

# IMPACT CASE STUDY 2014-15

Programme Name : BANGLADESH  
Case Study Theme : GENDER

## 1. Links to Partnership for Change

Please tick which Success Criteria in Partnership for Change which this case study relates to:

Success Criteria	Please tick
1. Women and girls are achieving greater social, political and economic equality, and Christian Aid is placing gender and exclusion at the centre of its analysis and work.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10. Our humanitarian responses are effective and inclusive, build resilience and address underlying inequality.	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 2. What changed?

### 2.1 What changes have there been in the lives of poor and marginalised people as a result of this piece/area of work? How have women and men experienced these changes differently?

We have carried out this impact case study focused on works of our partner **Nijera Kori**. Nijera Kori is a movement for awareness, from the individual to the collective, to bring social, economic and political changes in the life and livelihoods of landless poorest and marginalized community. **Social changes:** The landless women and men members now have a clear perception about their own identity and about how others in the society perceive and label them. Now the members prefer, and are proud, to refer to themselves in society as members of the landless peoples' organization. This is a significant indication that their collective membership has given them awareness about their citizenship, and their political and cultural identity, which in turn has led to increased self-worth and dignity. Society, people's representatives, local power structures, and even government and non-government officials regard them. The level of participation of women in demonstration, meetings and dialogues with the government, reveals the active representation of women in the society, as by participating in these activities they are making their presence noticed and their voice felt. Therefore, in the activity areas, the landless organizations are considered to be a power group; influential in the fight to stop violence against women. Over the period, the landless group has actively resisted violence against women by organizing collective protest on violence against women; and monitoring *Shalish* (local arbitration system) regularly to ensure women justice during legal actions. **Economic changes:** The ability of the women and men group members to conduct economic activities with group savings independently is different from the conventional development trend and shows an alternative, successful, approach. This also reduces the dependency of the members on money-lenders and micro-credit, and the tendency of members to sell their assets when facing an economic crisis has reduced. At present 1,570 women have been running small businesses by using their savings. Partner is never involved in supplying services or financing to the group members. Instead, by building their awareness and mobilization, the members acquire the capability to demand their rights. As result, they made collective demands to develop service benefits and local development activities. 4,958 individuals (76% women) were included year in various government safety net programmes. This made a positive contribution towards their life and livelihoods. **Political change:** Over the period, 39 members (51% women) elected in different local bodies such as school, market and UP standing committees. This shows the dynamic changes of the poorest groups' acceptance, leadership and empowerment. This representation of poorest women and men in local power structures has created a more equal balance of power. As a result, they organized movements against corruption on education sectors and development project, stop violence against women (i.e. dowry), local *shalish* system. Hence, the MIS data shows that BDT 2,396,100 has been recovered/saved in last year 2014-2015 through these community movements. These movements contributed to promote accountability, transparency and democratic practices in in the decision making progress. The groups played as watchdog to reduce corruption, injustice, violence against women in their locality. The community leaders (total group leaders 60; 34 are women) have significant roles to change the power structure and empowering poor/landless people.

## 2.2 How do you know the situation has changed?

The partner (Nijera Kori) has been practicing a comprehensive Planning Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) and reporting system ensuring equal participation of staff and programme participants at all stages in measuring changes. Partner understands change is a process that they measured in implementation, lesson learning, experiences, continuous reviewing. The changes have been measured through participation and reflection of project participants, community leaders, and project staff. In addition to that, comprehensive MIS practiced in order to track quantities and qualitative progress. Qualitative cases studies were also significantly contributed to addressing the change, challenge and leaning.

## 2.3 What was the total number of people reached by this piece/area of work?

Total 9340 (women-5113, male-4227) people were directly reached by this project. All project participants are landless. Out of them, 566 are marginal farmers (women-34, men-532); 134 are sharecroppers (women-10, men-124); 5426 are wage labourers (women-1092, men-4334); 113 indigenous people (women-56, men-56), and 500 single women. The project met its target number.

## 2.4 What changes have there been in laws, policies or behaviours of government or traditional authorities, business or other power holders in favour of poor and marginalised women and men as a result of this piece/area of work?

