcoming obstacles and devise future work plans. They also hold special meetings when the need arises, for instance when a *Shalish* session experiences complications.

### b) Human Rights Monitoring Groups (HRMG)

#### *Union-level HRMGs*

A total of 88 HRMGs, each formed with selected members of the WSC who are especially interested in the community's human rights situation, are active and functioning at community level. Each HRMG consists of twenty-seven members from nine wards (2 male, 1 female from each ward) of a union. Acting as a human rights "watchdog", HRMGs play an effective role in local mediation processes. Members of HRMGs are given extensive training on human rights law as well as mediation techniques. 'Refresher courses' are given as required.

## ***Annual Conference of HRMGs***

*Each year all of the union-level HRMGs convene to hold an annual HRMG conference in their respective areas covered by NU. These conferences are aimed at reviewing and discussing the responsibilities, achievements and strategies utilized by each HRMG over the course of the year. It also serves as a forum for planning future HRMG events and strategies. A report of the human rights situation is presented at each conference. Conferences typically consist of district and upazilla-level administration, UP representatives, other development organizations, journalists, educationalists and members of civil society. This board-spectrum representation entails that the conferences often play the dual role of being a public hearing. This year 9 conferences of HRMGs held in Nine working areas participated by 590 female 898 male.*

Each union-level HRMG holds quarterly meetings to review and discuss the human rights situation in their respective community as well as condition of *Shalish*. Members share experiences and describe interesting aspects of recent *Shalish* hearings. They also discuss relevant State laws, which enable members to keep each other updated and informed. These meetings are beneficial for monitoring *Shalish* procedures and to help uphold human rights activism at the community level. During the reporting period a total of 176 monitoring meetings have been held and attended by 2614 members, 39% of which were women. Moreover, 46 units of HRMGs received training on law and mediation in the reporting period.

### ***Upazilla-level HRMGs***

NU operates nine HRMGs at the upazilla level. These HRMGs function as higher level 'networks', which provide a broader discussion and awareness platform than what could otherwise be achieved from the union-level HRMGs alone. Every union provides 3 of its members (2 men, 1 woman) to their respective upazilla-level HRMG. This year each upazilla-level HRMG met 18 times. In total, upazilla-level HRMG meetings were attended by 369 members (male 241, female 128).

NU observed all the community organizations want to see their forum independent and self-reliant organizations in the long-run. All the committees have democratically (elected) structures which are instrumental in developing better sense of ownership among the members. Most members trained and have had preliminary understanding of human and women rights.

The HRMGs are much more visible in the community as a collective strength in protecting rights of people especially women and eliminating all kinds of social abuses and prejudice from the community. Their collective or individual efforts in resisting hilla marriage, child marriage, domestic violence, establishing inheritance right of women, realizing rights of alimony and maintenance, has made them a great comfort to the destitute people in one hand and a pressure group to the influential people on the other hand.

<b>Protection of Rights by HRMG, GWLN</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Number</b>
Child marriage resistance	185
Dowry resistance	49
Polygamy	7
Hilla marriage and oral divorce	17
Marriage registration	67

The HRMG members increased participation in social activities and social organizations enhanced their acceptance in the community. Many members are representing in maximum social organization in the community. Their growing relation with UP bodies has made the UP more accountable and accessible for people. For instance, with the assistance of UP they helped a large number of vulnerable people in getting VGF cards, VGD cards, elderly allowance, widow allowance, and allowance for disable and other support from government and non government organizations. During natural calamities like flood and cyclone sidr, they responded to the affected people through distributing relief goods, giving shelter, repairing houses, educational institutions, mosque and roads with their own contribution.

## Access to Justice

NU observed increased access of community men and women, especially the poor, to community mediation and justice system. Quantitatively, more community people now have more access to shalish. This is due in part to the presence of NU facilitating shalish in addition to the usual UP and traditional shalish groups. However, the main factor is the quality of NU-facilitated shalish that contributed to the people's level of trust, belief and willingness to access, which in turn results to increase in people accessing shalish. This is further proven by the increase in the number of communities settling disputes according to law, and increase in the number of disputes settled lawfully.

The figure in the table -9 shows that during 2009-2010 NU received around 38% more complaints than 2007-2008 but a few increase from the previous year. This is because NU initiated community groups mediators handled around 1750 cases of different categories (please see table -11 for details) which was not officially registered with NU and did not require any logistical support or other resource. NU termed it unregistered shalish and process of mediation and decision of followed by the community groups were quite democratic, lawful and acceptable by the disputants.

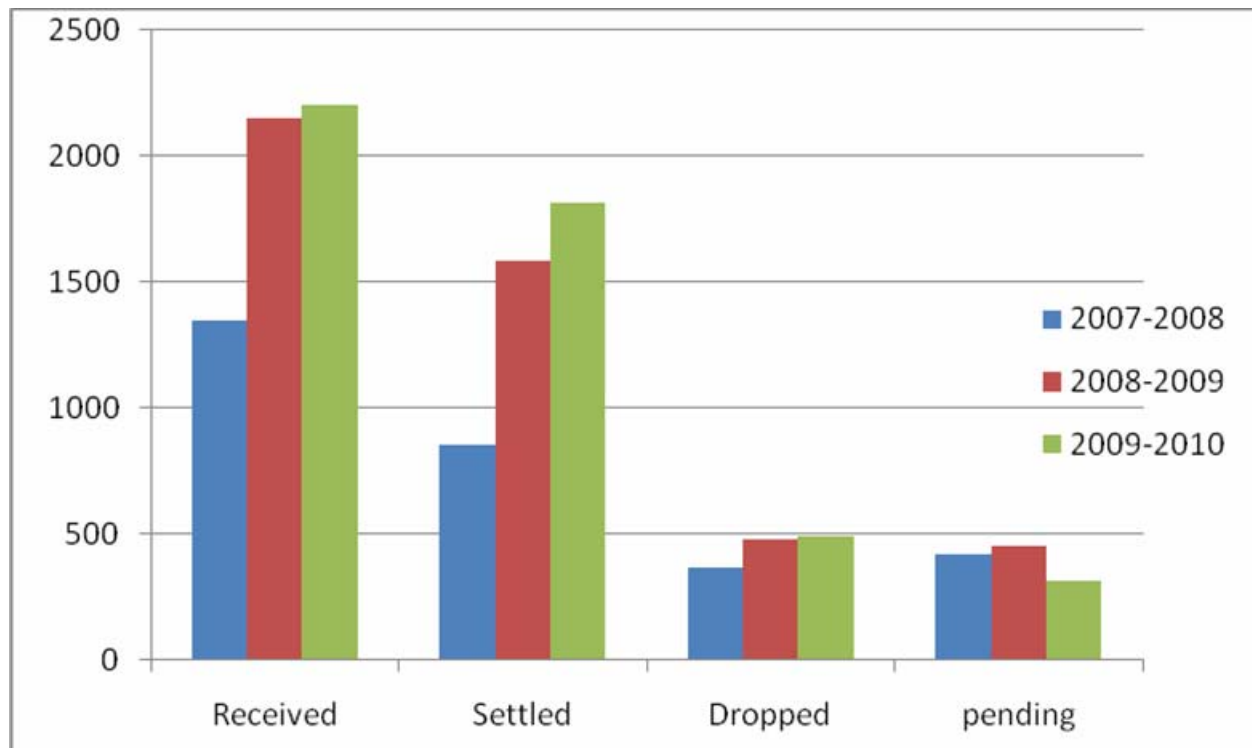


Figure- 9: comparative status of shalish facilitated by NU in last three years ( 2007-2010)

NU helped in facilitating 1817 complaints during 2009-2010. From the recorded 2645 complaints (This year received 2203, last year pending 442) of different categories, 1817 complaints have been resolved through peaceful mediation session. The cases resolved, dropped, referred to the court and remained pending respectively are 69%, 19%, 1% and 11% of all cases recorded.

**Table – 5: Status of Shalish (2009-2010)**

Types of	last years	Received	Settled	Dropped	Send to	pending
Domestic violence *	166	859	716	188	05	116
Alimony	04	42	29	10	0	07
Maintenance	86	201	157	84	04	42
2 <sup>nd</sup> Marriage	16	32	25	14	03	06
Divorce	14	42	37	09	01	09
Regaining conjugal life	24	213	147	64	0	26
Dowry	01	05	03	01	0	02
violence among neighbors	21	284	268	21	0	16
land	58	232	190	58	0	42
Inheritance	08	12	07	08	01	04
Others***	44	281	238	37	01	49
Total	442	2203	1817	494	15	319

19% of complaints have been dropped as the allegation found to be false during investigation. Besides, in some cases disputants settle their disputes at the family level with the interventions of guardians; they don't want to make it public for settlement. In some cases NU had to arrange shalish several times to settle it and also had to mediate some shalish again which was settled earlier. However, NU strictly followed up the settled shalish.

The percentage of women as mediators including women representatives of UP has been increased remarkably. And these increases were duly credited to NU initiative of making gender sensitive mediation. However, the remarkable achievement of Nagorik Uddyog is not in these numbers but in the quality of their participation.

## NU's approach to mediation process

Shalish committees at ward level (WSC) conduct the shalish with participation of members of other institutions, such as HRMG and GWLN. Training on law & mediation and human rights enables them to practice state law and prevent any kind of harassment and intimidation during mediation procedures. These groups of local elites give legitimacy to NU's shalish and ensure proper enforcement of verdicts. To enhance women participation in different committees especially in shalish procedures, one third of members of shalish committees are reserved for female. The women leaders, trained with legal knowledge participated in the shalish in good number and play effective role in decision-making.

NU has developed a systematic method of recording the complaints for shalish. From receiving to settling the complaints different forms are used in this process. When complaint reaches the community Mobilizer, a formal *shalish* registration takes place at the local NU office. The complainant must fill out a *shalish* form specifying the nature, history and details of the grievance. The *shalish* form (see Table below) serves as an official record of the proceedings. The local staff then undertakes a fact-finding mission to investigate the validity of the charges. On the basis of this evidence, NU sends a notice announcing an upcoming *shalish* to both parties. If both sides are willing, a mutually convenient date and place of *shalish* is fixed. In case one party does not show up on the designated date, NU will set new dates. After the successful resolution of disputes, NU Community Mobilizer will follow up the decisions made in the shalish for three months. In a few cases, NU refers the aggrieved party to the courts. Shalishes are conducted in a participatory and open process where both sides are encouraged to present their case and decisions are made as far as possible on the basis of consensus.

