

ANNUAL REPORT

2013-2014



বাংলাদেশ জাতীয় মহিলা আইনজীবী সমিতি
Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association



VISION


ENSURE RULE OF LAW AND GENDER EQUALITY
BY ACCOUNTABLE, TRANSPARENT DEMOCRATIC
PRACTICE OF STATE TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS AND
FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

MISSION

BANGLADESH NATIONAL WOMAN LAWYERS
ASSOCIATION [BNWLA] IS A HUMAN RIGHTS
ORGANIZATION ENGAGING THEMSELVES WITH
PROACTIVE INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS
FOR ESTABLISHING RULE OF LAW
AND GENDER EQUALITY
BY CONSTANT ADVOCACY [I.E. LOBBYING FOR REFORM OF LAW
/POLICY, ACTION RESEARCH/SENSITIZATION PROGRAMS],
CAPACITY BUILDING SPECIALLY WOMEN LAWYERS,
CATERING LEGAL SERVICES,
DELIVERING COMPREHENSIVE PSYCHOSOCIAL PACKAGE
SERVICES, BUILDING SOCIAL SAFETY NET &
ENSURING GOOD GOVERNANCE THROUGH
DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES & ALSO
ADDRESSING WOMEN & CHILDREN IN CONFLICTS
(I.E. DISASTERS-BOTH POLITICAL AND
NATURAL & DISCRIMINATORY LAWS ETC).

VALUES

BNWLA AS A HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION BELIEVES AND
COMMITTED IN PROGRESSIVE,
DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES WITH RELIGIOUS
TOLERANCE, CREATING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH MUTUAL
RESPECT, COLLECTIVE RESPONSE ALONG EFFECTIVE
COORDINATION AND OPENNESS



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Violence against women either physical or mental is a common phenomenon in our societies. In Bangladesh violence against women and children is a concern, which cost at multiple levels of the society. It is one of the most visible social issues in this region. Violence is a prominent gender violence in Bangladesh. Women and children are particularly victimized due to patriarchal society and practice of some law based which creates discrimination in the society. Even sometimes state also become captive in making reforms of these laws because of public religious sentiments. Laws based on religion creates certain of inequality as religious law and its implementation have not been demystified to create awareness of equality dignity and honor for women in general.

Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association (BNWLA) is working for equal opportunity, rights and conducting advocacy for reform of laws and policy. Access to justice is also BNWLA's mandate for ensuring rights of women and children. From 1979 BNWLA is catering services for protection and prevention of rights of the women and children. In catering services through protection and prevention programs, BNWLA had to cater service for rehabilitation and also for essential education including basic skill for victims.

BNWLA and the members from time to time develop strategy through advocacy by way of conducting research for reform of law and policy to ensure rights for women and children. At present BNWLA is facing the challenges with the probable law of child marriage, which might increase the rate of child marriage by sanction of state law reducing manageable the age to 16 years. BNWLA is pioneer in advocating for convention of child rights and also contributed in developing child policy. The age of child marriage need to be made according to the practical scenario and on the principal of Convention on Child Rights as Bangladesh is a signatory of this convention.

BNWLA and its member the women lawyers strongly believe that equality of rights and equal opportunity for women can materialized when women of Bangladesh would be able to empower themselves through economic rights, eliminating gender violence along with demystifying these laws which creates discrimination, taboos, stigma and disparity in the society. To ensure equality of women as per the constitution of BANGLADESH. As such BNWLA believes that to move forward their strategy and to synergize rights as per law and religion so that equal participation of women and children are ensured in every sphere of the society. BNWLA would also like to strengthen the voice of the 50% of population of Bangladesh for ensuring equality in every corner and provide door step legal services to the disadvantage women and children. This annual report is going to depict BNWLA's activities in ensuring equality and sustainable rights of women and children.

