

NAGORIK UDDYOG

Annual Report

July 2010-June 2011



House no. 8/14, Block-B, Lalmatia, Dhaka-1207

E-mail: info@nuhr.org

Website: www.nuhr.org

CONTENTS

Overview	3
CHAPTER 1: EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES	5
1.1. Building Community Institutions	
1.2 Strengthening Local Governance - Building administrative skills for basic service delivery	
CHAPTER 2: ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS	9
2.1 Transforming the Traditional Shalish	
2.2 Legal Aid and Investigation	
2.3 Role of Police in Democratic Society	
CHAPTER 3: WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT	14
3.1 Grassroots Women Leaders' Network - A platform for potential women active for social change	
3.2 Protecting Rights of Vulnerable Women	
CHAPTER 4: ADVOCACY, RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATION	17
CHAPTER 5: OUR INFORMATION OUR RIGHT	19
CHAPTER 6: RIGHT TO FOOD AND MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL SECURITY	23
CHAPTER 7: PARTNERSHIP, NETWORKING AND ALLIANCE	25
7.1 PaWA - a forum for raising the voices of women workers	
7.2 Voice for Dalit and Excluded Rights - Dalit and Excluded Movement in Bangladesh	
7.3 Youth activism for social change	
7.4 Involvement with other National Level Alliances	
CHAPTER 8: ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT	37
CHAPTER 9: PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION	38
CHAPTER 10: CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING UNIT	40
CHAPTER 11: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES	42
11.1 Management	
11.2 Administration and Finance	
11.3 Human Resource Management	
11.4 Legal Status	
11.5 Financial Report	
Annex 1 : Executive Committee	44

Overview

Nagorik Uddyog (NU) is a development agency promoting the human rights of the poorest and most excluded people in Bangladesh, focussing on women and minorities. Since it was established in 1995 NU has strengthened people's capacity to pursue and realise their rights, and improved the functioning of local and national authorities. NU recognises that democratic elections are by themselves insufficient in creating democracy - that poor, marginalised and disadvantaged people must be given the power to participate in, and contribute to the decision-making processes that affect their lives. Therefore NU aims to create an enabling condition for people to set up and influence institutions, to mobilise and to organise.

Commitment to this vision has given NU an international reputation for achieving results and positive change - delivering innovative, effective and ground-breaking programmes and advocacy strengthening gender justice, human rights, good governance, and the right to information. NU has supported some of the most marginalised people and communities in Bangladesh to access their rights and make tangible changes to their lives.

Vision: A Bangladesh without poverty where socially and environmentally conscious citizens achieve their full potential irrespective of gender or social status.

Mission: To build and promote community institutions, creating sustainable livelihood opportunities and institutionalising human rights, particularly for poor and marginalised women and minorities.

Objectives:

- To raise consciousness of human rights and gender equality at the grassroots.
- To create an environment conducive to fulfilling democratic rights.
- To ensure access to justice through mediation and legal aid.
- To promote political participation to ensure a fair, open and accountable electoral system.
- To support women at the grassroots level, ensuring their effective and broad participation in political processes.
- To establish and consolidate national and international human rights networks.
- To conduct research on key aspects of Bangladeshi society and on the impact of global policies on local human rights realities.

List of Current Projects and Donors

SI #	Project Name	Duration	Budget	Donor Name
1	Improving Access to Justice through Human Rights Education and Community Mediation-Phase 3	July 2010 to June 2013	34,435,000	-Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst (EED) - Christian Aid - Bread for the World
2	Strengthening Citizen's Participation in Improving Local Governance	March 15, 2010 to March 14, 2013	36,510,894	- European Union - Christian Aid, UK
3	Improving Women's Access to Equality and Justice	July 2008 to June 2011	34,290,666	Manusher Jonno Foundation, Dhaka, Bangladesh
4	Building a National Campaign to Protect and Promote the Rights of Dalits in Bangladesh	Jan.'08 to Dec'10	5,552,856	One World Action, UK
5	Campaign on Right to Information	July'10 –June '11	2,727,669	One World Action, UK
6	Supporting Small Economic Activities Run by Poor Women in Dhaka and Barisal City, Bangladesh	1 st February, 2010 to 31 st January, 2011	2,995,960	One World Action, UK
7	Strengthening Urban Poor Women's Organizations in Dhaka	April 2009 to March 2011	7,754,775	One World Action, UK

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

Without strong and sustainable institutional structures at the community level, poor people will never access justice, and their rights and an equitable society will not be possible. NU promotes the participation of citizens through educating, organising, training and strengthening local government bodies. NU addresses traditional hierarchical power relations between leaders and citizens, developing new political relationships based on trust and common goals. This year NU has continued to improve access to justice and provision of essential basic services for poor people.

1.1. Building Community Institutions

Enabling people to become active citizens, empowered socially, politically and legally to become catalysts of their own development - to understand the dynamics of their own communities so that they can bring about positive change. Through organising and mobilising NU's community empowerment programmes build the capacity of rural poor people to take collective action against exploitation and social injustice, to gain access to local resources, to address inequities and to play a more active role in the public sphere.

Strategies:

- Identify community leaders - traditional mediators, teachers, religious leaders, social workers, political leaders
- Co-ordinate participatory discussions on priority issues such as polygamy, divorce, dowry, alimony, inheritance laws and domestic violence. Discuss the use and understanding of both customary law and state law, and past methods for settling disputes.
- Establish community forums to collaborate with local government agency to contribute to building democratic structures at community level.

Community Forums Include:

- **Ward Justice Committees** that organise mediation and access to justice for citizens. Members are provided with legal training particularly on Muslim family law and land issues. Committees consist of 4 men and 2 women. To date NU has established 792 Committees and trained 4752 members working across 88 unions. This year 948 monthly meetings were held to settle disputes and follow up previous cases. 37 trainings were held training 1152 members.

- **Human Rights Monitoring Groups** act as human rights watchdogs, addressing human rights violations and promoting rights and good governance within their community. Each Group consists of 27 members from 9 wards (2 men and 1 woman from each ward) from each union. NU has given members extensive training on human rights law and mediation techniques with refresher courses given as required. Groups have an annual planning meeting to review progress, discuss responsibilities, achievements and strategies. A human rights report is presented to local officials, local NGOs, teachers and journalists. These meetings therefore also act as a public hearing to raise accountability and encourage action on human rights issues. This year NU established and supported 17 groups covering 88 unions training 1254 trained members. 308 members participated in a one day refresher course on law and mediation. This year the Groups expanded their activities at the Upazila level through formation of an Upazila Unit. 3 members from each union are represented in the Unit elected at an annual conference. This year 9 conferences were held in 9 Upazilas, with 748 men and 509 women, providing a broader discussion and scaling up their awareness of human rights issues at the Upazila level.
- **Citizens' Rights Groups link** citizens to local officials and institutions and also link up with other Community Organisations and NGOs in the area to work collectively for more effective local administration and good governance. Each group consists of 18 members (1 man and 1 woman from each ward) NU has formed Groups in 34 unions, training 2396 members have been trained. Each CRG consisted of 18 members (2 from each ward - 1 male and 1 female). Groups identify priority projects and participatory development plans so that plans reflect the needs of the community through consensus building and negotiation. Groups work with local officials engaging with development planning, budgeting and implementing and evaluating development projects. They train citizens on their rights and responsibilities. Groups are creating a strong community network and pressure group to realise citizen's rights and to make local government more responsive and capable.

These groups have increased citizen's knowledge on human rights, enhanced people's capacity to deal with conflict at the local level, increased engagement with local officials and held local institutions to account. This year groups have helped people register for ID cards and documentation to enable them to access government benefits such as elderly, widow and disability allowance. This year groups dealt with 4325 grievances of which 3717 cases were resolved through mediation.