Bangladesh, is constrained by, ineffective law, policy implementation, widespread corruption, elite dominated politics, patron-client system which control collective demand and actions by the marginalised and socially excluded communities. In this context, due to influence and creation obstacle from the beginning the landless members were not able to submit nomination for the school, market management committee election. At present landless groups treated as alternative power and women and men members have able to contest those elections. In addition to that landless members participated and sometimes invited by the local powerful groups in the *shalish* as mediator. It is increased by 36%. Over the project period numbers of dialogues were held government officials, and local peer groups to solve various local problems. This is positive change practice and behaviours of the government official and local powerful groups. In addition to that, the dialogues were immensely beneficial in ensuring the collective efforts and coordination of all parties involved, and promoting accountability and rights of the poor and the landless. The identity of landless groups is very crucial to make government service sector in order pro-poor and pro-active. Now the landless groups challenge and demand for service as rights. Over the project period, 164 collective protests were organised. In the some cases the landless groups submitted memorandum to the relevant government department and they have taken initiative to investigate complains which were raised by the groups. The women and men submitted alternative social safety-net entitle holders list to the UP. Majority of the list have been accepted by the authority. The women and men of groups have been actively participated in UP budget season. There are many evidence shows that the landless groups submitted alternative budget to the UP and it were partially/fully accepted. It proves that, over the project period practice and behaviours of UP has been changed.

## 2.5 What are you most proud of in this piece/area of work? What is the most powerful story you have heard from a partner or a community member about it?

In recent years the government has initiated development projects to assist the Adivasi (indigenous community). More specifically the Prime Minister's Special Affairs Division (SAD) grants financial assistance for social development every financial year to the sub-districts where large numbers of Adivasis live. Lalpur is one of the sub-district under Natore district that receives government funds to assist the Adivasi living there. The money intended for the Adivasi's, however, has not gone to them because a corrupt committee comprised entirely of non-Adivasis prevented the funds from going to the intended purpose. In the past the landless have repeatedly tried to expose the corruption and have a new committee appointed, but the opposition has been too powerful and influential for them to defeat. In the 2012-13 financial year the government granted BDT 15,22,000/- to Lalpur sub-district for establishing cattle farm (cattle shed construction, cattle purchase, and other cost) as an income generation project for the Adivasi. Like with other years, the committee of non-Adivasis' charged with appropriating the funds prevented them from being used for their intended purpose. In response to the misappropriation of the cattle farm fund the landless group collected proof of the corruption in the committee. The landless presented the information publically through organizing protest, processions and gathering in the haats and bazaars, demanding the suspension of the committee and rightful distribution of granted fund. The strength of their argument allowed them to generate strong public support for their cause. The landless

organized a meeting with leaders from both the Adivasi and Bengali communities. At the meeting the landless decided that it would organize a procession to the UNO's (Sub-district level administrative officer) office demanding disbandment of the previous committee and formation of a new committee with representatives from Adivasi communities, and just distribution of the government grant. Both of the Bengali and Adivasi around 200 people came to show their support and process to the UNOs office. When they arrived they submitted a memorandum that outlined their demands. The UNO read their grievances and pledged that a new, representative committee would be formed and the funds would be correctly distributed. He asked the landless organization to provide a list of names of Adivasi who should serve as representatives on the new committee. The UNO directed the development project's granted fund be deposited in a bank account established for the newly appointed committee. It was decided that in Shibpur Adivasi village, all the Adivasis would jointly establish a cattle farm. The UNO officially approved the appointment of the 17 Adivasi's selected by the landless to serve on the representatives committee. It was also decided that 75% of the profit would be distributed among the Adivasi families, 10% would be kept in the joint bank account of the committee to be used as a revolving fund, and 15% would be used for running the farm. After completing all arrangement, the cattle farm was started by community. The farm has been run by 'Adivasi Landless Group' since 2013. It is now making profits. Two landless members have been employed for livestock rearing and the group pays monthly BDT 3000 per person. Now, total number of cattle is 20. Over the period they expanded this collective economic activity. From the profit 60 decimals of agricultural land has been leased and started collective agricultural activities in this year. During April 2014 to March 2015, the farm gained profit BDT 119000.

**2.6 Empowerment:** Based on the information you have, pick the most applicable statement from the list below. PROMISE: See Project Review.

Poor and marginalised women and men have:	
• Increased influence to bring about positive change beyond the scope of the CA-funded programme work	√
• Increased influence to bring about positive change within scope of CA-funded work	
• Received benefits from CA-funded project(s), but with no increased ability to influence	
• Received project benefits but may have decreased ability to influence	
• Not applicable / not able to assess	

**2.7 Why did you choose this statement? What change(s) have there been for communities in processes/levels of exclusion?**

Before the formation of the landless organization the poorest community particularly women were excluded from the mainstream development process. We have collected some of value based opinions from different studies. The revealed that 'they identify themselves as change agents' (INCINDIN), 'Members have a strong sense of ownership in their group and activity' (HDRC); 'Men of the landless group feel there is a practical advantage to working with women on an equal footing' (KIT). Landless group members have multiple "NGO identities". "They look for economic support from other organizations while they continue with NK which works to develop them as an organized social stratum with ability of changing their relationship with the existing power structure" (IDS).