Advocate Fawzia Karim Firoze
President

HEADLINES OF THE YEAR 2013-2014

Published a report title "Ending Impunity Monitoring Report for the Implementation of the Domestic Violence (Prevention & Protection) Act, 2010"

BNWLA published a report titled "Ending Impunity Monitoring Report for the Implementation of the Domestic Violence (Prevention & Protection) Act, 2010" (hereinafter DVPPA). The report launched by the Honorable Chief Justice of Bangladesh Mr. Justice Md. Muzammel Hossain in a program held on September 7, 2013 at Kishoreganj where almost 68 Judges and Magistrate of three districts (Mymensing, Kishoreganj & Gazipur) were present. This report provides an analysis of the current status of implementation of the DVPPA and focus on major challenges experienced by the stakeholders to implement the law. Additionally, information presented in this report also reflects the opinions and recommendations of government and non-government officials collected through various meetings and interactions. This includes opinions and recommendations collected from the Judges, Enforcement Officers, and other concerned authorities through multiple sharing sessions conducted by BNWLA. This report will be helpful for the actors and stakeholders who are directly involved in the implementation of the DVPPA as it will make them more aware about their responsibilities prescribed by the law.

Awarded Women Journalists for Revealing Unreported Cases of VAW-G

On 6th September 2014, BNWLA had awarded three women journalists (Ms. Nazma Begum & Ms. Maliha Basir from ATN Bangla and Ms. Farhana Haque Nila from Mohona television channel) for their valuable reporting in revealing unreported cases of VAW-G. Prof. Dr. Muhammed Zafar Iqbal, prominent scientist, writer & Head of Department of Electrical & Electronic Engineering, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet was present in award giving ceremony at Dhaka Reporters Unity as Chief Guest along with representatives of Plan International Bangladesh and BNWLA's executive committee.

Publicized Annual Violence against Women (VAW) Report @2014

BNWLA had published its annual report violence against women in 2014 at the end of December and expressed concerns about the growing incidences (11%) of VAW comparing to 2013. These report says a total of 5,256 women fall victim to different forms of violence, including sexual harassment, staking, rape, fatwa, acid violence, trafficking, domestic violence, dowry, abduction and community violence. In 2014, a total of 789 women and girls were raped, 293 became victim of sexual harassment, 1,005 of domestic violence, 1,463 of community violence, 58 came under acid attacks, 307 became victims of dowry, 1,196 were abducted and trafficked, 37 fell victim to fatwa (religious edict), 108 domestic helps were murdered, raped and victimized in other ways. Also, 1,910 women and children were killed and 449 committed suicide. Statistics shows among the above categories, domestic violence has increased 44% in 2014 than the previous year. Moreover, the report also revealed that 14 incidents of violence against women and children are published on the newspapers every day. BNWLA had prepared this report based on data from the newspapers, fact findings of BNWLA, data of One Stop Crisis Centre, Police headquarters and Victim Support Centre.

Conducted an evidence based research on "Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929" and "Muslim Marriage and Divorce (Registration) Act 1974"

BNWLA had conducted an evidence based research on "Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929" and "Muslim Marriage and Divorce (Registration) Act 1974" covering 6 districts (Rangpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Mymensingh, Jamalpur and Khulna) with aims to identify the existing gaps of laws and to divulge the needs of amendment of existing laws or of enactment of new laws.



FROM THE DESK OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We at Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers Association (BNWLA) believe in using law as a tool of social change. We work towards achieving this social change through enforcement of women rights, facilitating accessible legal aid to marginalized sections of the society, referring victims to distinctive service providers as per the requirements of each individual case, providing technical support to government for drafting and amending laws, Public Interest Litigation, legal research etc. Vulnerable sections are identified through fact-analysis and immediate legal-support services are provided. BNWLA is also providing rehabilitation opportunities to the victims of various forms of violence and work towards their reintegration in the society.