<b>Groups</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Total</b>
WSC	403	1678	2081
HRMG	494	2362	2856
GWLN	893	0	893
vulnerable	30	0	30
UP	153	601	754
Local elite	935	6238	7173
<b>Total</b>	<b>2908</b>	<b>10879</b>	<b>13787</b>



Whereas before they were relegated as mere silent observers of mediation, now they are actively participating in the discussions and decision making. This year NU arranged 2326 sessions of mediation to settle registered shalish where as many as 13787 mediators including UP members, local elite, community people and NU initiated community groups attended of which 21% were female. Participation of vulnerable women as mediators was very significant for establishing a pro poor and gender sensitive mediation at grassroots level.

Aside from access to justice, NU's mediation has also enabled people, especially women to increase their access to financial resources through the realization of alimony, maintenance and other payments due to NU's shalish system. In the reporting period, 133 women received 4900880 taka as alimony, maintenance for her and children and dowry related compensation etc. This money helps provide these women with important financial security and in some cases also allowed these women to buy cropland, build a house or invest in a small business. In some cases NU helped women to save their *Shalish*-earned money in a formal bank account.

**Table - 7: Status of Monetary Realization (2009-2010)**

Category of Realization	Type of beneficiary (number and amount of realization in tk)				Total Beneficiaries	Total amount of realization
	Female	Realization	Male	Realization		
Alimony and maintenance	130	4691480	0	0	130	4691480
Dowry back	3	30000	0	0	3	30000
Compensation for physical assault,	30	179400	82	427550	112	606950
Compensation for property damage	16	133600	58	563900	74	697500
loan back	31	251900	59	954750	90	1206650
	210	5286380	199	1946200	409	7232580

The increasing number of disputes resolved peacefully through NU facilitated shalish, manifests the recognition of the organization in the rural community as a watchdog or shalish. It further demonstrates the effectiveness of NU's interventions in redefining traditional shalish in a way that integrates knowledge and principles of human rights and practices with gender justice. This process of change is reflected in a positive transition towards villager's increasing access to justice and decreasing number of court cases in the working areas of NU.

<b>Community Mediation out of Registration with NU</b>			
<b>Type of complaints</b>	<b>Number of complaints settled</b>	<b>Type of complaints</b>	<b>Number of complaints settled</b>
Maintenance	44	Divorce	44
Domestic Violence	315	Alimony	22
Family dispute	295	Compensation for property damage	22
Land related	370	Dowry	22
Financial transaction	62	loan	51
Violence among the disputants	370	Stealing	23
Polygamy	11	others	99
<b>Total 1750 cases settled</b>			

### **Legal Aid and Investigation**

Provision of providing legal aid by NU enhances opportunity of poor people's access to justice. When cases can not be settled through mediation, NU refers them for litigation with consent of the complainant. If the complainants remain insolvent, distressed and are unable to bear the expenses for litigation NU linked them with government's legal aid fund or provide assistance under its program. When a complaints is the nature criminal offence, NU directly send them for litigation without arranging mediation session.

### **Legal Aid and Investigation of NU**

NU has a Legal Aid and Investigation unit headed by a senior level staff. A standard Legal Aid Policy has also been developed to make legal aid process systematic and easy for the stakeholder. The unit has also made a draft Investigation Policy recently to investigate and monitor HR violation in the country in collaboration with other like minded HR organizations. This year two violations of human rights were investigated by Legal Aid and Investigation Unit of NU and the report. In September 2009, a news published in the national dailies that a couple named Maksuratun Nesa and Azijul Haque of mandalia village under Porsha upazila of Nougaoon district was abandoned by the society following directive of some local leaders as the wife denied to get hilla marriage. The situation was so painful that they even were not permitted to walk in the road of the village, buy food and daily necessary things or to talk with neighbors etc. NU and Mahila Parishad jointly organized a spot investigation of the case and shared the investigation report with administration and media. The investigation report also published in the Daily Smakal on 16 October 2009. NU linked the couple with BRAC for getting legal aid.

## Panel Lawyers

In previous, NU used to refer cases to other organizations for legal aid. NU could not maintain communication regularly with the organizations who deal the cases. As a result the complainant did not want continue the cases or the cases dismissed as NU and the complainants did not get information of the status of the cases. To avoid this problem NU a formed panels of lawyers in five districts of its working areas. Currently 26 panel lawyers in five districts deal cases of NU. The panel lawyers were rightly given orientation of NU's litigation procedures. Now NU maintains all the documents of the cases in central office and field office. For follow up of the filed cases, NU sits quarterly with the panel lawyers in each district where community leaders and complainant also participate. This year NU arranged eight coordination meetings with panel lawyers.

## Legal Aid provided by NU at a glance

Since the intervention of Legal Aid and Investigation Unit the status of providing legal aid are as follows

<b>Courts</b>	<b>filed</b>	<b>withdrawn /rejected</b>	<b>judgment</b>	<b>pending</b>
family court	33	5	2	26
women and child tribunal	10	2	1	7
other criminal	17	6	2	9
Land related	4	0	0	4
Total	64	13	5	46

## 1.2. Empowering Women

NU recognizes the importance of building women leaders at the grassroots level given the crisis in formal institutions. Bangladesh's rural women are widely known as the 'poorest of the poor' in this country, vulnerable to a long entrenched patriarchal social order and holding very little access to justice, basic social services, and community decision-making processes. One of NU's key concerns is hence to empower rural women, including elected women members of the UPs, to build their capacity to realize their human rights themselves and help to ensure their effective participation in the electoral process, in local development committees, and important decision-making activities like *Shalish*. To this end, NU works to form organizations of women like the Grassroots Women Leaders Network, providing them with training and workshops on key human rights and legal issues, and helping them consolidate their power to respond to the injustices they face as a group.

### Formation of GWLN

Each of NU's 88 union-level GWLNs has 26 members. Two women from each of the nine wards that comprise a union are selected to a union-level GWLN based on the potential they demonstrate for being strong and active community women's leaders. The eight remaining members are selected by drawing three women from each union's UP as well five college-going girls or interested women likewise identified as potential community women leaders. These GWLN members are trained on a variety of issues ranging from legal rights to health care problems.

## Grassroots Women Leaders Network (GWLN)

Event	Event done	participants
Quarterly Union level GWLN meeting	352	5372
Quarterly Upazila level GWLN meeting	28	532
Training for GWLN	17	256
Women Group Discussion	1080	32767
Vulnerable Women Group Discussion	309	6467
Vulnerable Women Group Training	9	227
Annual conference of GWLN	9	1554

GWLN represents NU's main women's leadership-building initiative, operating at both the union and upazilla level. Members of a GWLN are confident, creative and well equipped with the knowledge and skills required to be strong human rights advocates in their respective communities. They mobilize themselves to protest against violations against women's rights, and their growing strength has also seen the growth of a stronger, more fair and participatory *Shalish*.

Members of the GWLN aspire to see their networks eventually achieve a level of independence and self-reliance. Such autonomy would on the one hand evidence the goal of women's empowerment in rural Bangladesh being achieved, and it would also give the women greater sovereignty over their own interests and their own destinies as Bangladeshi citizens.

### **- Activities of GWLN**

The GWLN meets quarterly at union and upazilla level where they share their experiences in working to establish women's rights, discuss the GWLN's activities in the past quarter and plan the GWLN's upcoming activities for the term ahead. Enlisted women leaders participate in such a meeting, and when possible women UP members and female college students also take part. The meetings build confidence among the women leaders to collectively work against violations of women's rights in their communities. They also play a significant role at the community level in educating people – women and men – about human rights and the intrinsic value of gender equality. GWLN has annual conference each year in all working areas.

## ***Annual Conference of GWLN***

*Nine annual conferences of the GWLN were held this year in Barisal Sadar, Swarupkhathi, Banaripara, Sreenagar, Kalihati, Tangail Sadar, Rangpur Sadar, Badarganj and Gangachara Upazila. These conferences build upon the achievements made in the quarterly meetings, helping to consolidate women leaders' power and raising hope, confidence and enthusiasm to continue pushing for a more gender equal Bangladesh. The GWLN conference saw comprehensive discussion on issues and challenges facing rural women in their communities. The conference also saw the review of existing strategies and the planning of future strategies to prevent violence against women, campaign against child marriage, promote the government's initiative to register marriages, births and deaths, ensure women remain entitled to their property rights, and promote participation in Shalish.*

In addition the GWLN, NU frequently organizes training sessions and workshops in collaboration with elected representatives, mediators, teachers, representatives of non-governmental organizations and other community members. These training sessions and workshops aim at exchanging experiences in traditional mediation and to deliberate the traditional community laws and the settlement of disputes in accordance with these laws, and as such extend and compliment the work done and achievements made in the GWLN meetings. The issues discussed in the training are as follows - Human rights, Fundamental Rights, Women's Rights, CEDAW, VAW, Gender, legal issues, Family Law (Muslim, Hindu), Good Governance, mediation, and leadership skill.

GWLN members are aware of basic human rights and existing legal provisions to mediate domestic violence and family disputes. Many of them are represented in school management committees, market development committees, and village development committees (etc.), and a few of them are active members of political parties at the local level. Leadership training and social capital building that arises from membership in the GWLN results in the development of individual women's sense of self and a feeling that they are in control of their lives as opposed to being at the mercy of a system that works to control them.

Members of the GWLN are increasingly engaged in the organizing of protests against violations of women's human rights. They are actively working in the community to raise

voices against such practices as child marriage, dowry, hilla, and unofficial divorce. In turn they are also fighting for formal change to marriage registration legislation so as to ensure that women's right to divorce is included in the marriage registration form. Further evidence of their collective empowerment can be found in the example include the community demonstrations and protests they have undertaken and their dialogues with upazilla-level administrators on human rights issues.

The GWLN is becoming increasingly self-reliant and self-sustaining. Their democratic (elected) structures are instrumental in developing a better sense of ownership of the Network among its members. The GWLN's pro-active role has increased their recognition, acceptance and respect in the community, and opened doors for them in public spaces which were otherwise closed. Village women have become more enthusiastic and courageous in addressing human rights violation in the communities and have exerted pressure on making Shalish more fair and participatory.

### **Women Group Discussion**

Part of a GWLN's mandate is to have each GWLN member organize "Women Group Discussion" sessions in their community with their women neighbors. This has the positive effect of building participating women's social capital and building grassroots women's knowledge of their rights as Bangladeshi citizens.