This year Human Rights Monitoring Groups were much more visible in the community and preventing rights abuse and violations, particularly of women. This year Groups prevented 142 child marriages and 49 oral divorces. They resolved 6 cases of sexual harassment, 7 cases of polygamy and assisted 94 marriages to be conducted without a dowry and 110 marriages to be registered properly thus securing rights of the woman.

1.2 Strengthening Local Governance - Building administrative skills for basic service delivery

NU believes that effective functioning of local government is vital for creating democracy and good governance and that strengthening local government is a must for community empowerment. However the Union Parishad, the smallest administrative unit in Bangladesh has traditionally been weak and inactive due to a lack of resources, accountability and corruption.

NU's community empowerment programme is building the skills, knowledge and abilities of citizens and elected officials to create a more participatory, transparent, accountable and responsive local governance, and to change existing power relationships.

NU's is ensuring increased engagement by citizens in local government and the involvement of citizens in planning, budgeting, implementation and evaluation. As a result there is citizens are monitoring the pledges that officials have made and development plans are being developed on the basis of need. Local government are increasing their ability to implement activities in a more democratic and cost effective way.



This year NU held 5 meetings at upazila level with local government representatives like Upazila elected bodies, Union Parishad chairmen, members and secretaries, civil society representatives and relevant government officials.

- **Effective planning and budgeting capacity** – This year NU organized 34 trainings on participatory budgeting and planning attended by 1158 Union Parishad officials. Training included effective planning and budgeting, identification of income and the importance of involving local community. Union Parishad chairmen facilitated sessions. This year 34 meetings in 34 unions were held with elected representative and Citizen's Rights Groups on the roles and responsibilities of local government, including the need for women to play an equal role in leadership.
- **Ensure accountability through public hearings** - This year NU arranged 5 public hearings in Barisal on Upazila development. Citizens directly questioned officials and service providers about their role and responsibility, success, challenges and how they could access different services. These hearings help to minimise gaps and improve people's access to basic services.
- **Pre-budget meetings** – These sessions support the community to identify actual needs and to access decision making process. They also enable Union Parishad's to generate more internal revenue by motivating local people to

pay their taxes and to gain support from the community in implementing development projects if they show credible transparency and accountability in open budget sessions. This year NU organised pre budget planning session in 23 unions. Community representatives asked for the clarification of different revenue and expenditures and made recommendations for what should be included in the final budget. 34 Union Parishad set up notice boards outlining a Citizen's Charter and services available and a complaint box.



- **Ensuring the functioning of Union Parishad Committees and Arbitration Councils** - Committees are there to increase participation in local governance and to ensure delivering of services however these Committees are rarely active. NU aims to build their capacity and ensuring they are operating effectively and meeting regularly. NU have reactivated Law and Order, Anti-Violence Against Women and Vulnerable Group Committees as well as local Arbitration Councils who by law are responsible for addressing issues in relation to divorce, polygamy and maintenance. This year NU organized 5 advocacy meetings on the importance of Arbitration Councils for establishing justice at upazila level, with 329 people including Upazila officials and marriage registrars. 9 orientations were held at union level on the same issue with the participation of 100 Union Parishads' members and secretaries. Members were encouraged to form or strengthen Committees and to activate Arbitration Councils to deliver better services and access to justice, as well dealing more effectively with law and order issues and in responding to violence against women and children. As a result Union Parishad's have become more active and responsive and this year 132 meetings were held of Arbitration Councils and Law and Order Standing Committees – particularly focussing on addressing sexual harassment, child marriage and domestic violence.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

A lack of access to justice and basic human rights prevents poverty alleviation and derails the significant development achievements that have been attained in Bangladesh in other sectors such as health and education. Despite constitutional assertion poor, marginalized and women in particular continue to suffer from challenges against the rule of law, limited justice options, as well as the lack of knowledge and protection of human rights.

For the last ten years NU has been developing a groundbreaking community justice programme. They have attempted to democratise the Shalish (traditional mediation) system, as shalish plays an extremely important role in reinforcing the prevailing moral codes of conduct on which rural society is based. Through strengthening and democratising the process the rights of women and disadvantaged groups have been protected within the framework of the laws of the country.

NU's key objective has been to improve women's access to justice by promoting gender sensitive, appropriate mediation procedures at the grass root level. The provision of services created by the project fill an important gap in the national system of justice, making access to justice and legal rights more accessible, affordable and accountable.



NU has created institutions and leaders that are able to advocate for increased access to justice for the poorest women and men and uphold human rights at the local level. Formation Shalish, Women Leaders networks and local Human Rights committees provide access to justice for local people with the avoidance of the expense, delays and bias of the formal justice system. The Shalish agreements reached are mediated and not imposed, the process is locally-based and assisted by local committees with knowledge of local circumstances. As a result there is also more accountability resulting from local societal pressure for compliance.

2.1 Transforming the Traditional Shalish

NU seeks to transform rather than replace the existing power structures, bringing together 'influential' and ordinary members of the community in training and mediation, so fostering new allegiances. NU identify traditional mediators who are open to a more democratic and just forms of dispute resolution through participatory local level workshops, and invites them to become members of a local NU Shalish Committee along with other individuals representing a cross-section of the community. One third of the members are women, and a particular effort is made to include women Union Parishad members.

Once established, NU provided the committee members with necessary tools for promoting greater justice in the Shalish. Emphasis is given to education and training, combining human rights education with information about the law, including civil and criminal laws, as well as religious, customary and family laws. The training given enhanced members' sensitivity to prevailing attitudes and norms that discriminate against women, and



develop legal and moral arguments for how these can be counteracted through the Shalish. Members of the Ward Shalish committee are free to take part in the traditional Shalish in their own capacity.

NU has developed a systematic method of recording Shalish complaints. When a complaint reaches the Community Mobiliser, 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 form serves as an official record of the proceedings. NU staff then undertake 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, the Community Mobiliser will follow up the decisions made in the Shalish for three months. In complex and challenging cases NU will refer the aggrieved party to the courts. Shalish is 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.

Shalish Cases 2010-2011

Types of Complaint	last year's pending	Received this	Settled	Dropped	Send to court	Pending
Domestic	112	710	595	148	7	72
Family Dispute	2	111	89	17	0	7
Alimony	10	14	15	5	0	4
Maintenance	46	83	54	43	0	32
Polygamy	8	12	9	8	0	3
Divorce	10	33	17	17	0	9
Retrieval of	24	185	116	49	1	43
Dowry	4	25	13	8	1	7
Violence	14	260	254	13	0	7
Land	25	146	126	30	0	15
Inheritance	4	18	8	6	0	8
Others***	31	150	133	30	3	15
Total	290	1747	1429	374	12	222

This year 63,66,400 taka, 214 decimals of lands and 8 bhories of gold was given in favour of beneficiaries. In addition 112 women received 4334500 taka as alimony, maintenance and dowry related compensation. This money has provided women with financial security and allowed these women to buy land, build houses or invest in a small business. In some cases NU helped women to save their Shalish-earned money in a formal bank account.

NU tries to settle a case within three sessions (maximum within two months) but for complicated cases it can take more sessions. This year NU settled 1105 cases in the first sitting, 264 required in two and 35 in three. Only 25 cases remained after the third session with no decision being reached. 2045 people benefited, 63% women.



Over the past 3 years this programme has seen impressive progress and community mediators are gradually taking on the role of NU in facilitating mediation. In the last five years 6985 complaints have been registered with NU and 5689 resolved peacefully. A total of 12536 people have benefited, many receiving money or land or properties as compensation. Previously NU took responsibility in organizing Shalish from receiving, organizing mediation to follow up of cases etc. As the community mediators increase their so the role of NU gradually retracts to only documentation. This year the community members settled 2288 cases (859 more than registered cases with NU) without any major support or intervention from NU.