BNWLA is also actively involved in evaluating the existing statutes, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of law, holding discussions with practitioners and other stakeholders and formulating recommendations for proposed changes or effective implementation of the laws. A discussion and a day-long workshop with practitioners was organized to analyze the recent Torture and Custodial Death (Prohibition) Act, 2013 passed by the Parliament, and formulate such steps so as to make the same an effective law. Efforts are being made to bring change into and update the 40 year old *Muslim Marriage and Divorce (Registration) Act, 1974*.

The year 2013-14 has been immensely fruitful and rewarding for BNWLA. We published reports regarding violence against women, conducted an evidence based research on "Child marriage Restraint Act, 1929" and "Muslim Marriage and Divorce (Registration) Act, 1974", established child friendly services to reduce unsafe child migration, rescued 31 children from Faridpur and Dawladia brothels with support from partner NGOs, rehabilitated 522 survivors of various forms of violence, conducted training of 594 batches for capacity building, provided life skill training to 4403 girls and young women and a lot more as is documented in the present Annual Report.

At this juncture, I would like to convey my absolute gratitude to the members of the Executive Committee for their benevolent support at every step and their precious suggestions with regard to various legal issues. I, on behalf of the entire team of BNWLA would also like to thank our National and International partners for our joint endeavors towards gender equality and ensuring rule of law. We also express our profound appreciation and gratitude to all our donors.

I would also like to express heartfelt thanks to various Government Ministries and Institutions for making the resources available and providing valuable insights and co-operation for our projects and initiatives.

None of the projects' success and progress would however have been possible without the hardwork, enthusiasm and dedication of the individual staff members of BNWLA, for whom I express my deepest regards and appreciation.

Salma ali

Advocate Salma Ali
Executive Director

HOW WE ARE CONTRIBUTING TO REDUCE VULNERABILITY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS?

Women represent the majority of the poor as well as experience greater deprivation and vulnerability to poverty and socioeconomic adversity due to their low status in society. Violence against women in the form of rape, assault (domestic as well as workplace violence), trafficking, or acid throwing is prevalent throughout the country; with an estimate that nearly 2 out of 3 women in Bangladesh has experienced sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) in their lives (Source : UNFPA).

Although several legal and protective policy measures have been taken to safeguard women's rights, effectively outlawing gender-based violence and discrimination—implementation through enforcement remains difficult, greatly impeding the advancement of women's rights in the society.

Violence against Women (VAW) conceptualized by experts as "relational vulnerability" reflecting women's subordinate status within hierarchical gender relations and the dependencies associated with it. While women are especially vulnerable, then they seek protection, and it becomes the responsibility of the state or other paternal powers to provide that protection. On the model, feminist activism not only petitions paternal authority for special dispensations and protections, but affirms that inequality of power situates women in a powerless position and, by implication, men in a more powerful one, or it invests state structures with the responsibility for facilitating the achievement of feminist goals. In yet other instances, women struggle to establish practices (self-defense) and institutions (battered women's shelters) that seek to provide protection without enlarging paternalistic powers.

Hasi is only 17 years old and already divorced. Social customs and poverty pushed her into child marriage at age 12. Soon after her marriage, her husband traveled to Dubai as a migrant worker. Upon his return five years later, she found that he had remarried secretly and no longer wanted her as his wife. Her husband ceased to provide her with maintenance—required by Islamic law—and never consulted her before taking a second wife¹. What power does Ferdousy, a poor girl with only a 5th grade education, have in this relationship? What hope does she have of moving on and living a productive life?



¹ Based on client profile (all names in this report have been changed to preserve the anonymity of client).

Hasi did have certain legal remedies. Under Muslim personal law, she had the right to mehr, or dower, money given to the wife by the husband upon divorce, or upon claim by the wife during the marriage. However, Hasi did not know her rights and did not have access to a lawyer to enforce them. Bangladesh have inadequate justice sector infrastructure to provide legal services, and private lawyers tend to be insufficient and too expensive for the poor. In addition, lawyers, judges, prosecutors, and police in Bangladesh sometimes lack of training, funding and support. They require appropriate implementation of law, process large case loads, and responding correctly to community needs. Besides, without access to legal services, men and women languish in pretrial detention, sometimes for years without seeing inside of a courtroom; women may not be informed of their rights to maintenance upon divorce or rights over their children.