**2.8 Sustainability:** Based on the information you have, pick the most applicable statement from the list below. PROMISE: See Project Review.

Poor and marginalised women and men:	
• Are likely to sustain and strengthen resources and capacities beyond those developed by the CA-funded programme work	√
• Are likely to sustain the resources and capacities developed within CA-funded work	
• Have gained resources and capacities from CA-funded work, but these will be vulnerable over time	
• Are less able to adapt to external changes	
• Not applicable / not able to assess	

**What do you think will be the lasting impact of this work?**

The project worked in a right based approach which focuses on social mobilisation through the creation of autonomous and self-sustaining landless groups. Landless families established their rights on Khasland and water bodies. By using the permanent land resources they will be able to cultivate and produce every year, enabling

them to earn an income from the land, creating even more economic benefits. This shows how increasing the access of landless members to agricultural land and water bodies, will in turn ensure economic sustainability. The groups are managed by themselves (44%) and have self-help financing mechanism. This is an encouraging aspect in achieving self-sufficiency and sustainability of the group.

## 2.9 To what extent is this piece of work and its results/achievements indicative of a wider trend that CA and its partners have contributed to/been a catalyst for?

The project is unique than other development works. This project works are focused on not only women but also engaging men to positive change of men, changing their attitude and behaviours towards gender equity. In addition to that it is also important to give special emphasis on single women as they are sometime excluded from mainstream development. In the last partner's consultation workshop, other partners learnt about important of these programmatic elements to incorporate with their programming.

## 3. How did it change?

### 3.1 What were the key activities/steps that brought about the change(s)?

**Mobilisation and collective capabilities:** Mobilisation of marginalised and socially excluded women and men. Formation of organisations of the target groups and the strengthening of these organisations, through regular discussions, meetings, trainings, workshops, collective actions and use of Participatory Action Research (PAR) to identify problems, and addressing measures to overcome and realise their rights is a key input towards the realisation of their needs. Deepening organisation and developing network between organisations as well as supportive groups is a key strategy in developing a broader alliance to strengthen and expand mobilisation, monitoring and collective actions. **Knowledge and capacity building training:** The awareness and basic knowledge gained in the trainings and workshops were deepened by a comprehensive capacity building programme using participatory approach. The project explored trainings and workshops opportunities both of rights holders and duty bearers, aiming to increase awareness of constitutional and legal instruments and processes for ensuring citizen's rights, including gender equality, government procedures, constitutional guarantees and other relevant laws and legal obligations of the State such as use of RTI. **Voice Raising and empowerment:** Gender, an important central theme in the project, ensuring equality between women and men at individual, family, community and national levels. The project works promote increase access and ensure meaningful roles for women in all organisational tiers and leadership, both within the organisations as well as all other local and elected bodies. Increased acceptance and actions of men towards women in leadership roles within the personal and organisational sphere and taking up of women's issues as being central is also an important aspect of this project and an outcome. **Advocacy and Alliances:** In order to ensure maximum results and wider dissemination towards networking and alliance building for advocacy. The project built supportive coalitions with civil society groups on specific issues, carried out public interest litigation, participated in policy-making processes in an advisory capacity, organised local level consultations to influence public policy.

### 3.2 What else made a difference?

Surrounding community people in project areas beyond the project participants had significant contribution into the project interventions to achieve its desired objectives and goal. Community people including civil society representatives supported the marginalized group to organize, raise their voice and promote movement towards establishing rights.

In the movement of landless and marginalized people to establish their rights, many cases legal supports were required. The project has received extended support from lawyers free of cost in favour of poor people.

The project utilized Right to Information Act 2009 as a way to encourage community people to get update information about services and create a pressure for duty bearers to open their information. The approach worked very effectively and improved service provisions.

Political unrest situation (general strike, barricade, violence etc.) affected the project operations more than 3 months in last year. During that period, staff could not move smoothly and scheduled activities did arrange which resulted slow progress of project. The project avoided political events and activities rescheduled considering political unrest situation however, accelerate plan has been developed and implemented by partner after ending

the unrest situation.

### 3.3 If no-one had funded this work, would the results have been the same given the external factors you have outlined in 3.2?

The facilitation process of the project interventions worked as a catalyst to bring changes within the targeted community. However, if no one had funded this work, the results would not same.

### 3.4 What did CA contribute to this change, beyond funding partners' work? What was our added value (if any)? How distinctive was this – do you think it would have made any difference if the same projects were funded by a different INGO?