Level of awareness among the village women regarding, women rights, inheritance rights, domestic violence, family and marital law increased remarkably through attending women group discussion or sharing the experience and information learned from it. Being aware from the discussion, village women gained to realize their rights in the family like inheritance right, right to alimony etc. The remarkable improvement is that they have been able to pursue the male members to look women with dignity and equally both in family and neighborhood. The women group discussion encouraged many women to register complaints with NU for domestic violence or other family matters. This year NU received 61 complaints during the discussion and 9 village women canceled their children's marriage, five women realized alimony from their husband learning demerits and legal obligation of such practices from the women group discussion.

### **Establishing Rights of Vulnerable Women**

Bangladesh is now in the realm of micro-finance economic activities that earns significant acclamation from the developed countries. Yet many of people live below the extreme poverty to which the micro-finance does not reach. Even they do not get government's social safety net assistance due to politicization, corruption of local

government authorities and lack voice to demand. A significant portion of this people are women especially divorced, abandoned by husband and widow who remain among the most vulnerable sections of Bangladesh society. Long entrenched socio-cultural customs as well as flaws in the legal system, particularly those related to the inheritance of property, perpetuate the problem. These women are significantly marginalized and deprived of their rights to income, property as well as decent livelihoods.

Based on an action research conducted in 2005, NU understands that it is important to raise awareness among these women as to their rights and that specific interventions are needed to help ensure that these women's inheritance rights realized, that dispute resolutions involving these women are fair and equitable, that these women receive proper public services and support, and to enhance their dignity and status in society. The findings also revealed a serious need to provide training to these women so as to raise their level of awareness, build their confidence, and change their prevailing attitude and mindset towards their position in society – that it is changeable; that they deserve more. To this end NU has formed groups of vulnerable women in each union (88 groups; 27 members each group) of its working areas.

NU arranged quarterly meeting with this vulnerable women groups to make them aware about their rights, and claim their rights from government and non-government agencies. This year, 309 meeting held participating by 6467 vulnerable women in all working areas. NU also has initiative to link them with service providing organization as well as changing people's attitude towards them through its other program with community. In the reporting period 9 groups of vulnerable women received training on right based approach across NU's working areas. Besides, 227 women received skill training on candle making, bamboo ware (winnow, sieve, fan etc.), and paper made packet and started to earning through selling them.

With regards to NU's efforts to establish the rights of vulnerable women, the women in NU's vulnerable women groups who received training now feel more empowered and dignified after being participants in such groups and activities. These women are also now more aware of their rights including their rights to basic services provided by various government agencies. Specifically, 301 vulnerable women were provided "Vulnerable Group Feeding cards", 44 received "Vulnerable Group Development cards", 62 received elderly allowance, 53 received widow allowance, and 11 woman received allowance for disability.

NU's Vulnerable Women Groups have succeeded in drawing the attention of local, upazila level administration and other organization to their impoverished position, and are now receiving positive responses and support from these organizations. Prevailing



social attitudes towards these women are gradually being changed. As capable and knowledgeable women's groups, they are now recognized and respected by the community. In the reporting period 30 vulnerable women participated in mediation as mediators in all working areas which are a significant evidence of their acceptance in the mainstream society.

### **1.3. Strengthening Local Government**

Local government is acknowledged as highly viable mechanism through which democratic processes and practices can be established and participatory development ensured. Union Parishad is the lowest tier of local level government in Bangladesh and directly involved with community. Thus it has imperative responsibility for the service of community. However, Union Parishad remains weak and inactive for lack of resource, accountability and corruption which can be termed a long tradition in Bangladesh. All the constraints with UP has made them less accountable to their electors or community people and it affected the relation between both parties. NU believes that effective functioning of local government is vital for paving democratic practice and good governance and so strengthening local Government Issue is one of NU's key focus areas.

#### **Improving service delivery**

For increasing UP services to the community people, NU assists UP in functioning of different committees of UP. Currently NU works with the following committees UP - Standing committee: Law and order committee; other committee: "Nari o shishu Nirjaton protirodh committee" and arbitration council in 88 unions under nine upazilas. Besides, NU works with Union Parishad about activating arbitration council in the mentioned union. NU provided day long orientation to all the members of the UP with UP secretary about the function of these committee and arbitration council also. Now these committees actively work and in the reporting period 352 times meeting of these committees held in the selected unions while the Union Parishad discussed about progress of arbitration council 176 times. NU's continuous effort for activation of arbitration council resulted 73 notices for divorce, maintenance and polygamy submitted in UP. Among the received notice UP formed 47 arbitration councils and settled the matter.

## Activities with UP

Event	Event done	Participants		
		Female	Male	Total
Quarterly meeting on Arbitration Council with UP	176	470	1622	2092
Quarterly meeting of standing and other committees of UP	352	853	2867	3720

The standing committees strictly monitored law and order situation or violence against women and children through follow-up meeting and took action plan if there is any violation. For instance, during the flood in the working areas, law and order committees initiated watchdog committee consisted of community people to protect the areas from robbery or other irregularities. The committees also took stance against violation of rights like violence against women, hilla marriage or curbing drug business and eve teasing with assistance of the members of NU initiated groups. The performance of standing committees enhanced Union Parishad's role and responsibility to the community people. The submission of activity report to the Upazila level administration created a scope to increase accountability of union parishad. The administration also monitored function of the committees.

## Increasing role of female representatives of UP

Elected female representatives at the UP are still marginalized politically or socially. In order to strengthen local level democracy, elected women representatives must establish greater social legitimacy as human rights activists and advocates. NU's GWLN is formed with the participation of UP female members. They regularly participate in activities of GWLN - Union level and upazila level meeting, conferences. They were given leadership building training and other training on human rights, women rights and legal issues. In the reporting period 87 female UP members, participated in training on family law and mediation. After NU's intervention with UP, these women role in the UP increased remarkably. Their service to the community people is greater than other male members of UP. They played active role in leading GWLN to protect rights of community women. In most of the shalish hearing in the community, female UP members take part and that helps women's access to justice in large number.

## People's participation in local government

Community people's greater participation in UP activities only can ensure accountability and transparency of local government. Currently NU is working with 88 unions of 9 upazilas on human rights and access to justice issues. UP members are

largely involved in many components of the program undertaken by NU. They UP members are often invited in mediation session as mediators. NU regular provided training and capacity building activities to the members of UP.

At the end of the reporting period NU launched a new project titled 'Strengthening Citizen Participation in Improving Local Governance' supported by European Commission. The objective of the project is to help maximize the service of local government to the community people through exchanging cooperation in different areas like planning, budgeting, implementation and evaluation. Through citizens' participation in different layers of activities accountability will be ensured of UP work as well as people will be the benefited according to their needs. The citizens' effective participation will also help UP in doing priority work with their available capacity which will ultimately culminate in local and national level. The project is being implemented in 34 unions of five upazilas in Jhalokhathi and Pirojpur Districts. The project aims to work with three other committees of UP – Law and Order Committee, Women and Children Abuse Protection Committee, Vulnerable Group Development Programme Implementation Committee and Arbitration Council (An obligatory body made by state ordinance to resolve specific family issues like divorce, maintenance claim and polygamy). The project also plans to create sustainable community organisations which will breeze the UP and community people in delivering and getting services. Citizens' Rights Group (CRG) will be capacitated to be the voice of the community within the UP Committees in development planning, budgeting, and implementing, monitoring and evaluating development projects.

## 2. 1. COMMUNITY ACTIVISM THROUGH POPULAR THEATER

NU recognizes the potential of popular culture as medium for educating the people of Bangladesh on important social and human rights issues as many of them are illiterate. Working closely with popular local entertainers NU's *Uddyog Theater & Cultural Activities for Human Rights Awareness* programme aims to increase social consciousness on human rights and likewise reduce discrimination of women by way of progressive cultural activities aimed at rural communities. These activities include theater and folk music performances about the duties of local government organizations with respect to the rights of women, their empowerment and dignity.

### ***Formation of Uddyog cultural team***

*NU's cultural team is essentially comprised of two distinct units: the "Uddyog Theater Group" and other the "Uddyog Baul Team". Both of these units are formed with local popular performers who have long been in touch with local cultural heritage and liberal cultural sensitivities. The Uddyog Theater Team consists of nine performers while the Baul Team utilizes performers as per its required musical instruments at the time of the performance.*

*After having formed its Theater Group and Baul Team then NU moves on to developing local demand-based folk songs and/or scripts for dramas. A 3-4 day workshop is organized to make the performers efficient and skilled to communicate to the audience the particular human rights issue in focus. Scripts and baul songs vary in different areas as they are performed based on the types of abuses known to be prevalent in a particular area.*

### **Activities of cultural team**

#### **Folk song presentation and Drama show**

	Theater show	Folk song
Number of shows	78	251
Female	10915	29530
Male	9696	22311
Child/youth	2525	6707

In collaboration with local entertainers, NU's cultural team delivers human rights education in rural areas by way of issue-focused popular cultural performances, including dramas, lyrical dialogue and folk songs. These performances engage issues like domestic abuse while simultaneously providing a space for rural people's entertainment.

Both the Uddyog Theater Group and Uddyog Baul Team deliver shows that disseminate information regarding women's rights, inheritance, dowry, children's rights, child marriage, unlawful *Shalish* and the necessity of accountability and transparency in local government. Since community people typically lack such sources of live popular entertainment the theatre and cultural shows thus attracted a significant audience of rural people. This has provided an invaluable opportunity to help transform prevailing social attitudes.

The cultural performances are arranged in local hat-bazar (market place) or other convenient places where people usually gather. Sometimes it is also arranged in the Uthan (Yard) of villagers in order to adequately reach the female audience. At the beginning of the show, NU staff brief the audience about the purpose of the show. Besides, a member of the theater or baul team is trained with legal and human rights issues so that he/she could answer the queries from the audiences regarding the raised issues through performance.

### **Taining for culturual team**

Uddyog theater team are given regular training and refresher to enhance their skill in presenting the message of human rights awareness effectively. During the reporting period Folk song team of Barisal Sadar Upazila, Gangachara Upazila and Sreenagar upazila are given refresher. Through the refresher they revised the local folk song they used as per the demand of the audience and prevailing situation in the community. Similar types of workshop held with Uddyog theater team in Barisal, Tangail, Sreenagar and Gangachara upazila.