When the programme began there was very low participation of women as mediators, observers or participants in the mediation sessions. If they did attend they were often as silent observers and even elected officials did not participate. However over the last few years women have increased in all roles becoming active and influential participants. This year NU in 1626 mediation sessions with 11247 mediators including local officials, leaders and citizens - 21% were female. This is very significant for establishing a pro poor, gender sensitive mediation at grassroots level.

Case Study - Lipi

Lipi Akthar was married at 15 and her poor father paid one lakh taka as a dowry. When she moved into her husband's family they abused her both mentally and physically. She had a daughter that added to the abuse as her husband's family wanted a son. To escape the abuse she returned to her father's house with her child. There was no communication between Lipi and her husband for 7 months, he went abroad to seek work and did not give her any maintenance or support. Lipi started work as a domestic servant. NU's Grassroots' Women Leaders Network suggested that Lipi register a complaint. A mediation session was organised with local officials and leaders. As a result he was ordered to give 220,000 taka to Lipi as alimony and dowry and she divorced him. Lipi used this money for potato cultivation and she is now financially independent, providing for herself and her child.

2.2 Legal Aid and Investigation

NU has established a Legal and Investigation Unit that undertake fact finding and co-ordinate legal aid services. Investigations are published in a quarterly bulletin "Nagorik Uddyog Barta" to create awareness about human rights violations. NU, in collaboration with other human rights organisations also conduct lobbying, press work and campaigns to highlight abuses and specific cases. This year the Unit investigated 8 cases – interviewing witnesses, victims, collecting evidence and co-ordinating with the police. Cases included:

- Abduction and forced marriage of a girl in Banaripara Union, Barisal District – the accused was arrested and imprisoned.
- Murder of a college teacher who protested about sexual harassment – an arrest has been made and NU is closely monitoring the case.
- Murder of a woman who protested against the sexual harassment of her daughter – an arrest has been made and NU is closely monitoring the case. NU held a press conference to protest about the incident.
- Murder of a woman by lashing due to a Fatwa – an arrest has been made and the high court as requested an autopsy. Again NU is closely monitoring the case.

NU provides legal support to poor people who are often distressed and can not cover the expense of court proceedings. When a case cannot be settled through mediation NU refers the case to the courts and provides legal aid. In cases of human

rights violations NU investigates the matter and accompanies the victim to court, covering all the expenses. NU works with a panel of 18 lawyers across 5 districts. NU staff work closely and meet regularly with the lawyers to follow up cases. Lawyers also help in training and advocacy.

This year legal aid was provided in 63 cases, the majority in Family Court and Women and Child Tribunals – 41 are pending, 4 have been judged and 18 were withdrawn or rejected.

2.3 Role of Police in Democratic Society

The police are responsible for maintaining and establishing the rule of law in Bangladesh however society in general has very negative attitudes towards the police, who are often seen as authoritarian and controlling. This situation has been exacerbated by institutional challenges and traditional mindsets. There is a significant level of violence and human insecurity in Bangladesh and the need for an accountable, transparent and efficient police system. In this context NU has started an initiative to inform citizens and the police about their role. They have held a series of seminars and discussions on police reform and the role of police in a democratic society.

In co-ordination with Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust and Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative NU held a workshop on 'Role of Police in a Democratic Society' in August 2010 with police officials, lawyers, human rights activists and journalists. An event on a similar theme was held in Barisal District in



April 2011 attended by Barisal City Corporation Mayor, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Chief Judicial Magistrate, District Police Super, Deputy Commissioner of Metropolitan Police and councillors. The workshop developed recommendations to develop people friendly and modern police force.

A book called '101 Questions and Answers about Police' was launched with Barrister Shafique Ahmed, Minister for Law, Justice and Parliament Affairs, eminent lawyers and writer of the constitution Dr. Kamal Hossain.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

NU's women's empowerment programme is building the capacity of rural women to protect and promote their rights and to strengthen their network for collective action. It is working to eradicate violence and to ensure increased access to resources and to establish a gender sensitive and equal society.

Rural women often face deeply entrenched patriarchal values and ideologies, discrimination, violence and undignified treatment as well as a limited role in decision making in the family as well as social and political space. NU focus on rural women and elected women local leaders to build their capacity to realize their rights and to become effective leaders in the community.

3.1 Grassroots Women Leaders' Network - A platform for potential women active for social change

NU has identified, trained and organised women leaders creating a '**Grassroots Women Leaders' Network.**' NU's approach involves mobilising and engaging these leaders to monitor and prevent human rights violations, creating a safer and more gender sensitive environment, creating mass awareness among women and men.

The Grassroots Women Leaders Network (GWLN) is democratic and flourishing day by day – implementing meetings, conferences and trainings. 88 units of GWLN are active at union level with 9 units operating at Upazila level. At union level GWLNs has 26 members. 2 women from each of the 9 wards that comprise a union are selected to a union-level. The 8 remaining members are 3 elected leaders and 5 college/younger girls. This year union GWLN organized 254 quarterly meetings with participation of 93% members. Meetings discussed strengths, weaknesses and future strategies of the network.



GWLN conducts group discussions at ward level for village women to raise awareness, disseminate information to women regarding laws preventing early marriage, dowry, domestic violence and abuse, inheritance and property rights, reproductive health as well as information about availability of resources. This year 1256 discussions were held with 23654 women.

Training helps to maintain motivation, raise awareness of women's rights and increase participation in community activities. It covers women's rights, constitutional provisions protecting women's rights, the causes of discrimination against women, reproductive rights, and national and international law. This year 1256 women leaders participated in 32 trainings. 16 refresher courses were attended by 256 women leaders. As a result women feel more in control of their lives rather than at the mercy of a system that works to control them. Women have gained increased confidence, knowledge and skills and traditional views about the role and value of women are changing.

GWLN is increasingly protesting against violation of women's rights. This year they prevented 69 child marriages, they properly registered 102 marriages and facilitated 124 marriages with no dowry. GWLN are also participating in local Committees and in political parties. 37 GWLDN members contested UP election, 26 became elected UP members. This year 809 women leaders participate in 2037 NU mediation sessions and helped 175 women complainants to receive 49,31, 850 taka as alimony, maintenance, dowry return and as compensation money. GWLN are becoming increasingly self reliant and self sustaining.

9 annual conferences of the GWLN were held this year in Barisal Sadar, Swarupkhathi, Banaripara, Sreenagar, Kalihati, Tangail Sadar, Rangpur Sadar, Badarganj and Gangachara Upazila. A total of 1139 women leaders participated in the conference. They 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.

3.2 Protecting Rights of Vulnerable Women

Widows, divorced and abandoned women are significantly marginalized and deprived of their rights to income, property as well as decent livelihoods due to our long entrenched patriarchal and religious custom. In 2003 NU conducted research to understand their issues, perspectives and solutions.



For the last few years NU has conducted specific activities to raise awareness amongst these women of their rights and designed interventions to access their inheritance rights, resources and support. NU has formed groups of vulnerable women in each union (88 groups - 27 members each).

This year groups meet quarterly for training - 135 meetings were held with 3117 women. NU links them with government services and also tried to change society's attitudes toward them. Along with building self confidence and awareness of rights, women were provided training on manufacturing candle, shopping bag and cards and bamboo products. As a result this year many are women are now making and selling goods.

These women are now more aware of their rights and entitlements. This year 162 women were registered in the government's work programme, 391 women in the Karma Srijan Project of the government, 669 were given Vulnerable Group Feeding cards, 109 received Vulnerable Group Development cards, 27 received ration cards, 61 received elderly allowances, 53 received a widow allowance and 11 received disability allowance.