Christian Aid and Nijera Kori has been long partnership. Partnership between Christian Aid and Nijera Kori is not only basis of funding rather than value and mutual working experiences to empowering people and establishing rights. Over the project period, PPA workshops, Monitoring and Reporting Workshop, and conduct gender case study as well as helping to develop baseline contributed to value addition in the project and its achievements. PPA outcome assessment workshop particularly value for money analysis is totally different issue in the project period. Thus currently Nijera Kori uses the practical knowledge and skills for analysing Value for Money in their different projects.

## 4. Value for Money

### 4.1 How much in GBP has Christian Aid spent on this piece/area of work? If relevant, please give a year-by-year breakdown. PROMISE: See grants transfer.

The project phase covered there years (April 2012 to March 2015). The total grant amount is £90000 for 3 year period (£30000 per year)

### 4.2 What is your assessment of the *value for money* achieved by this work? Pick the most applicable statement from the list below.<sup>1</sup>

The results of the programme:	
• Go beyond the scope of the programme work to impact other sectors / places	√
• Go beyond what would be expected given the level of funding / other support provided, but within the scope of the programme	
• Are more or less in line with the level of funding / other support provided	
• Are disappointing, given the level of funding / other support provided	
• Not applicable / not able to assess	

### Why did you choose this statement?

The numbers of direct beneficiaries are 9,340. On the basis of total expenditure per beneficiaries is Tk. 1,192.30 (Tk.11,136,020/9,340). The project brought significant positive changes in life and livelihoods of landless and marginalized people through building unity, promoting accessibility to government services, self-driven collective initiatives and economic activities. The advocacy and linkage building interventions of the project, amount BDT 11,787,187 (last year 2014-2015) has been leveraged from government (Safety-Net, Government Agriculture Card, Employment Generation Programme, Student Stipend, Government Health services) for poorest people.

### 4.3 What else could we have done or what could we have done differently to increase the value for money of this work?

The project is focused on women. But the root casus is that, value of patriarchy and discriminatory power structure and relation between women and men. Thus we could particular programmatic action for changing the patriarchy based male attached, behaviour and power we could more focus and importance to men. That might contribute more value in order to economic empowerment of women. Because women generate more economic value but they do not have any control of expenditure.

<sup>1</sup> To find out more about CA's approach to achieving 'leverage' see Section 3 of CA's Managing the Programme Induction Module, which is available here:

<http://intranet/corporate/lc/functional/pmi/Documents/Course%20Manuals/Managing%20the%20Programme.doc>

## 5. Learning

### 5.1 What is especially exciting or innovative about this work that you want to share?

During the inception project, 'Single Women' were ignored and hidden in the programmatic intervention. But after a certain period, partner realized that the project needs special attention to single women as they are the most vulnerable in the society. Then the project initiated to focus on 'single women' which is unique aspect of this project.

### 5.2 What have you learned from this piece/area of work?

Learning from the project:

- Without financial support and services, awareness and mobilisation activities will contribute to generating economic value which is more sustainable than service delivery.
- Men should be considered as direct target groups in relation with gender or women rights programme
- The project was implemented with the specific target groups, but whole community benefited from the project. So, project interventions should not be isolated from other people in the community.

### 5.3 Is there any reason why any people or groups within the target group did not benefit from this work?

All of the target groups directly or indirectly have been benefited from this project.

### 5.4 If you could change one thing about this work, what would it be? Is there anything that you plan to do differently to increase the positive outcomes of this work for the target group going forward?

If we have been working with men comprehensively that might be more contribute to achieving the outcome.

## 6. Evidence

### 6.1 What evidence do you have to show the results of this work?

- Computerised based MIS
- Regular monitoring visit report
- Progress report
- Outcome based case studies conducted by interns
- Gender Assessment of Nijera Kori
- Making the invisible visible
- Impact study (by IDS, KIT, INCIDIN and HDRC)
- IDS working paper on six NGOs in Bangladesh
- Mid Term Review Reports conducted by other partners
- Video documentation on "Public Audit" by using Right to Information Act. on the issues of corruption and ensuring accountability of the government and other authorities.

### 6.2 Please provide any supporting documents / evidence. e.g. Partner reports, case studies, trip reports, media / other documentation – please attach/link/embed documents where possible

- Outcome based [case studies](#) conducted by interns
- [Gender Assessment](#) of Nijera Kori
- [Making the Invisible Visible](#) – Re-thinking traditional gender relation to increase gender equality in rural families
- [Video documentation](#) on "Public Audit" by using Right to Information Act. on the issues of corruption and ensuring accountability of the government and other authorities.