### **Documentary Film**

The important endeavour of NU cultural team is enhancing capacity in making documentary film. This is not also added resource of NU but also increased capacity of staff of this unit. Last year the unit made two documentary film titled women leadership and shalish. In consequences this year the unit made two other magnificent documentaries on women worker of informal sector in Dhaka City. The script, design, location, shooting all is managed by the staff of the unit with technical support hired from outside. The unit also made two documentaries on Cyclone Sidr victims and Dalit and Excluded community using still photographs.

The unit also organized cultural program as supplementary to other program of NU. The member of this unit rendered musical soiree in the reception of SSC passed Dalit students, national conference on Informal sector women labours, Nagorik Odhikar Mela

and Dalit Utsab. The unit play vital role in organizing national event like Independent day, National martyr day, International mother language day, victory day etc. Besides, the 1st year of Bengali New Year was celebrated with the initiative of this unit participated by the staff and their families. The unit also organized regular film show in the NU head office was right sensitive movies are showed to the staff of NU.

## **2.2. Voluntary Youth Action for Social Change**

NU recognizes the significant place that youth and students can hold in Bangladesh's development story. A socially and environmentally conscious young generation entails a future of socially and environmentally conscious Bangladesh citizens and leaders. Accordingly, NU places particular emphasis on awareness and capacity-building campaigns aimed at young Bangladeshis, including Dalit youth.

### **Jubo Nagorik Odhikar Jote (Youth Citizen's Rights Alliance)**

Jubo Nagorik Odhikar Jote ('Youth Citizen's Rights Alliance') is a voluntary youth and student alliance founded in 2004 by group of students committed to bringing about progressive social change in Bangladesh. Since its inception, the Alliance has successfully attracted youths through various programs and activities carried out in different parts of the country. The goal of these programs is to create awareness among youth on issues that concern the young generation most, including labor, education, environment, and human rights. The programs also intend to develop youths and students as future leaders of society. The Alliance strongly believes that in order to create a new generation of social leaders it is essential to make them aware about socio-political and economic issues that continuously shape and reshape our lives and livelihoods. It believes that social consciousness leads to authentic commitment, which is the key to making progress and advancing society.

The Alliance seeks to demystify the present globalization euphoria that has grasped the hearts and minds of so many young people by educating young people to both the positive *and* negative realities of globalization. To this end, the Alliance seeks solidarity with other youth groups around the world who share the Alliance's vision of an 'alternative' world order. By networking with other like-minded youth and student groups the Alliance hopes to gain new insight into global trends and empower young Bangladeshis to take the initiative to push for positive social change.

NU extends technical and logistical support to the Alliance's activities as they see huge potential in organizing and mobilizing youths and students for social progress. To attract youth to the Alliance, NU provides training sessions and workshops for youth in its working areas on relevant social issues like human rights awareness and law. After completing three days of preliminary training, the participating youth are invited to join

the Alliance by creating own youth group units. The alliance is active in five districts of NU's working areas (viz. Rangpur, Tangail, Munshiganj, Barisal and Pirojpur) including Dhaka City. The regional youth coordinators oversee the activity of alliance in those areas.

### **Activity of alliance**

The Alliance and its units respond to different issues the young generation find important via demonstration and rallies, seminar and roundtable discussions, general awareness programs, day observances, and charity drives. Some of the programs are organized by the Alliance or its units themselves, and in some cases the Alliance participates in civil society groups programs. The units actively participate in the programs organized by the members of their network.

During cyclone Aila hit some southern part of Bangladesh, the members of alliance stood by the affected people with relief goods like food, medicine, child food, fuel, clothes and necessary daily commodities with their own contribution and from the local citizens. In Barisal and Rangpur, the alliance collected warm clothes from citizens and distribute them among the poor people. This year the members organized rally linking with other organization against eve teasing.

### **Dalit Youth Movement**

Dalits and Excluded are the extreme vulnerable and minority group in Bangladesh. NU is working with Dalit people to capacitate them to voice for their rights. In this regard NU thinks Dalit youth can be catalyst to lead their community in future. NU helped in forming a Dalit Youth forum consisting Dalit youth and students around Dhaka city. This group is given training on human rights and leadership skill. Now they organize meeting and seminar in collaboration with other youth organizations for establishing their dignity and rights.

### **Youth Social Forum-Bangladesh**

Youth group with other organization (political youth organization, development organization and local clubs) forms Youth Social Forum-Bangladesh. This is one of the key campaign organizations against globalization, imperialization and privatization. Each month they organized study circle on different issue related with Imperialist Globalization. JNAJ is a member of YSF and NU works as a secretariat of YSF-Bangladesh.

## **Global Xchange Programme:**

Another endeavor Nagorik Uddyog participates in involving youth in Bangladesh is Global Xchange (GX), an international volunteer exchange programme giving qualified youth aged 18-25 the unique opportunity to be a part of an international team of like-minded young people living and working for three months, first, in Scotland, and another three months in one of two different communities in Bangladesh: Rangpur Shadar and Gongachara Upazila. The team of volunteers shared skills and experiences, and made valuable contributions to local communities in such diverse areas as environment, youth leadership, elderly support, and advocacy for people with disabilities.

As a partnership programme, GX is co-managed and delivered internationally by the British Council and Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO), with Nagorik Uddyog and Young Power in Social Action (YPSA) helping implement Bangladesh - level operations. The principles guiding GX's goal of 'developing and inspiring active Global Citizens' find their form in the GX partners' shared belief that young people have the power to make positive change in the world; building mutual understanding and respect between countries and peoples. Volunteers involved in GX learn from each other, become aware of issues facing different countries and different peoples around the globe, and put their learning into action. Nagorik Uddyog was a line manager in the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of this exchange, and looks forward to continued involvement in this valuable community development - youth development initiative.



### 3. NETWORKING AND CAMPAIGNS

NU believes in promoting and protecting human rights at local, national and international level, collective effort can play significant role and so NU affiliated itself with a number of human rights based organization at national and international level, of them few are formed with its initiative.

#### **Voice of Women Labours of Informal Sector**

Workers in the informal sector have no voice when it comes to basic rights – a familiar portrait of women workers in the informal sector in Dhaka city but this poor status has some development getting wider attraction in recent times. Partnership of Women in Action - PaWA's involvement in building the informal sector labor rights is unique in this regard and gained recognition as a leading network. PaWA is getting familiar not only as an organizing agency rather a movement to establish informal sector women workers' rights.

***Partnership of Women in Action - PaWA*** is a coalition of 5 organizations working with informal sector's women laborers, established in 2006 with NU initiative. The aim of the network is to set in motion an autonomous movement of migrant women laborers who are able to lobby Bangladesh policy-makers to bring about substantive changes in their life and livelihoods. PaWA is currently in the process of networking with other organizations, institutions and influential individuals working in the field of women workers rights. The member organizations of PaWA network is Banchte Sikho Nari, Bhasoman Nari Sramik Unnyon Kendra, Mukta Shishu o Nari Sramik Forum, PaWA Uddyog, Dalit Nari Forum. The working area of PaWA is mainly in Dhaka City - Mirpur, jatrabari, Mohammadpur, Rayerbazar and Keraniganj. Recently its working areas are expanded in Barisal City.

#### **Strengthen the Coalition**

As PaWA leads a network of 5 partner organizations working with the most vulnerable and unorganized women workers of Dhaka city so it essentially requires strong coordination among the partners involved in the process. During 2009-2010 the network members made new MoU and renovate their strategy of work. Five partner organizations made new twenty five groups with 750 new members around Dhaka Metropolitan city and Keraniganj.

Coordination among the partners' organizations of PaWA networks further enriched through 12 monthly coordination meeting and 754 fortnightly meeting within the group of each member organization during this period. Such a regular interaction and process of coordination not only helps smooth implementation of activities but also intensify the bond of solidarity and cohesiveness among the partners. It is observed that the leaders of the partner organizations have already placed high value to these coordination meetings, as they feel empowered while making decisions without any outside intervention. PaWA, as part of a social movement, has successfully developed network with key civil society organizations both at home and abroad. One important manifestation of this process is that PaWA is now organizing programs or events jointly with one or more of those organizations they have developed relationship with.

### **Business initiative of PaWA**

To develop sustainable self-employment scheme of the members of the organizations, PaWA provides various skill training for the group members. In the reporting period Ten Skill Development training courses on sewing and cutting, food processing, block and boutique provided to 200 group members of the network partners. PaWA also formed five business entrepreneur groups involved with various types of business like sewing, candle making, block and batik on saree and salwar-Kamiz (lady's dress), spice powder, floating restaurant, grocery shop, poultry etc. The providing of interest free loan and introduction of cooperative practice among the business entrepreneur groups accelerated the self-employment initiative of PaWA. Almost all of the groups returned the loan from their benefit and received new. Business entrepreneur groups hold regular meeting and discuss business opportunities and strategies. Recently PaWA has expanded its activity in Barisal city under a new project 'Supporting Small Economic Activities Run by Poor Women in Dhaka and Barisal City'. In the meantime 5 team with 100 members has been formed under this project. For training and business purpose 25 sewing machine, 10 overlook machine and 15 embroidery machine were bought. The most significant is PaWA has hired a show room at Mohammadpur Krishi Market to display and sell its product.

## **Institutional Capacity Building**

Capacity building initiative is a very crucial component for PaWA activities as most of the members and their organizations were without organizational and management knowledge. Having received training, member organizations are more disciplined in terms of management and financial aspects. Partner organizations are in a better position to run their day-to-day activities of the organization through keeping records, maintaining files, monitoring activities etc. PaWA members had an opportunity to get training on advocacy and mobilization. Their skill to identify issues and quick organizing capacity is a strong evident of improvement. In the reporting period PaWA organized series of advocacy meeting and mobilization on various issues relating to informal sector independently. These programs were participated by prominent human rights activists, policy makers, political persons, development activists, and media in and earned their concern. PaWA activities were highly covered in the print and electronic media and the issues of informal sector especially the plight of domestic workers were often reflected in the editorial or column of newspaper during the project period. PaWA initiative to organize the women with disability is seen progress brining them under a workshop which was more focused on confidence building.

### **Training organized for PaWA members**

- Training on Organizational Management and Project Management attended by twelve participants
- Two leadership building training.
- Three days training on advocacy campaign and mobilization.
- workshop on social security of informal sector women labours
- A workshop with Disable Women member of associate organization

PaWA undertook a series of seminars, round table discussions, mobilizations, demonstrations during the last one year and successfully demanded to ensure minimum wage, working hours, working conditions, health and other facilities and rights for informal sector women labours. PaWA's continuous effort of advocacy initiative resulted the placement of bill for domestic workers in the national assembly.