ADVOCACY, RESEARCH AND COMMUNICATION

NU's efforts to promote human rights and good governance involve intensive advocacy and lobbying at local, national and international level. Research and production and dissemination of publications play a key role in credible lobbying and effective advocacy. Through consultation with different programmes NU's Advocacy, Research and Communication Unit identify and select issues – activities then involve seminars, production of reports, roundtable discussions, media work, cultural activities and publications targeting relevant stakeholders. NU is active in pressing for the implementation of the National Women Development Policy 2010 and in lobbying for policy recognition of informal sector workers.

Examples of specific activities include:

- In Barisal and Tangail NU's Upazila Unit organised two advocacy meetings on 'Sexual Harassment and Women's Human Rights: A Social Analysis'. The participants demanded tough laws to eradicate sexual harassments on women.
- Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010: NU Kalihati Upazila unit in Tangail District, Badarganj and Rangpur Sadar Upazila unit in Rangpur District, organized advocacy seminar on Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010.
- NU organized a round table discussion on the theme of 'Importance of Education on Law and Mediation in Resolving Local Dispute' on 20 June at Dhaka. Eminent lawyers of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, development and human rights activists, media were participants in the discussion.
- NU organised a sharing meeting at Dhaka on 'Social Security and Budget' on 2 April 2011. The seminar participated by noted economists, labour leaders, representative of political parties, development activists and human rights activists. The participants urged the government for recognition of the informal sector labours specific allocation for their security.

Research is a vital component of NU's advocacy activities, providing NU with an informed platform upon which it can build useful and efficient human rights and good governance strategies. For example this year NU published research on

'Women Leadership as a Poverty Reduction Strategy: Lessons from Bangladesh'. The findings of the study shared in a national level seminar held at Dhaka on 31 August.

NU's Publications and Communication Unit publishes stories and articles to promote human rights and good governance. NU publishes a quarterly human rights thematic newsletter (Nagorik Uddyog Barta) and a newsletter on Women's Rights called Narir Swapno Pata. The Unit also supports the publication 'Unmochon' by CCRTI, Shramojibi Nari Kontha ('Women Worker's Voice') by Partnership of Women in Action, Jubo Uddyog ('Youth Initiative') by Youth Citizens' Rights Alliance and 'Dalit and Banchita Samachar'- a newsletter of Dalit and Excluded Rights Movement. A new newsletter - 'Jono Angshograhan' on the theme of strengthening local government and good governance was published this year. The unit also publishes posters, leaflet, and booklet for the purpose of its program. This year NU published two books - 'Disability: In Human Rights and Development of Services,' and '101 Questions & Answers on Police'. The Unit has also started to publish a series of books on 'Diversity and Social Deprivation.' The Unit have also produced accessible versions of legislation and laws such as a guidelines on the use of the Right to Information Act and 4000 copies of the Union Parishad Act.

OUR INFORMATION OUR RIGHT

Accessing information about how, why and what decisions are made is a vital component of a functioning and accountable democracy. Access to information can be a catalyst for promoting and protecting human rights, economic participation and growth - it strengthens good governance and freedom of expression. Where information is accessible, services are more effectively delivered, the media is more balanced and corruption is reduced. The right to information (RTI) is a fundamental human right, from which other basic rights flow. It was called by the United Nations in 1946 'the touchstone of all the freedoms.'

RTI can also contribute to promoting the rights of women for example through policies aimed at women's full and equal participation in decision making. It can promote a wider culture of informed political engagement, lead to better access to benefits, greater accountability and transparency of local and national government institutions and increased engagement of civil society in governance and politics.

It was the growing realisation that access to information is essential to developing democracy and informed and active citizens that led NU to start campaigning to establish the right to information in Bangladesh.

Calls for RTI legislation can be traced back as far as 1983 when the Press Commission first recommended adopting an RTI Act and in 2002 this was echoed in a Working Paper from the Law Commission. In 2003 NU launched a RTI Campaign to lobby for an Act and over the following years the demand from civil society and lawyers intensified.



The campaign developed a range of advocacy and lobbying initiatives targeting policymakers, parliamentarians and the media, organising events and workshops across the country to create a diverse movement, demanding change. The campaign raised awareness about the need for RTI legislation and illustrated the potential impact that accessing information could have on all aspects of society. In 2008 the demands of the campaign

occupied a central position in public and media discourse, with pledges to enact legislation appearing for the first time in the election manifestoes of all major political parties.

In 2009 due to the continued efforts from civil society, an RTI Act was finally adopted by the current Government. A strong legal framework is an essential first step, however changing mindsets from a culture of secrecy to public disclosure, where people understand their rights and can claim them is a far greater challenge. For the last two years NU have implemented a series of programmes aiming to implement the Act, to create mass awareness and understanding about the law and its benefits, to help people obtain information and to create demand for information. NU has also worked with institutions and officials to build their capability and capacity to supply and disclose information, and to strengthen the institutional base of the RTI Act by supporting the newly established Information Commission.

32 public seminars and discussion meetings on RTI were organised in Dhaka and throughout the country involving civil society representatives, government officials, teachers, lawyers, journalists, human rights activists and officials from Information Commission. These were designed to create greater awareness about the Act and to develop a culture of openness amongst government officials.

A 2 day workshop was held in Dhaka from 21 to 22 September 2010 to develop skills to implement the Act. The workshop was participated by Upazila Chairmen, Upazila Vice Chairmen, Union Parishad chairmen, development workers and right to information activists. Another workshop on the same issue held from 26-27 January 2011 at Dhaka participated by human rights activist.

The campaign has implemented street plays, seminars and numerous meetings with national and local policy makers and officials. Human chains - where people stand by the side of the road with festoons and photographs - have been a vital tool to raise visibility and gain media coverage. Human chains have called for specific



demands, for example strengthening the Information Commission and ensuring freedom of press and security for journalists. The International Right to Information Day -28th September - was marked with different programmes. For example rallies, discussion meetings, distributing posters and submitting a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner calling for proper implementation of the RTI law.

Cultural campaigns and street theatre have proved a powerful way to convey messages on a larger scale. A play was developed called Kanamachi - a traditional rural children's game where one child is blindfolded with a piece of cloth and has to find the other children. Using the blindfold to illustrate how a lack of information can affect people the play explains the practical usefulness of RTI and how it can bring about enlightenment and accountability.

NU trained 3 theatre groups in Barisal, Rangpur and Pirojpur who have performed a total of 81 street plays throughout 4 districts. Around 2500 (or is it 25000?) students, youths, rickshaw pullers, vendors, hawkers and workers have seen the play. After each show audiences are asked for their opinions during a question and answer session and information leaflets distributed.

Right to Information Fairs have been an innovative way to sensitise and encourage various state and non-state institutions to voluntarily disclose information. Fairs have been designed to bring institutions and agencies closer to the people they claim to represent, or be working for. This year fairs have been held in 4 sub-districts to encourage proactive disclosure by local government officials and NGOs (e.g. on their budget, impact, available benefits and services). One fair in Gangachara Upazila, Rangpur District involved 17 different organisations and agencies working in that Upazila and each had a stall displaying their activities and information. Representatives were given time to discuss their organisation, followed by a cultural show and theatre performance. 2000 people visited and participants were moved by the potential of the Fair and many asked to organise similar programmes regularly and to expand into other places.

A number of materials have been developed and disseminated to popularise the Act, to raise awareness and to provide practical and technical advice on how and where people can request different types of information. These include stickers, leaflets, posters, booklets and a reader friendly version of the Act with case studies on how the law can be applied. The campaign publishes an RTI newsletter 'Unmochon.'

NU believes that youth will be catalyst for bringing expected social changes in Bangladesh and thus NU formed a youth forum - Jobu Nagorik Adhikar Jote which has significant contribution in campaign for promoting and protecting rights of different issues. This forum involves since the intervention on RTI and plays significant role in sensitizing mass people about RTI. Under this project Jubo Nagorik Adhikar Jote expanded its coverage in new areas. This year 188 Jubo Nagorik Adhikar Jote volunteers participated in 5 workshops. They organized 19 meetings where they discussed about RTI Act, set strategy to create mass awareness about its benefit and proper implementation.