Time, expense, and effort involved in attempting to access the courts (both district & women and children special tribunal) push many poor & vulnerable women to use traditional, customary, or local justice systems. Unfortunately, pronouncements handed down by customary institutions may not follow national or international human rights laws, and can even further violate individual rights, especially of those women, who frequently receive unjust verdicts due to patriarchal social norms, which often favor those already influential.

Considering the above underlying factors behind women's vulnerability to justice sector, BNWLA since its beginning (1979) is contributing to reduce vulnerability through delivering legal aid and a range of other social and justice services to empower the poor and most vulnerable in Bangladesh. The organization is presently using legal empowerment approach- that is, utilizing grassroots outreach lawyers and para legals, human rights education/awareness, and a network of accessible legal aid and justice service clinics/centers that provide holistic and low-cost legal and dispute-resolution services to the poor—as a recognized and complementary solution to protecting the rights of the vulnerable, combating violence against women and girls, and resolving disputes, alongside the state's justice delivery mechanism.

BNWLA's legal service delivery program is unique due to its different features. First, legal service program's size and scale is unique; in its 35 year of operation, it is operating 207 legal aid clinics in 48 of 64 districts in Bangladesh, has more than 2.3 million graduates of its legal education classes, and has more than 1,000 community-based outreach female lawyers and paralegals. Secondly, it is not simply a legal aid program, but is part of organization's holistic development program that ensures clients / justice seekers protection, rehabilitation and reintegration both at institutional and community level. Legal service delivery program is thus unique as its clients benefit from cross-linkages across program areas. Finally, the organization's legal service delivery program is contributing to reduce certain percentage of VAW at selected areas of Bangladesh, which treat as evidence at national level data controlling, setting policies and procedures.

Following sections will lay out some characteristics that allow BNWLA's legal service delivery program to contribute to reduce vulnerability as well as legal empowerment of women in Bangladesh:

(a) Positioned at grassroots

BNWLA involve root level selected female community members as para legal or front line worker in delivering initial legal services (i.e. advice, counseling etc). Selected community members themselves are part of the community, as they are no strangers to local level violence against women. They do not have to study the needs of the community, because they have lived those experiences themselves. Thus, community members/paralegals are likely to know the most effective arguments to use in resolving local disputes. For instance, community members/paralegals have been able to convince family members, because domestic violence have negative effect to the family's social status and reputation, and also have an effect on the health of their young children, and might even cause divorce— which would mean even greater loss of status for the family. Since female community members are drawn from the same group

as the women they serve and have similar experiences with domestic abuse, they are better able to empathize with the plight of women in their village and more readily able to come up with realistic solutions to their problems. This grassroots approach, almost a form of organizing in itself, has been utilized by BNWLA as a powerful paradigm shift from traditional aid giving to genuine social change at the community level. By shifting power to the vulnerable women –this approach recognizes their agency to shape their own lives and allows legal empowerment to take place.

(b) Accessible services

This is important to ensure access to local level legal services (both government and non government) for vulnerable women. With the involvement of 1200 women member lawyers and legal clinics/centers at the upazila and union level (including char, hill and coastal areas), BNWLA has been able to make its legal services more accessible to the vulnerable, and thus a realistic option for those who cannot access the formal court system for reasons of distance, time, cost, or unfamiliarity. Second, BNWLA is set apart from the traditional and customary dispute resolution mechanisms in Bangladesh by virtue of it being free, as opposed to bribe that may be extracted from local elites, and less biased