### **Advocacy activities of PaWA**

- National Seminar titled Security of domestic worker, social attitude and specific policy at National press club. on 28 August 2009
- National seminar titled 'Social security of informal sector workers' held on 11 May 2010 at National press club
- Human chain demanding social security of informal sector labours held on 26 May 2010 at Shahbag
- Human chain in protesting child killing by temset syrup made by Reed Pharma at National Museum on 29 August 2009
- Rally in observance of International Women's Day 2010 on 6th March
- Rally on 30 April in observance of May Day 2010

Publications and promotional materials produced by PaWA played a significant role in favor of their movement. PaWA published two issues of its regular newsletter "Srmajibi Nari Khantha" (Voices of Women Worker) and a poster depicting plight of domestic worker and a leaflet on May day. A case study based on the interview of 66 women labour of informal sector made by PaWA. PaWA has produced two documentary films (10 minutes long each) named 'Invisible Women Workers' and 'In from the Margin' which obtain wider attraction at home and abroad to the plight of women labours in the informal sector in Dhaka City.

PaWA with its partner organizations has some initiative to provide help to the tortured women workers. During the reporting period PaWA partners' organization received 122 cases regarding domestic violence, wage discrimination, divorcee, polygamy and other incident against women workers. Of them 37 were resolved through mediation. When disputes are out of merit of mediation, PaWA recommend them for litigation in the court and 23 cases were referred to Ain o Shalish Kendra (ASK), Bangladesh National Women lawyers Association (BNWLA) and Nagorik Uddyog for providing legal aid. PaWA is planning to form a team of trained mediators and a panel of volunteer lawyers to provide legal support to the victim women workers.

PaWA has taken initiatives to provide education for the children and adults. To date 7 schools are being run by the 5 partner organizations including one by the PaWA Uddyog. The objective of the action is to provide basic education to the children of women labours working in the informal sector as well to some groups of elderly women aiming to help their business in terms of accounting activities.

PaWA build significant communication with international organization and forum for fund raising or experience sharing. On September 2007 A team of One World Action consisted by Asian regional coordinator Bethan Cobley, Head of Policy and Advocacy Caroline Gottardo and journalist from Guardina, Merry observed activities of PaWA and exchange their views. SEWA, the pioneer organization for organizing informal sector women labours participated in the PaWA conference. They observed other activities of PaWA and exchange their administrative and loan activities during a meeting.

PaWA's identity as the leading network for informal sector women labors earned well recognition. Partner organizations in their respective areas gained significant trust of local Women workers. They know the office of partner organizations and its activities. They feel confident that whenever they are in trouble they can go to the office and seek for help. Now all the core members of PaWA have their own office with sufficient logistical support as well as paid staff. While talking to the members of the partner organizations, they told that they feel more secured as they have their own office and other facilities. The expansion of membership is the outcome of the increased recognition of the organizations the community.

### **Conference of Informal Sector Women Workers**

The first ever and the biggest congregation of informal sector women workers in the history of Bangladesh held on 2-3 October, 2009 at Dhaka with significant enthusiasm. This was great and courageous initiative of PaWA while Nagorik Uddyog has important input in organizing the program. There were 8 parallel sessions including 28 articles, open discussion, rally, photography exhibition on the life of women workers, presentation of PaWA's activities and cultural programme in the conference. Around 500 informal sector women labours participated in two days conference where various topics relating to the issues of informal sector in Bangladesh were discussed by the eminent researchers, labor leaders, economist, urban planner, human rights activists, journalists, political personnel and Member of Parliament. The conference could be regarded as the biggest wrap off the plight of informal sector women labors to the citizens including firm commitment to promote the rights of the women labours. The news of the conference got important coverage in the national dailies as well as in the electronic media. The conference has earned international values as it participated by representatives from India and Pakistan. Four representatives from SEWA, the first and the leading organization for informal sectors' workers rights in the world, participated in the conference. What is significant that they facilitated a session and share their experience and process of operation in India. Besides, three representatives from One World Action, UK, also participated in the conference.

## **'Our information Our Rights'**

'Our information our rights'- this slogan echoed in Bangladesh for the first time as continuous campaign for right to information sensitized lots of people, policy makers, government bodies as well. NU can claim itself pioneer in popularizing right to information. NU believes People access to information is one of the key steps to ensure their rights as well as establishing democracy and good governess. In 2006, with the equal input of five other organizations, NU initiated a network Campaign on Citizen's Right to Information - CCRTI as a means toward helping to ensure that legislation established to protect people's right to information is enacted and enforced.

The movement for right to information act got momentum as Bangladesh government has passed Right to Information Act 2008 and formed a commission as well. It is evident that among the citizens there is little awareness of this issue, and the utility of having such a right, especially with regard to empowering them. NU thinks now it has big task to utilize the act through sensitize the citizens which in turn will strengthen our democracy and ensure good governance. The main objective of this campaign is to achieve greater public awareness and understanding of the Right to Information Act, its existence, content and potential, to create demanded and use of the legislation by civil society-to support citizens to claim their right to information, to know what benefits and information they are entitled to and to use this knowledge to take action and achieve change. NU undertakes various activities to ensure citizen right to information through maximum utilization of the act.

### **Our Information Our Right**

It's a book containing case study on establishing right to information in various countries around the world. The publisher CHRI, India assisted NU to translate this book into Bengali so that Bengali speaking people can learn from experience of other countries. Bengali version of the book 'our rights our information' was launched in the national press club on 6 October 2010. Chief Information Commissioner M Azizur Rahman, Information Commissioner Dr. Sadeka Halim, Chief information officer of PID Shamim Ahmed Chowdhury, Eminent Journalist Monjurul Ahsan Khan and CHRI representative Sohini Paul were present in the occasion. The book launching program was chaired by Professor Khan Sarwar Murshid and conducted by Zakir Hossain of Nagorik Uddyog. It is to be mentioned that the English version of the book was published by CHRI in India.

## **National Level**

At national level two seminars titled 'Right to Information Act and Mass Media' and 'Right to Information Act in establishing transparency, accountability and resisting corruption' in this period. Eminent human rights activists, educationists; media personalities participated in these two discussion meetings and gave their comments for the fruitful implementation of the act. Around two hundred and thirty people attended these workshops. CCRTI formed a human chain in front of National Museum demanding to strengthen the Information Commission and effective. It also demanded to make a guideline about using the act.

## **Local level campaign**

NU organized two discussion meeting on Right to Information Act and its Implementation at Barisal and Rangpur district. DR. Sadeka halim, member of Information Commission attended the discussion meeting held at Barisal District. 14 discussion meetings on the same issue organized at upazila level of the same districts. A wider segment people including member of local government, government and non government organization, teacher, religious leader and lots of community people were sensitized about the benefit of the act. They also knew how they would apply for getting information when they need. 20 workshops at union and ward level of the same districts held during 2009-2010.

NU believes youths are the catalyst for social change so they should be prepared properly. NU organized three workshops at Rangpur, Barisal and Banaripara on Right to Information act and its uses. 144 students from different educational institute were participated in these workshops.

## **International level**

One of the NU's strategies about right to information movement is to learn from the other countries experience. Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), India, is one of the key knowledge providing organization of NU to strengthen the movement. In the reporting period one staff from Nagorik Uddyog visited the activities of CHRI in India.

## **United voice for Dalit Rights**

Dalit and excluded rights movement gets significant momentum this year by drawing large attraction of citizens towards their plight. Nagorik Uddyog has pivotal role in organizing this group of people through strategic and technical support in all its activities and linking up with national and international institution sympathized to their rights. In fact, this is the long cherished achievement which started since 2004 when Bangladesh Dalit Human Rights (BDHR) formed with NU initiative.

## **Dalit Rights – a movement**

Since its establishment BDHR started advocacy and lobbying which was just to draw the eyes of concern authority towards their situation. In some cases they earned their rights through bargaining or lobbying. BDHR felt that to materialize their demand there is no alternative to start a social movement and unity of the communities scattered in different parts of the country. In 2009, a National platform - Bangladesh Dalit and Excluded Rights Movement (BDERM) formed through a National consultation participated by Dalit and excluded community people from all over the country. BDERM has a national working committee with the representative of different Dalit and Excluded community. The platform has strengthened their movement and received significant recognition from national and international communities.

## **Dalit communities in Bangladesh**

Dalit and Excluded community live in every town and different areas of 64 districts of Bangladesh. They are mainly known as sage, cobbler, washer man, Dome, sweeper, Paroi, Kaiputro, Kawra, Beara, Nikari, Shikari, Kapali, Hari, Poad, Kulu, Chamar, Bauri, Bagdi, Namu, Shiali, Kaibarto, Kahar, Keshra, Nalua, Dhani, Bagol, Bachar, Mecho, Kotal, Vogmene, Chandal, Charal, Antoj, Namashudro etc. Some of them also known as banspuri, Tea labor, Lalbegi, Maithal, Fansi, Chamar, Mala, Madiga, Chakali, Dewali etc. These people are also known as Kanpuri, Telegu or Madrazi based on their ancestral living place and language. These ethnic communities were known as Chondal or Charal till they were introduced as Namashudro in the census of 1891. In between 1835-1850, a part of Dalit communities were brought to Bangladesh from different parts of North and Andhra province of by then India by the British colonial regime to provide menial services like cleaning bushes, garbage cleaning, carry away dead animals, etc. The word 'Dalit' literally means broken or oppressed and has been recently adopted by the former untouchables or Harijans (Ghandian term) of South Asia. Approximately 5 million Dalit and Excluded people live in Bangladesh. Though they have played a significant role in the country's development, Dalits are the most economically marginalised, deprived and excluded group in Bangladesh. The majority are landless, living in chronic poverty in poor rural areas, government colonies or slums. They are deprived or excluded from adequate housing, health care, education, employment, sanitation, transport and from participating in public spaces or places of worship. Dalits are often refused entry to schools and hospitals and approximately 96% of Dalits are illiterate. Dalit communities experience daily insecurity, uncertainty and violence from the public, police and officials with usually no recourse to justice.