Jubo Nagorik Adhikar Jote organized a conference on RTI in Dhaka participated by 45 students from different universities. Mr. ASM Shajahan, former advisor of Caretaker Government and Inspector General of Police participated. As part of the conference the youths arranged field campaign at two places of Dhaka city. They also arranged street drama at Mohammdaur area. The conference included campaign strategising and visits to near by communities to create awareness amongst community people. It was an opportunity for students and young people to exercise their understanding and mobilisation skills.

12 August 2010 Jubo Nagorik Adhikar Jote and Green voice jointly organized a rally and youth gathering in observance of International Day for Youth demanding effective implementation of RTI act for ensuring good governance, transparency and accountability. The rally started from Shahbag and ended at the premises of Shahid minar.

NU published a book 'Tottho Adhikar Charcha: Baboharik Nirdeśika' – Exercise of Right to Information: Practical Guideline. It also produced a documentary titled 'Tottho Amar Adhikar'- Information is Our Right. Both the documentary and book was launched through a open ceremony at Dhaka.

19 people applied for information from different government institutions at upazila level that includes 17 on social security, agriculture, 1 for birth registration and other regarding employment. Of the submitted application, 9 applicants received their desired information, 2 applicants denied to get information and they appealed to RTI commission. In the meantime Right to Information Commission conducted hearing for one complaint and other is on the process. Concerned government did not accept two applications; two applications are on the process. Regarding another two application relevant departments at first did not cooperate but after lobbying by RTI movement, they assured to take necessary process.

RIGHT TO FOOD AND MOVEMENT FOR SOCIAL SECURITY

The Constitution of Bangladesh mentions the state's obligation to ensure "provision of the basic necessities of life, including food" in Article 15 (a), as a fundamental principle of state policy. Ensuring food security for all is a major challenge for Bangladesh today. Despite significant achievements in food grain production and food availability, food security at national, household and individual levels remains a matter of major concern. Moreover, food insecurity can be linked to skewed market prices of food grains, challenges with food stocks, economic insecurity, seasonal unemployment and climate change. The existence of social security/ safety nets contradicts reality, where the country's human development index, still can be seen ranking in the low human development bracket.

In this perspective NU initiated advocacy activities for peoples' right to food. The overall objective of the action is to initiate a campaign on Right to Food and Social Security (RTF&SS) in Bangladesh ensuring participation of concerned organizations and individuals, committed to work towards establishing people's fundamental entitlements. NU believe that the right to food and social security are intrinsic for establishing a life free from hunger, malnutrition and poverty, thus being essential for developing the foundation of any individual's dignity.



NU's activities involve raising awareness amongst affected people to ensure proper implementation, distribution and monitoring of the Social Safety Net Programmes and building a campaign towards proper implementation of the Public Distribution System. Campaigning against the syndication and illegal hoarding of food grains in the market, monitoring corruption and selection of beneficiaries through using the Right to Information Act-2009, to advocate for policy and legal reforms related to securing the right to food, social security and disaster response and to undertake, as appropriate, legal action (including Public Interest Litigation) to secure the Right to Food and Social Security.



This year NU in collaboration with Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust jointly organized four workshops and discussion meetings in Dhaka on 'Peoples' Right to Food.' The aim of the workshop was to develop a strategy for ensuring peoples' right to food. The participants provided specific recommendation about poverty elevation, elimination of hunger, and unemployment. The workshop

provided information on social safety net program, social security program and distribution of food of the government as well as information of international convention and covenant regarding right to food and specific suggestion for ensure social security. It discussed existing national policy legal framework and organizational structure that helped people access to food. Participants included development activists, labour leaders, lawyers, researchers and economists. The meeting discussed the food stock of Bangladesh, supply, management process, legal aspect based on right to food.

On 12 February 2011, NU, jointly organized a seminar at CIRDAP auditorium titled 'Economic and Social Right and Public interest litigation. In the seminar Mr. Kalin Gonsalves, a senior lawyer of the supreme court of India, shared his experience about public interest litigation in favour of poor and marginalized people.

PARTNERSHIP, NETWORKING AND ALLIANCE

NU initiate, facilitate and support the development of rights based social movements and their collaboration with other movements at national and international level. NU is now well known as a catalyst for securing rights of most vulnerable and ignored communities like informal workers and Dalit communities.

7.1 PaWA - a forum for raising the voices of women workers

Unorganised and isolated, informal women workers are often extremely poor and vulnerable. Their lack of political power and engagement in local and national political and development processes, further increases their invisibility and exclusion.

Approximately 10 million women in Bangladesh find work in the informal sector. The majority are labourers, street vendors, rag pickers, brick breakers, sex workers or domestic servants. These women share a common experience of low pay, long hours, dangerous, unregulated and unprotected working conditions, the risk of



sexual harassment, inadequate shelter and health care, and the constant threat of eviction from homes and workplaces.

In response to these challenges, NU helped form the Partnership of Women in Action (PaWA) coalition in 2006. PaWA brought together five existing but fragile grassroots women's organisations working with informal women workers. PaWA has developed these organisations capacity, knowledge and ability to take collective action and all member organisations now have several thousand members, secure rented rooms and full time staff. In the last three years PaWA have transformed the lives of their members and lobbied for women workers to become visible, protected and supported.

PaWA have developed a range of different initiatives to support their members. These include human rights and literacy training, providing legal advice and support

with family mediation (particularly on issues relating to violence and marriage), setting up crèches, giving information on health and government schemes and providing opportunities for women members to socialise. Inspired by a visit to the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India in 2007, PaWA has set up simple financial services so for the first time women can access credit, open bank accounts, save and take out insurance. PaWA has given its members identity cards which is an important first step in women identifying themselves as workers and accessing the benefits they are entitled to.

This year 20 members of PaWA network received training on leadership enhancement skill. Two courses of workshop on 'Entrepreneurship and Capacity Enhancement' were organised for 20 entrepreneurs. The network arranged a workshop on women leadership development for 24 dalit women leaders from across Bangladesh.

PaWA have formed five business entrepreneur groups involved with various types of business like sewing, candle making, block and batik on clothes, spice powder, floating restaurant, grocery shop and poultry. Interest free loan and introduction of cooperative strategy among the business entrepreneur groups have accelerated the self-employment initiative. The groups return the loan



regularly from their benefit and receive 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'. 5 teams with 100 members are working under this project. The most significant is PaWA has opened up a outlet Mohammadpur Krishi Market to display and selling of its product.

Training	Place	Participants
A Weeklong training on Block and Boutique	Barisal	19
Four course of training on Block and Boutique	Ganaktuli and Ranking Street, Dhaka	60
Training on sewing and cutting	Rupnagar, Dhaka	30
Month long training on sewing	Keraniganj	30
Two course of training on embroidery	Mohammadpur and PaWA office	40

Workers will continue to be isolated and invisible if they are unorganised. Organising is therefore at the heart of everything PaWA do. PaWA's integrated rights based approach and ability to combine grassroots community organising and poverty alleviation programmes, with personal empowerment and lobbying for longer term policy change has proved an effective model that has already led to positive changes for some of Dhaka's most marginalised women.

Advocacy activities of PaWA

- Human Chain at Shahbag on 'Stop slum eviction without rehabilitation' on 12 August 2011
- Human Chain demanding Policy on Domestic Worker, implementation and stop torture on 15 January 2011
- Human chain protesting continuous torture on domestic workers
- Discussion on 'Women Leadership as a Poverty Strategy' on 31 August 2011
- Seminar on 'Informal Sector, Social Security and National Budget' on 2 April 2011
- National seminar on 'Rights of Domestic Worker, Present Situation, Role of Trade Union and Human Rights Organizations' on 4-5 April 2011
- Human chain for implementation of National Women Policy on 12 April
- Human chain and symbolic funeral rally demanding effective steps to formulate policy for domestic workers as well its implementation

This year PaWA partners' organizations received 57 cases regarding domestic violence, wage discrimination, divorcee, polygamy and other incident against women workers. Of them 54 were resolved through mediation. 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 4 schools are being run by the 4 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 provide all the educational materials to students as books, workbooks, pencil etc.