## **Organizational capacity building**

Through continuous advocacy activities and communication with national and international organizations increased organizational capacity of BDERM. In October 2009, BDERM had its 1st Council held at Dhaka. The council formed a 15 members' working committee which will be effective for two years. The council also attended by Ms. Bethan Kobly – coordinator (South Asia) of One World Action, - One World Action, Mr. Dr. Ali Ersalan, representative Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER), Ms. Farzana Islam, Advisor, BDERM, and Mr. Zakir Hossain, Advisor and Chief Executive of Nagorik Uddyog. BDERM organized its Sylhet Divisional Workshop in July 2009 participated by 110 representatives of Dalit and Excluded Communities from Habiganj, Moulavi bazar and Sylhet.

## **Awareness building Activities**

To sensitize the dalit community people about human rights, women rights and other basic rights and building their leadership skill five workshops were organized in Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal, sylhet, rangpur attended by 179 male and female participants. Awareness building activities in 10 Dalit communities in Dhaka and Narayangang city were held regularly through group discussion. Human rights, women rights issues are focused in this group discussion. Besides, a court yard meeting organized in Khulna city Dalit community attended by 100 community people.

## **Voice against Injustice**

BDHR and BDERM has significant achievement in mobilizing their community against any oppression and injustice. Now the people of the community is no more to endure offence against them. In Jessore, a girl from Rishi Community raped by some miscreants. BDERM organized series of program protest the incident in Khulana, Sathkhira, Jessore and Dhaka and demanded arrest of the perpetrators. BDHR, Dalit Nari Forum and Nagorik Uddyog organized a human chain at Shahbag intersection in Dhaka demanding arrest and proper punishment of the accused. 80 people from Dalit community along with human rights activists attended the program. Another human chain organized by them in protesting of ousting of Dalit students from the program of Independent day on 29 March 2010. April 15, 2010 BDERM Jessore unit formed a human chain with people of three Dalit communities protesting the leasing of Lal dighi. This year, several incident of eviction of dalit colony happened around Dhaka city especially in Sutrapur Area by local influential people and land grabber. BDHR played active role in mobilizing people, media rights activist against the eviction.

## **Commucation with international forum**

Dalit and excluded community movements in Bangladesh received significant attraction from overseas organization. Several international organization including UN body vistied Dalit communities and learned from their activities. In September 2009, representative from OWA and a journalist from Gurdian visited several Dalit Community in Dhaka City. In November, Aney Namalo, Director, National campaign for Dalit and human Rights (NCDHR) and Center for Social equity and Inclusion – India visited Dalit colony in Dhaka city and had meeting with Dalit Nari forum. In December 2009, A team of United Nations visited Dalit colonies and learned their situation. BDERM had a meeting with Dalit representatives from Nepal and India on 9 april 2010 at WVA auditorium in Dhaka. June 2010, Nepal National Dalit Social Welfare Organization had a meeting with BDERM and discussed about movement by the organization. A discussion meeting between BDERM and Bread for the World held at YWCA auditorium in February 2010. Besides, BDHR and BDERM leaders also participated in several international meeting and consultation. BDERM General Secretary Mr. B. Solomon and Advisor Mr. Zakir Hossain participated in the 12 council of Human rights of UN on an invitation by IDSN from 15-18 september 2009 at geneva, Switzerland. They also participated in the council of IDSN at geneva, Switzerland in March and visited and shared their experience with OWA officials in london. BDERM preseident, Mrl Mukul Sikdar and advisor Mr. Zakir Hossain participated in an International Dalit conference titled “Envisioning New Nepal” at Godabory Village Resort from 20-22 June 2010.

## **Publication**

The lone newsletter of Dalit and Excluded communities - *Dalito o Banchito Samachar* (News of Dalit and Excluded) attracted wider readers including government officials, media people, human rights actitivists, intelectual etc. This year two issues of *Dalito o Banchito Samachar* published. BDHR translated UN principle and guideline into Bengali and circulated. A calender conveying rights of dalit community was brought out by BDHR.

## **Education for Dalit students and youth**

BDHR has started a primary school for Dalit students in Naraynganj City where students will have education free of cost. Besides, BDHR is colleting bio-data of poor dalit students and umemployed youth to manage scholarship and job for them. In October 2009, BDHR gave a reception to the SSC and HSC passed Dalit students at WVA auditorium in Dhaka. Ms. Bethan Kobly – coordinator (South Asia) of One World Action, Mr. Dr. Ali Ersalan, representative Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER) and Ms. Farzana Islam, Advisor, BDERM were presented in the reception. 25 SSC and HSC passed girl and boy students from Dalit and Excluded community were honored in the program.

## National Level Alliances

### -BAPA-

Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon - BAPA is a united national platform of individuals, organizations and institutions interested in the protection of Bangladesh's environment and the conservation of its natural resources. It is also committed to extensive policy advocacy and legal fights for environmental protection, suggesting law reforms and pointing out implementation flaws and representing the people in various committees formed by the government. NU is a key member in BAPA. NU's Chief Executive is Joint Secretary of BAPA, and NU is also a secretariat of BAPA's climate change group. NU participated in site demonstrations, sit-in protests, hunger strikes, rallies, seminars, workshops, and roundtable discussions by BAPA in protection of environment.

### - Social Action Committee -

Protesting against violations of human rights, particularly women's rights, is one of the major objectives of the Social Action Committee, comprised of a network of 41 organizations and eminent personalities of Bangladesh, working in the field of women's empowerment, the Social Action Committee advocates for implementation the National Women Development Policy -2008 without any alteration suggested by the religious fundamental group. With this view SAC arranged several demonstration, seminar, rally; human chain participated by thousands of human rights individuals and organizations. Nagorik Uddyog is a member of SAC and have active role in all its agenda and program.

### - Governance Coalition-

NU is a member of Governance Coalition, a forum of 21 organizations and Network that work for strengthening local level government in order to ensure good governance. The Coalition organized a national convention this year and NU conducted one of the five task forces formed during the convention and the issue was 'Law and Order situation in the local level, justice system and Relevant Issues'. The suggestions raised from the task force were sent to the Committee for reorganizing Local Governance of the Government.

### - Human Rights Forum on UPR-

Human Rights Forum on UPR, Bangladesh, a coalition of 17 human rights and development organizations formed to review the human rights situation in Bangladesh in the light of Universal Declaration of Human Rights especially to compare the status of Bangladesh when the Declaration reaches to its sixty years. Nagorik Uddyog is one of the active members of the forum. The forum has planned to prepare a joint stakeholders' report under the UPR and submit to UN after series of national consultations with forum members and Bangladesh Government. This report will follow the guidelines adopted by the United Nations' Human Rights Council.

### -AJIN-

NU has played a pioneering role in the establishment of the Access to Justice and Right to Information Network- AJIN, which currently has 12 member Organizations in 11 districts. AJIN provides the opportunity to share ideas and experiences and to find common ways of promoting human rights and good governance through diverse approaches in the different regions of Bangladesh.

### - People's Health Movement (PHM)-

PHM focuses primarily on people's right to health and health services, initiating advocacy campaigns for health issues at national and international levels. In Bangladesh PHM comprises a national level network of more than 300 NGOs and individuals working in the health sector in connection with PHM International. NU is a long-standing member of PHM.

### -SHUJAN -

Shushashoner Janney Nagarik- SHUJAN is a pioneering network working for promoting good governance and democracy in Bangladesh. A group of civil society members started a movement called Shujan ("Citizens for Good Governance"). As a forum for advocating social reform, Shujan functions at both the national and district level. The Chief Executive of NU is the Assistant Secretary of Shujan, and NU is one of the key members of this forum.

### - Citizen's Voice against Domestic Violence -

To campaign against domestic violence and to pursue the government to formulate appropriate law in order to combat domestic violence, an alliance is active with 14 organizations devoted to promote Human Rights and Women Rights in Bangladesh. Nagorik Uddyog is one of the members of the campaign 'Citizen's Voice against Domestic Violence.

### Other National Network

- Climate Change Development Forum (CCDF)
- CA disaster group
- Human Rights Information and Documentation System (HURIDOCS)
- HIV/AIDS Program-AITAM
- Gender mainstreaming group VSO
- World Social Forum (WSF),
- Gobar Exchange (GX)
- Local Justice and Human Rights Network
- Aid Accountability and IFI work

### International Level

- World Social Forum (WSF)
- South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR)
- Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID)
- Peace in South Asia (PISA)
- Peoples Forum Against-ADB Women
- International Center for Research on (ICRW)
- People's Decade of Human Rights Education (PDHRE-International)
- South Asian for Composite Heritage (SACH)
- Asia Dalit Rights Movement (ADRM)
- International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN)

## 4. ADVOCACY, RESEARCH, AND COMMUNICATION

NU believes that human rights activism requires strong advocacy in terms of sensitizing citizens, policy makers and above all to press and pursue government for taking appropriate measure - so advocacy becomes an integral part of NU's work. NU is currently involved in advocating the issues related to its focus areas both local and national levels. NU's advocacy activities supervised the Advocacy, Research and Communication Unit. Consulting with program unit, partnership & network unit and other unit of the organization, this unit identifies, settle advocacy issues and undertake activities.

### At the local level:

<b>Local Level Advocacy Meeting</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Organized by</b>
Hilla Marriage: Causes and Consequences	Gangachara Unit
Child Marriage: Women Rights and Social Status	Sreenagar Unit
Domestic Violence: Role and Responsibilities of Women	Barisla Sadar Unit
Dowry and Child Marriage: Rights and Responsibilities of Women	Banaripara unit
Dowry: Social ailments, barrier to women rights	Badarganj Unit
Role of Arbitration Council in Establishing Justice at Local level	Tangail Unit
<b>National Level Advocacy Meeting</b>	
Right to Information, law and mass media	Nagorik Uddyog
Right to Information Act to Establish Accountability and Transparency in Resisting Corruption	Nagorik Uddyog
Role of Shalish in Resolving Dispute at Local Level: Problem and Way Forward	Nagorik Uddyog
Social Security for Informal Sector's Women Labours	Nagorik Uddyog and Partnership of Women in Action (PaWA)
<b>Day Observation</b>	
International Human Rights Day, International Mother Language Day, International Day for Women, Day for Resisting Violence Against Women, World Environment Day, Day for Village Women, Independent Day, Victory Day, May Day, Day against Racial Discrimination, World Dignity Day	NU central Office and all Upazila level Unit

Locally, NU focuses on ensuring implementation of existing laws and policies aiming to protect women and improving their rights. Focus is also placed on helping ensure the provision of poor peoples access to basic services, the greater use of government legal aid support, the effective participation of women elected representatives at the union

council, the activation of the arbitration council of local government, and the strengthening of the local government's standing committees. NU campaigns on the above issues through its regular program like court yard meeting; folk song; theater performance and awareness building activities of CBO members. While facing constraints in implementing its program, NU arranges advocacy meeting on specific issues with participation of community people, government administration, journalists, and civil society groups. This year NU arranged six advocacy meetings at local level in its working areas.