PaWA's identity as the leading network for informal sector women labours 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 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.

7.2 Voice for Dalit and Excluded Rights - Dalit and Excluded Movement in Bangladesh

Over the past few years the Dalit movement in Bangladesh has gone from strength to strength, and is now a growing and effective force for positive change. Despite entrenched patterns of discrimination and extreme poverty, a new generation of courageous Dalit leaders and activists are starting to organise their communities and demand justice.

Despite constitutional guarantees as well as ratification of different human rights treaties of UN by Bangladesh government Dalits and other minority communities across the country continue to experience caste discrimination, social exclusion and practices linked to untouchability. The community people often organized to end discrimination against them and demand basic rights but they were mostly isolated with no visibility at local or national level. Dalit and Excluded community group formally appeared under a broader forum at national level in 2002 and that is establishing of Bangladesh Dalit Human Rights (BDHR) led by B.G. Murthy. BDHR can be termed as a pioneer organization to organize dalit community across the country as well as draw their issues to the countrymen for the first time in Bangladesh. On April 22nd 2008, at a national consultation, organised by BDHR and Nagorik Uddyog, the national movement Bangladesh and Excluded Rights Movement was formed. In January 2009 BDERM and Nagorik Uddyog co-ordinated Bangladesh's first national Dalit conference where 260 Dalit and representatives from excluded communities came together for the first time for two days of workshops, rallies and strategy sessions. This historic conference received widespread media coverage and was a milestone for the Dalit rights movement, capturing the attention of national and international agencies. The conference accelerated the national platform. BDERM intentionally widened the focus of BDHR to unite and include other excluded communities who although they experience caste or descent based discrimination, do not identify with, or recognise the term Dalit.

The ultimate goal of BDERM'S is to build an equal society by eliminating all forms of discrimination against Dalit and excluded communities on the basis of equality, dignity, prosperity and security. Thus it involves building awareness amongst Dalits and excluded communities of their socio-economic, cultural, and political rights, creating public awareness against discrimination based on work and descent, making policy makers (both government and non-government) sensitive and responsible to meeting the rights and needs of Dalit and excluded communities, ensuring access of Dalit and excluded communities to development, basic services and benefits and To establish unity and harmony, to strengthen the capacity of Dalit run organisations and to play a catalytic role for communication amongst Dalit groups. BDERM is now a strong and vocal national platform, a social movement and a membership organisation - which is spearheading the fight for human rights for Dalits and excluded communities and uniting excluded groups and communities.

Building and Strengthening the National Movement

BDERM now has 25 member organisations in 10 districts and has established Local Committees in 35 districts, out of 64 districts. BDERM is self financing through its members and has established democratic and inclusive governance structures based on its Constitution. Successes so far have been founded on this broad based national movement.



Annual General Council Meeting 2010

Bangladesh Dalit and Excluded Rights Movement (BDERM) observed its 2nd Annual General Council with lots of enthusiasm at Dhaka on 26 November 2010 with the slogan – To End all kinds of Discrimination on the basis of Birth and Profession. The meeting elected a National Working Committee with the mandate from the general council to run activities over the next year. About 100 representatives, from 46 different districts attended with solidarity messages given by Rikke Nöhrland, (Director, International Dalit Solidarity Network), Bethan Cobley (One World Action/Dalit Solidity Network, UK), Zakir Hossain (Executive Director, Nagorik Uddyog), Dr. Farzana Islam (BDERM Adviser) and Manjula Pradeep (Director, Navsarjan, India).

Planning meeting of BDERM

BDERM held its planning meeting on 23 November 2011 at NU conference room and set its activities and strategy for the next three years. The meeting was chaired by BDERM Chairperson Mr. Mukul Sikdar while General Secretary Bodhanki Solomon, Information and Research secretary Bivutosh Roy and other leaders of divisional convening committee as well as BDERM advisors Dr. Farzana Islam and Zakir Hossain.



National Dalit Women's Federation

In November 2010 in Dhaka Dalit Women Forum and 9 other community based organisations working for the rights of Dalit women namely Avijan, Institute of Social Advancement, Dalit Nari Parishad, Mothers Club Forum, Auntoj Nari Parishad, Harijon Nari Kollyan Samitee, Shreemongol Upazila Indigenous Development Samitee, Young Monipuri Association, Ashru Mochon Dustho Mohila O Shishu Unnyon Sonstha held a sharing meeting. A total of 61 participants including women activists, human rights activists of different organisations participated in the meeting. The participants shared prolonged discrimination and problems they faced in different areas of Bangladesh.

Capacity Building activities

Ongoing visits, solidarity and networking have been carried out by BDERM leaders to conduct fact finding and build the capacity of Dalit communities throughout the country - this has been vital for building the movement, community organizing and sharing information.

Activities of BDHR

BDHR held its general meeting on 9th July 2010 at its secretariat. In the meeting the participants choose an eleven members working committee headed by Mr. Bodanki Solomon as president while Shubu Das as Organizing Secretary. To sensitize the dalit community people about human rights, women rights and other basic rights regular meetings were held at the colony of Dhaka and Narayanganj. The monthly meeting of core members of BDHR held regularly. The ongoing activities of collecting bio-data of school and college students as well as communication with different organizations for arranging stipend or job is continuing.

Campaign and Mobilization Activities

District Level

BDERM members and District Committees have made great progress at the local level with activities focusing on community organising, capacity building, raising visibility and taking action against atrocities. On 16 July 2010 BDERM in collaboration with Hindu, Buddha Oikka Parishad jointly organized a meeting protesting a abduction and killing of one of the Dalit community people. Thousands of people from Dalit community attended the protest rally and submit a memo to local police station for taking proper action against the perpetrator. In Monirampur in December 2010, 71 Dalit students were prevented from participating in their National Day event. As a direct result of BDERM protests the teacher was transferred. The case received mass media coverage and highlighted caste discrimination within education. In Joypurhath, BDERM leader and advocate Babul Rabi Das, issued a memorandum to his Deputy Commissioner. As a result the administrator built a community centre and school for sweeper's children.

National Level

BDERM has undertaken both reactive and proactive campaigning, using a range of different strategies and tools. In July 2009 a human chain was held in protest against the sexual harassment of a Dalit girl. 80 activists demanded the right of women's security in the workplace.

On 4 December 2009, human chains and rallies were held in 11 districts including Dhaka to observe International Human Dignity Day. In Dhaka around 100 representatives from different Dalit colonies gave speeches and held a human chain on this occasion in front of the national museum. Again on March 21st 2009 BDERM celebrated the International Day for the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination with a large gathering outside the National Museum and human chains were organised in 11 different districts.

In December 2010, similar events were held in 29 districts - calling for specific action to be taken to end discrimination; to introduce a specific law on caste discrimination; to establish a special desk for Dalit women within the Ministry for Women and Children; to improve education, social security benefits, health care, access to land for Dalits and excluded communities; and to implement a quota system for education, employment and political parties.

Popular action to strengthen policy demands

On October 8th 2010, a human chain was held to demand special provision for Dalits within the constitution. Women and men from various Dalit colonies gathered with festoons and banners, despite incessant rains, to demand their constitutional protection. The event was covered in all Bangladesh's main papers including the Daily Star, New Age, The Independent, Bangladesh Today, The Daily Sangbad, Amader Shomoy and Jonota.

Lobbying and Advocacy

Success in Budget Advocacy - BDERM submitted a Memorandum to the Finance Ministry demanding specific allocation of funds in the national budget to develop the housing facilities of Dalit communities. In response the Ministry allocated 10 crore taka (2011-2012) for this purpose. Dalits and excluded communities were also

referred to in the Budget Speech made by the Finance Minister on 10th June 2011. Influencing the national Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper and the National Human Rights Commission to seriously address Dalits and excluded communities.

Lobbying for Constitutional change - BDERM submitted a memorandum to the special parliamentary committee to amend the constitution on October 5th 2010, demanding special provision in the constitution to protect the Dalit community and make more explicit reference to caste based discrimination. Copies were sent to all 340 MPs. BDERM had a positive meeting with the Co-chairman of the Constitution Review Committee. Positive meetings have been held with various MPs (e.g. Shuranjit Sen Gupta) and Ministries held to request quotas, a specific law against untouchability and more priority to be given to the issue.

In January 2011 BDERM leaders met with the Prime Minister, her sister Sheikh Rehana and her niece Tulip at her Government home. They discussed the overall situation and some solutions to the current problems – including the need to include caste within the national census. She assured representatives of her Government's commitment to improve the situation of Dalit and excluded communities based on the electoral manifesto of the ruling alliance.

Ongoing lobbying of the Dhaka Municipal Authorities for improved housing, water and sanitation for Dalit communities. BDERM briefed the Deputy Commissioner of Dhaka on the situation of Dalit communities and requested positive and immediate measures be taken. As a result he committed to taking action to develop these communities according to the rules and regulations of government and human rights norms. BDERM representatives met with the Managing Director of the Water and Sanitation Authority in Dhaka in September 2010 to ask them to take immediate measures for Dalit slums in Dhaka. As the result the Authority supplied water to Rainkhola Colony.

BDERM have held a series of meeting with the Danish, UK and German Embassies, and with the European Commission and United Nations Development Programme to raise the visibility of the issues and to make recommendations for how Dalits and excluded communities can be included within wider development programmes. In September 2011 BDERM will be making a presentation to programme staff at the UK Department for International Development in Dhaka.

Although the 2011 Census provided an unprecedented opportunity to capture national data, categories related to work, descent and caste were not included. Unfortunately BDERM meetings and submissions during December 2010 which aimed to influence both through the Bureau of Statistics and the European Commission who helped fund the census were not successful. The lack of concrete national data contributes to the invisibility, marginalisation and disempowerment of Dalits and excluded communities and also hinders claims for special measures.

Media advocacy

In October 2010, at Dhaka Reporters Unity, to highlight BDERM's demands to change the Constitution. Representatives from around 20 newspapers heard BDERM leaders, eminent citizens and human rights activists express their solidarity. Retired Justice of Apex Court, Gholam Rabbani, stressed the need for a special rule in the code of procedure to prohibit discrimination. Rabbani suggested introducing the provision of

6 months to 3 years imprisonment to anyone found impeding Dalits from receiving education, treatment and other fundamental rights.

Legal Assistance, Fact Finding and Securing Justice

BDERM have developed the mechanisms and skills to quickly respond when incidents of abuse, violence or discrimination occur. Members now regularly conduct fact finding, lodge complaints and accompany cases through to the court. In February 2011 some Dalit families of the Union of Suapur of Dhamrai Upazila were evicted from their homes by local land grabbers. BDERM immediately investigated and compiled reports that were then followed up by the National Human Rights Commission and the District Administrator. In Jessore members protested to government officials when people set fire to a Dalit house, and their intervention in a rape case resulted in a Dalit girl receiving compensation and the perpetrator being sent to prison. A press conference was organised to demand legal action and the arrest of perpetrators, in 3 separate incidents of murder in Jessore and Jhenaidah districts.

Documentation and Research

BDERM have researched, produced and commissioned a range publications, reports and documents. These have been produced in both English and Bangla and disseminated to a range of international and national audiences. BDERM also produces a twice yearly newsletter called Dalit O Bonchito Shomachar and in the reporting period it brought out 7th issue of the newsletter.

Publications include: Report from first Dalit Human Rights Conference Report - Bangladesh's Universal Periodic Review Session Factsheet - Problems of Bangladesh's Dalits 'Why Ambedkar is needed in Bangladesh?' by Altaf Perves Bangla version - Draft UN Principles and Guidelines Booklet - Patriarchy, Untouchability and Poverty Booklet - Diversity and Social Exclusion A range of leaflets, posters, desk calendars, New Year cards Academic Research. The Upstream Journal based at Canada published a column on Dalit community in Bangladesh written by Rahan Higgitt, a volunteer once worked with NU. BDERM sent a thank you to the journal for publishing their concern.

International Advocacy, Networking and Awareness Raising

In 2009, BDERM joined the International Dalit Solidarity Network and as a result both the issue and the movement have become much more visible and influential at the international level. BDERM now regularly participate in IDSN Council meetings and lobbying - so jointly influencing the UN Human Rights Council and the European Union.

Since March 2009, BDERM have attended the United Nation Human Rights Council meetings in Geneva participating in joint lobbying events. In 2010 BDERM representatives spoke eloquently to the council about caste discrimination in Bangladesh, particularly the need to improve housing, water and sanitation.

Exposure Visits and Exchanges

BDERM have facilitated visits by both UN Special Experts researching the issue of caste based discrimination and with Special Rapporteurs on Water and Sanitation – in both cases experts visited Dalit colonies in Dhaka and as a direct result their independent reports highlighted issues facing Dalit communities.

In December 2010, UK MP Bridget Philipppson visited Dalit communities in Dhaka. Later in the month the Chair-person of the Dalit Women's Forum, Moni Rani Das visited Bridget in London and made a presentation to the UK All Party Parliamentary Group of MPs, to the Bangladesh High Commissioner and the Department for International Development.

BDERM have hosted various delegations from Dalit organisations in India and Nepal to share strategies and to observe and compare the situation of Dalits in Bangladesh. BDERM attended a seminar, 'Minority Issues and Social Exclusion in South Asia: Challenges and Responses by State and Civil Society, Positive Practices, Learning and Future Tasks,' held in December 2010 Delhi, India.

In 2010 One World Action awarded their Sternberg Award to the Dalit Women's Forum in recognition of the Forum's work, vision and success in tackling caste discrimination and poverty amongst Dalit communities in Bangladesh.

Celebrating Dalit Culture and Contribution

- BDERM have co-ordinated a range of cultural and musical programmes to celebrate the contribution of Dalit culture to music, theatre and the arts in Bangladesh. For example: An event in December 2010 in Dhaka featured traditional songs sung by Dalit women. A drama show, called Amra Dalit (We are Dalit) has been shown in Dhaka and in communities, performed alongside a photographic exhibition.
- BDERM have organised receptions and celebrations for Dalit students who have passed their examinations to encourage and inspire them.
- A short film called Defiant Voices – featuring photographs and music from Dalits living in Dhaka has been viewed over 1,200 times on You Tube – see www.youtube.com/watch?v=eli1BBbQQ-k
- A photo exhibition featuring photographs from this exhibition was held at the UK Department for International Development in December 2011 in London to coincide with celebrations around international human rights day.

7.3 Youth activism for social change

NU's innovative programming to connect young people in social development issues has helped mobilise young people across many regions of Bangladesh to advocate for social change. Youth volunteers and students committed to bringing about progressive social change in Bangladesh were organized under an alliance - Jubo Nagorik Odhikar Jote ("Youth Citizen's Rights Alliance") in 2004. Since its inception, the Alliance has successfully involved thousands of youth in six districts of Bangladesh through various programs and activities. 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.

Social consciousness leads to authentic commitment, which is 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.

Jubo Nagorik Adhikar Jote

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. 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 group's programs.