### **At the national level:**

NU is actively working in conjunction with other civil society groups to promote human rights, women rights, legal development, and good governance and establishing democracy. In the reporting period NU emphasizes on Citizen's Rights to Information and Rights of Dalit and Excluded community and rights of informal sector women labours in Dhaka City. NU has continuous advocacy campaign in support of National Women Development Policy -2008. This year NU arranged four advocacy meetings in collaboration with Campaign on Right to Information (CCRTI) and Partnership of Women in Action (PaWA).

NU's advocacy efforts generally consisted of the organizing of seminars and roundtables discussions targeting relevant stakeholders. For the advocacy purpose, NU conducts research and brings out a good number of working papers regularly. Publication also play important role for advocacy, research output and information dissemination.

### **Research**

Research occupies one of the vital components of NU's work, helping to provide NU with an informed platform upon which it can build useful and efficient human rights and good governance strategies. Research helps build awareness of the organization and its mandate as well. The research projects NU conducts are managed by individuals with valuable experience in the field.

#### **Research conducted in 2009-2010**

- Women's participation in public space
- Shalish
- Situation of Dalits in Bangladesh
- Barriers and opportunities for grassroots women leaders for effective participation in social and developmental activities at the community level
- Social resistance and movement at the community level
- Hilla Marriage: Problem and Possible way out
- Women development in the perspective of PRSP

## Publications

NU regularly publishes quarterly thematic newsletters with a view to raising people's awareness on important human rights issues. In the reporting period NU publishes 4 issues of Nagorik Uddyog Barta and Narir Swopna Pata ('Women's Dream Pages') respectively. In addition to these newsletters, NU supports the publication Unmochon by CCRTI, Shramojibi Nari Kontha ('Women Worker's Voice') by PaWA and Jubo Uddyog ('Youth Initiative') by Youth Citizens' Rights Alliance. Each of the newsletters engages issues central to NU's mission and mandate. The unit also publishes a good number of posters, leaflet, and booklet for the purpose of its program. This year NU published two books - *Amader tottho amader adhikar* which is a translation of *Our Information our rights*, a publication of CHRI, India and another book was *UN Policy and Direction to Effective Elimination of Discrimination based on Profession and Birth*. NU also reprinted UPR *Bangladesh 2009*, why Ambedkar is Necessary (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) and summary of articles on women labor in the informal sector.

In the reporting period, NU brought out good number of campaign materials like leaflet, poster etc. NU published poster on the issue of celebration of 100 years of International Women Day, Right to Information and Human Rights, World day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination, domestic labour and on the issue of social security of informal sector's women labour. NU also published a sticker on right to information and a brochure of BDERM.

## 5. ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Since its intervention, NU has been involved with the campaign of protecting environment; create awareness on climate change issues as well as responding to the disaster affected people. Since 2004, NU operated small scale emergency relief program for flood and cold wave affected people in Rangpur and Tangail districts. But after the cyclone Sidr that devastated the southern part of Bangladesh, NU operated large scale emergency relief operation as well as rehabilitation and awareness building program in Pirojpur and Barisal District. For relief and rehabilitation program NU draws fund from donors, friends and well wishers and from staff contribution. NU is involved with the citizens' movement to save the environment of Bangladesh and also involved with international forum working for raising awareness on climate change.

While people of people are struggling to realize their basic rights, the environmental degradation due to natural and human made climate change make them more vulnerable. Over a decade poor people in the northern and southern zone of Bangladesh severely affected by various kind of natural disaster like flood, cyclone, and drought, cold weave which often destroyed their live and livelihood and resulted a significant problem in the socio- economic sector.

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In November 15, 2007, cyclone Sidr struck the southern coast of Bangladesh impacting 5.4 million people- across 30 districts. The storm and resulting floods destroyed homes, household belongings, food stocks, water sources and sanitation facilities in what were already very poor communities. People in three of NU working areas were affected badly by the Sidr. NU undertook immediate relief operation in the most affected areas including its working areas. NU distributed emergency relief among 2000 affected families in Barisal Sadar, Mathbaria, Bhandaria and Swarupkhathi Upazila.

Because of the severity of the storm's impact and the high-level of need in affected communities, NU undertake a rehabilitation program for the affected people in Shawrupkhathi and Mathbarial upazila of Pirojpur with the funding of EcNet and Christian Aid. The aid included full and partial support for house, school/social club, providing milking cow, fishing boat and net for the Sidr victim to involve income generating activities. The program also include disaster preparedness and risk reduction issues as it can be a major factor in preventing the loss of lives in natural disasters and helped save tens of thousands of people in the areas affected by cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh. In December of 2009, a terrible cold wave swept over the whole of Bangladesh. The months long cold wave increased the sufferings of poor people and it was badly felt in the northern districts. Media sourced that over hundred people died by cold wave. In these circumstances, NU decided to operate relief program among the affected people. From the previous experience, NU decided to distribute warm clothes among the poor and affected people. NU operated warm clothes distribution work in most affected areas like 11 unions in Badarganj Upazila in Rangpur Districts, 11 unions of Rangpour Sadar, 8 unions of Kalihati upazila in Tangail districts, 6 unions of Sawrupkhathi unions of Pirojpur district and 7 unions of Banaripara upazila of Barisal districts. In total 43 unions under five upazila covered under this action.

NU believes if we can protect our environment it will give us our life. Save the environment and adaptation to climate change is one of the prime concerns of NU activities. NU is actively involved in the campaign of save the environment and climate change issues. NU is a key member of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (BAPA). NU's Chief Executive is Joint Secretary of BAPA, and NU is also a secretariat of BAPA's climate change group. NU participated in site demonstrations, sit-in protests, hunger strikes, rallies, seminars, workshops, and roundtable discussions by BAPA in protection of environment. In the reporting period NU, BAPA and Nobolok jointly organized seminar on Climate change issues. NU actively participated in BAPA's 'Save the Buriganga' campaign.



## 6. PLANNING, MONITORING & EVALUATION

NU has grown up a strong Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism to ensure maximum effectiveness of its work. The PME unit brings out the actual status of NU through regular and periodical health check and suggests required remedy for improvement. PME unit assesses the performance of NU comparing planning vs. achievement on six monthly bases or frequently if required.

NU practices a comprehensive M&E and reporting system that attempts to ensure equal participation and input from both NU staff and the beneficiaries of NU's projects and programs. Specific tools like monitoring and reporting format, FGD, Case study are conducted for monitoring and evaluation purposes. Coordination meeting and progress reports are the two basic components of NU's M&E process. In the program level - achievements and constraints against the periodic target are discussed on the basis of reports submitted by the union level staff in the meeting of Upazila unit. Area officers submit the reports in the project level meeting in central office. This report is verified by the program staff, presented and discussed in the Central coordination meeting. Other units (technical support unit) also present their activity reports in the Central Coordination Meeting. All the reports are thoroughly discussed by the concerned staff in the meeting. PME Unit validates all the reports through vilification and finalizes. This unit also conducted participatory monitoring in the field level for verification and validation of the output achieved as well as determining strategy for redressing challenges. NU maintains frequent consultation and feed backing process in every reporting stage from top to bottom. PME unit prepares quarterly and annual reports for internal and external purpose.

PME unit prepares an annual planning based on internal and external assessment reports. It also works for raising fund of the organization. During the reporting period the unit helps in preparing project proposal for the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the ongoing project 'Improving Access to Justice through Human Rights Education and Community Mediation' - supported by Consortium donors (EED, Bread for the World and Christian Aid) and a new project on 'Strengthening Local Government' supporting by European Commission.

### **Resource and Documentation Center**

The resource and documentation center of NU consists of a full fledged Documentation Unit and a reference library. NU produces quite a good number of documents relating to human rights, essential laws, training and workshop materials, case studies, activity report etc. Reference library possesses a comprehensive collection of books, journals,

magazines, reports, newspaper clippings, audiovisual material on various issues. It catalogues books and periodicals and keeps newspaper clippings on relevant topics, including wider social and economic issues related to the real-life needs and concerns of poor people as well human rights and law issues. The documentation centre has created database of books articles indexing audiovisual material, and newspaper clippings. The resource and documentation center is useful not only to NU's own staff but also to the wider public. It also serves NU's growing research unit. The library is constantly expanding its catalogue every year.

## 7. CAPACITY BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT

NU provides training for the employees to increase job skills and build their capacity based on the identified development need in performance and the recommended development interventions. Training and Capacity Building Unit assesses the capacity need of the organization and manages it through incorporating necessary inputs. For the program level, it conducts training for different level stakeholders as per annual plan of different project. It continuously monitors and evaluate of the given training to the stakeholders. For staff level capacity building it depends on the annual staff assessment and arranges eligible training for them. Besides, staffs are often sent to seminar, symposium, workshop or meeting arranged by different organization or networks in home and abroad and the learning are duly shared with other staff. The unit also develops a good number of training materials, module, hand out which is also helpful to other organization. NU's training strategy starts with determining of training needs and ends with analysis of trainings' impact on groups or individuals. Specific objectives of the unit are as follows –

- *Strengthening capacity of CBOs on human rights, legal issues, gender and leadership skill*
- *Enhance staff capacity on various issues based on training need analysis*
- *Produce training manuals and other materials for organizational purpose*

### In-house training

<i>Training Issues</i>	<i>Participants</i>
Refresher on Project Implementation Strategy	<i>Community Mobilizer</i>
Workshop on Right to information and Human Rights	<i>Project Staff</i>

NU regularly arranges training for staff development through internal capacity or externally on a variety of topics and contents relating to program or organizational strategy. The staffs frequently attend in meeting and seminar organized by partner, network organizations and donors in home and abroad. The learning from the meeting/seminar/training and workshop is duly shared among the other staffs and documents are rightly preserved. The skilled staffs of NU also help partner or network members' organizations in facilitating or developing trainings materials.