The alliance in collaboration of Green Voice observed International Day for Youth on 12 August 2010. The day was observed with a started from Central Shaheed Minar and ended in front of National Museum. The theme of the event was to demand effective implementation of RTI act for ensuring good governance, transparency and accountability. The alliance was also a co-organizer of another event organized by Nagorik Uddyog and Green Voice on observance of World Press Freedom day held on 3rd May 2011. A human chain was held on this occasion. The member of the Jote also participated in the street drama staged on this occasion. Besides, the Jote conducted awareness raising campaign on RTI at Kalapar Ferighat, Kuakata Sea Beach and Rakhain Market .

Dalit Youth Movement

A Dalit youth group has been organized by the insistence of the Alliance. They organize meeting and seminar in collaboration with other youth organizations for 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 organisations against imperialisation and privatisation. Each month they organized study circle on different issue related with Imperialist Globalization.

GLOBAL XCHANGE PROGRAMME

Global Xchange (GX) is 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 England, and another three months in one of three different communities in Bangladesh. 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.

7.4 Involvement with other 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.
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 Universal Periodic Review	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 Movement Health	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.
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.
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.

NU are also active in the following national and international networks:

National

- Climate Change Development Forum
- CA disaster group
- Human Rights Information and Documentation System
- HIV/AIDS Program- AITAM
- Gender mainstreaming group VSO
- World Social Forum
- Global Exchange
- Local Justice and Human Rights Network
- Aid Accountability and IFI work

International

- World Social Forum
- South Asians for Human Rights
- Association of Women's Rights in Development
- Peace in South Asia

- Peoples Forum Against-ADB
- International Centre for Research)
- People's Decade of Human Rights Education
- South Asian for Composite Heritage
- Asia Dalit Rights Movement
- International Dalit Solidarity Network

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Protecting the environment, adaptation to climate change and response to disaster affected people are key focus areas for NU. Thousands of people in the northern and southern districts of Bangladesh have received assistance from NU, from emergency relief goods to shelter and income generating instruments etc. during natural disasters. NU has an Emergency Response Unit consisting of staff of different project and program who volunteer their time when need. NU appoint new staff for large scale relief and rehabilitation program.

This year NU responded to the sufferings of the people in the Tangail Sadar Upazila of Tangail District and Gaganchara, Badarganj and Ragnpur Sadar Upazila of Rangpur District during unusually cold weather. NU distributed blanket and wrapper (for the use of women) to 500 families while 333 families received blanket and 300 families received wrapper only. Bread for the world and Manusher Jonno Foundation provided financial supports in this relief operation.

NU is closely involved with citizens' movement for protecting environment at local and national level as well as with international forum working for raising awareness on climate change. NU is a key member of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (BAPA) and NU's Chief Executive is the Joint Secretary of BAPA and secretary 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. NU actively participated in BAPA's 'Save the Buriganga' campaign.

PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

NU's Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) Unit works to ensure maximum effectiveness of the activities conducted under different programmes. The unit brings out the actual impact of NU through regular and periodical health check and suggests recommendations for improvements. The PME unit assesses the performance of NU comparing planning vs. achievement on yearly or half yearly bases or frequently if required. Systematic tools (various types of reporting format and documents) for monitoring and evaluation purposes use by the unit. Monthly Coordination meeting and progress reports are other 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.

The unit prepare annual reports of NU and compilation report of different project if required. It also involved and play key role in fund raising initiative of NU through preparing concept not or project proposal.

Resource and Documentation Centre

The resource and documentation centre of NU serves the various units and project through providing necessary information and documents. It is consists of a Documentation Unit and a reference library. It 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 centre also serves external researchers or interested persons and NU's growing research unit. The library is constantly expanding its catalogue every year.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING UNIT

This unit helps NU to reach its goal through enabling stakeholders as well as staff for quality input in implementing activities. The unit has 3 full time staffs with knowledge of legal and human rights issues and superb facilitation skill. The unit conducts training, workshop both at grassroots and national level as per the annual plan/strategy of NU. NU provides training for the employees to increase job skill and build their capacity based on the identified development need in performance and the recommended development interventions. The unit follows systematic tools for assessment of the need of staff on regular basis. As per the appraisal of the staff capacity as well as need of the organization it conducts training for staff development through internal capacity or externally on a variety of topics and contents as required. The unit also suggest staff for attending meeting and seminar organized by partner, network organizations and donors at 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.

Staff Training in 2010-2011

Participants	Facilitating Organizations	Training issues
Director, Project Manager, Senior Program Officer	Manusher Jonno Foundation	Role of NGOs in implementation RTI Act
Program Officer, Assistant Program Officer	Democracy Watch	Capacity building Workshop for Local NGO's on Good Governance ,Human Rights And Project Management
Project Manager	Manusher Jonno Foundation	Strategy of Establishing Communication and Relation with Mass Media with Voluntary Organisation.
Project Officer	Research Initiative Bangladesh (RIB)	Study Circle on RTI

Senior Program Officers	Bread for the World	Capacity Building Workshop on Impact Assessment & Bread for the World Annual Reporting Format
Senior Program Officer	Christian Aid	Training on Gender Awareness & Sensitivity Application
Advocacy Associate	Society for Environment & Human Development	Skill Sharing Workshop Rethinking & Mapping Human Rights
Program Officer	ALRD	Lawyers Orientation on Land Survey

Staff participation of workshop/training in abroad in 2010-2011

Participants	Place	Facilitating Organisations	Training issues
Chief Executive	New Delhi, India	FK	Meeting Fk AIHR and Shupro
	India	Commonwealth Human Right Initiative (CHRI)	Police Reforms in India and To Observe the Implementation and Use of Indian's Rights to Information Act.
	Thailand	Asian Institute for Human Rights (AIHR)	FK Partner Planning Meeting
	India	NCDHR & WGHR	Regional Seminar on 'Minority Issues and Social Exclusion in South Asia'
	India	Multiple Action Research Group (MARG)	Conference on 'Legal Empowerment of the Poor'
	Geneva and London	One World Action	IDSN Council Meeting
Chief Executive(advisor to BDERM), General Secretary (BDERM)	Geneva	Pax Romana	UN Human Rights Council
Chief Executive(advisor to BDERM), President (BDERM), Project Officer (BDERM)	India	NCDHR & WGHR	Minority Issues and Social Exclusion in South Asia

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

11.1 Management

NU has a Board of Executives all eminent human rights activists, academicians, development activists and researchers. This committee is responsible for supervise overall governance of NU and contribute to basic operation. The committee examines the progress of the program undertaken and other aspects of the organization through quarterly meeting. NU's board of executive is of 19 members. (Please see Annex - A).

A Senior Management Team (SMT) formed with the senior level of staff active in supervising day to day activities at project and program level. 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.

11.2 Administration and Finance

Finance and Administration is an independent unit headed by a Deputy Manager. It provides necessary administrative and logistic supports for the implementation of projects as well as organizational affairs. The unit is also responsible for necessary staff recruitment and maintaining staff development issues, remuneration through assessment of performances. It 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.

The unit supports the staff with sufficient electronic equipments like computer, scanner, photocopy machine, over head projector, multimedia etc. NU has a website - www.nuhr.org with details of the organization and activities.

The Finance and Accounts wing maintains day to day financial activities like preparing budget, preparing financial reports, communication with donors and NGO affairs bureau for approval of grant etc. It is also responsible for ensuring transparency in financial activities and to ensure reasonable usage of fund.

11.3 Human Resource Management

The Human Resource of Nagorik Uddyog represent 171 staff at different level. 144 staff work at field level while 44 supervise the activities from central office at Dhaka. The human resource of Nagorik Uddyog is managed 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. Staff 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 the recruitment of 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 are given a week long orientation that help them to learn organisational, program management and behavioural 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

11.4 Legal Status

NU is registered with NGO affairs bureau (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).

Annex 1

Executive Committee

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