## Training received from External sources

Training Issues	Participant	Organized by
Professional Training Programme on Disaster Management'	1 Coordinator, 1 Area Officer	Department of Sociology, Dhaka University
Disaster Risk Reduction & Climate Change Adaptation Advocacy	1 Program Officer, 1 Coordinator	Christian Aid, Bangladesh
ToT on Composite Heritage	1 Coordinator, 1 Associate Program Officer	Hope Foundation
Domestic Worker Protection and Welfare Policy	1 Project Officer	Network for Protecting Domestic Worker's Right
Gender Evaluation Methodology (GEM) Adaptation Workshop	1 Assitant Program Officer	D.Net
Social Networking and Legal Awareness Building for NGO's	1 Project Officer	
Building Capacities Knowledge Perspective on People Centered Advocacy in South Asia Theme Based Workshop on organizing and Mobilizing	1 Program Officer	National Centre Advocacy Studies
Workshop on Film Making	1 Volunteer	Christian Aid
Workshop on Finance Compliance capacity Building for Bangladesh Programme Partner and Team	1 Senior Program Officer, 1 Assistant Accounts Officer	Christian Aid
Training on Need Assessment in Emergencies	1 Program Officer, 1 Coordinator	Christian Aid
Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness Bangladesh Process	1 Assistant Project Officer	BAPA, CPD, SUPRA, Equity BD

### Attending seminar/meeting /Training in abroad

Issues	Participants	Organized by
Bengali Course on Gender	2 Program Officer	South Asian Network for Gender Activist and Trainer (SANGAT), West Bengal, India
Bihar Flood Lessons learned Workshop	Chief Executive	
Training on Implementation of Right to Information	1 Project Officer	Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), India
Training on Community Driven Sustainable Development	1 Senior Program Officer, 1 Coordinator	Bala Bikash Kendra, Hyderabad, India
14 <sup>th</sup> Fredskorpset Preparatory Course in Asia	1 Project Officer	
First Strategical meeting of Dalit Women Group	1 Area Officer (Urban), 1 PaWA member	Katmandu, Nepal
Consultation from the excluded group meeting	1 Area Officer (Urban), 1 PaWA member)	Actiona Aid, Asia, Bangkok, Thailand

## 8. ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Systematical and standard governance procedure is vital for successful operation of NU activities. NU maintains a smooth transfer of function in delivering service which helps in attaining optimum success.

### **Board of Executives**

At the top level a board of executive representing eminent human rights activists, educationalists and researchers oversee the function of NU. This board cares the organization's basic operation and makes decision as to its strategic agenda. The executive committee sits quarterly and reviews the undertaken program and activities as well as other aspects of the organization. NU's board of executive is of 19members. (Please see Annex - A). New members can be included upon vacant of any membership.

### **Management**

Organizational management is overseen by a five members' Senior Management Team (SMT), headed by the Chief Executive. This committee is formed with five senior staff of the organization. SMT deals with strategic planning, fund raising and resource mobilization, program and operational process, policy and procurement, wealth and human resource, administration, financial activities as well. SMT looks after the different units of NU responsible for executing activities as planned.

### **Administration and Finance**

Administration and finance - these two wings comprises this unit headed by a deputy manager and 5 other staff.

*Administration* wing carry out day to day petty administrative task along with to provide necessary logistic supports for the program and organizational purposes. Administration also performs the task of human resource management like staff recruitment, welfare, development and appraisal. This wing supports coordination within the organization through monthly staff meeting, quarterly coordination meeting, and senior management meeting. It also maintains administrative function with NGO Bureau, Government departments and Donors.

NU enjoys adequate IT facilities in performing its activities. It supports the staff with sufficient computer, scanner, photocopy machine, over head projector, multimedia

projector, laptop and printer. The ratio of computer and its users is 1:2 and the entire computers are connected with each other through local area network and have broadband internet facility. NU has one ISD telephone number and one facsimile. Besides the entire unit have internal communication facilities through PABX system. NU has its own domain name at [http://: www.nuhr.org](http://www.nuhr.org). This website contains the activities of the organization and meets the information needs of wider readers.

*The Finance and Accounts* wing maintains the day to day financial activities. It prepares program and organizational budget, financial reports, submits periodical financial reports to the donors and NGO bureau and concerned persons. This wing is also responsible for ensuring transparency in financial activities and to ensure reasonable usage of fund. The wing thoroughly checks all the financial documents like bill, voucher, note; maintaining of cash book, ledger book, updating of documents regularly.

### **Human Resource Management**

Nagorik Uddyog is comprised of 44 full time staff at central office and 184 staff at field level. Among the staff of central office 8 are senior level staff 49 mid level staff and 171 are entry level staff. One volunteer supported by VSO Bangladesh work with Nagorik Uddyog as a management expert.

The human resource of Nagorik Uddyog is managed as following a standard human resource policy. The policy is made through a participatory workshop attended by all level staff as well as assessment by external evaluators and it can be amended when necessary. Staffs performance is evaluated every six months following a standard appraisal manual. On the basis of appraisal, staffs gain increment, promotion and other benefits of the organization.

NU maintains a fair and transparent system in recruitment staff. Advertisement for recruitment is rightly served in the national or local dailies and website and the candidates are selected maintaining utmost transparency. After recruitment, staff is given a week long orientation that helps him/her to learn organizational, program management and behavioral practice of NU.

Nu operates a contributory provident fund benefits from which are given to its employees in accordance with its policies. All permanent employees of the organization are contributing monthly to the fund and amount of 5% of their basic salaries. The organization also contributes 5% of employee's basic salary to the fund each month. Interest earned from the investment is credited to the employees' accounts on a yearly basis and this fund is audited every year by a firm of chartered accountants

## STAFF OF NU

Designation	female	male	total
<b>Central Office</b>			
Chief Executive Officer	0	1	1
Project Manager	1	0	1
Deputy Manager (Finance and Admin)	0	1	1
Senior Program Officer	2	1	3
Senior Accounts Officer	0	1	1
Project Coordinator	0	1	1
Program Officer	3	5	8
Project Officer	1	2	3
Accounts Officer	0	3	3
Monitoring Officer	1	2	3
Associate Program Officer	1	0	1
Assistant Accounts Officer	0	1	1
Assistant Program Officer	1	2	3
Area Officer - Urban	1	0	1
Total	10	21	31
<b>Area Office</b>			
Area Officer	1	8	9
Assistant Area Officer	0	4	4
Field Organizer	1	2	3
Community Mobilizer	43	47	90
Total	45	61	106
<b>Total</b>			
Central and Area office	55	82	137



## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Sl.	Name	Position in the Executive Committee	Status
1.	Dr. Khan Sarwar Murshid	Chairperson	Prominent Educationalist
2.	Dr. Hameeda Hossain	Vice Chairperson	Imminent Human Rights Activist
3.	Mr. Safi Rahman Khan	Treasurer	Executive Director, Bangladesh Freedom Foundation
4.	Ms. Khushi Kabir	Member	Coordinator, Nijera Kori
5.	Dr. Meghna Guha Thakurta	Member	Executive Director, Research Initiative Bangladesh (RIB)
6.	Dr. Farzana Islam	Member	Professor, Department of Anthropology, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka
7.	Dr. Mirza M. Hassan	Member	Independent Researcher
8.	Mr. Shah-I-Mobin Jinnah	Member	Director, CDA-Dinajpur
9.	Zakir Hossain	Ex-Officio, Member	Chief Executive, Nagorik Uddyog

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

**Executive Committee**  
F-4, M-5

**Chief Executive**  
Zakir Hossain (m)

**Senior Management Team- 5**  
members (3m,2f)  
3 m, 2f

## PROGRAM UNIT

## TECHNICAL SUPPORT UNIT

## ADMINISTRATION

**Project-A**  
**AJTHRECM**  
Donors: CA, EED, BftW  
**Line Manager-**  
Mahabuba Sultana

**Project-B**  
**IWAEJ**  
Donor: MJF  
**Line Manager-**  
Britwa Roy

**Project-C**  
**Canpagin on RTI**  
Donr: OWA  
**Line Manager-**  
Amit ranjan Dey

**Project-D**  
**BNCPPRDB**  
Funded by OWA  
**Line Manager-**  
Zakir Hossain

**Project -E**  
**SCPILG**  
Funded by EC  
**Line Manage**  
r- Mozibor Rahman-PC

**TRAINING**  
**Line Manager-**  
Britwa Roy

**THEATER & CULTURAL**  
**Line Manager-**  
Amit Ranjan Dey

**LEGAL AID & INVESTIGATION**  
**Line Manager-**  
Mahabuba Sultana

**Research, Policy & Communication**  
**Line Manager-**  
Zakir Hossain

**Advocacy, Campaign & Networking**  
**Line Manager-**  
Amit Ranjan

**Monitoring & Evaluation**  
**Line Manager**  
- Amit Ranjan

**Finance & Admin**  
**Line Manager-**  
Sarder Zahidul Islam

**DM**  
Sarder Zahidul Islam (m)

**SPO**  
Mahabuba Sultana (f)  
**PO (FO)**  
Marjina Khatun (f)  
**PO**  
Pulak Ranjan Palit (M)  
**APO- Training**  
Tahmina Afroja (F)

**Project Manager**  
Britwa Roy (f)  
**PO (FO)**  
Rivjiul Kabir (m)

**Project Officer**  
Hamidul Islam (m)  
**APO**  
Ekram Hossain (m)  
**Campaigner 3**  
m

**Project Coordinator**  
Abul Bashar (M)  
**Field Organizer**  
Abdullah al mamun (m)  
**Campaigner**  
Miltan Sardar (m)  
**Community Organizer**  
B Solomon(m)  
**OA**  
B David Raj

**Project -E**  
**SPO**  
Soma Dutta (f)

**PO**  
Aleya Begum

**APO-**  
Anjuman Ara

**PO**  
Abu Bakar Bakul (m)

**APO-**  
Rahsed Mamunur Rahman (m)

**PO**  
Khurshid Alam (m)

**SPO**  
Soma Dutta (f)

**Intern**  
Mirza Golam Hafiz (m)

**SPO**  
Amit Ranjan Dey (m)

**PO**  
Abu Naser (M)  
**APO**  
rabiul Alam (M)

### Finance

**Senior Accunts Officer**  
Manirul Haq (m)  
**Accounts Officer**  
Gabida Chandra Kor (m)  
Ashim Chatterjee (m)

### Office mngmnt

**Office Manager**  
Mijanur Rahman  
**OS**  
Umme Fahmida (f)  
**Supporting Staff**  
Babul Mia (m)  
Namimur Rahman (m)  
Mina Begum (f)  
Narsamma (f)

**AO**  
(4m, 1f)  
**FO**  
-5 (3 M, 2F)  
**CM** - 45  
(m24, f 21)  
**OA** 5 (m)