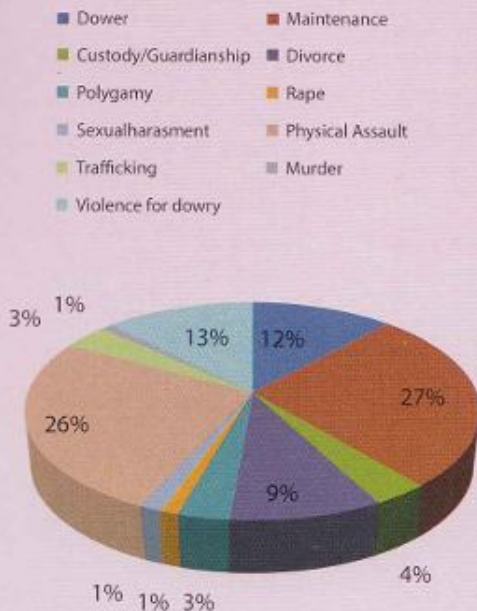
(c) Client's empowerment

BNWLA serves not only victims of abuse, but also works as agents of empowerment. Rather than making decisions for clients, BNWLA makes a sincere attempt to work with them to come to better solutions. First, the legal literacy classes contribute to empowerment because community members are educated on the laws and develop some of the basic skills and knowledge needed to identify and resolve common disputes. By receiving education, these individuals are themselves empowered to apply their understanding of the law to their own lives, and to the lives of friends and family. The content of the literacy course also focused on taking action by preventing, protesting, and protecting human rights. Ultimately, rights-based education is a key part of empowerment; it results in communities being able to peacefully solve their own disputes, and to assert their rights in the face of injustices.

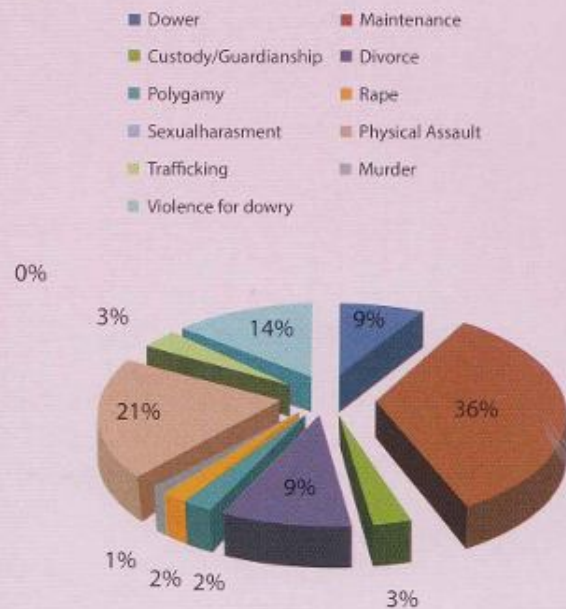
Furthermore, in shalish, simply being given the space to come forward and articulate demands may contribute to the empowerment of women. The knowledge that someone is listening to them, supporting them, and willing to take action on their behalf can be motivating. For women in particular, the provision of various options— such as resolving a dispute through shalish or through court—can be a powerful experience. BNWLA provides women with more choices compared to traditional shalish. For instance, “in a situation where a husband is beating his wife, the traditional shalish would likely rule that the woman be offered two saris by her husband as a symbol of their truce. In contrast, in an NGO shalish the woman would at least be told of the different options available to her and could ask the shalish to ensure that her husband does not continue to beat her, rather than accept material compensation. By providing choice, NGO shalish is unique as compared to the traditional shalish.

Legal service program's client follow up workshops at the legal aid clinics are another example of its empowerment approach. At these events, clients come together and discuss their problems and successes, as well as their experiences in the formal and informal justice systems. Paralegals and district lawyers follow up with clients about their cases, encouraging them to tell their stories. In addition, both current clients with ongoing cases and previous clients who have resolved their cases are invited. Those who have benefited can explain the advantages of legal aid, clear up concerns about the process, share criticisms or challenges, and impart advice to current clients. Through the sharing of knowledge, clients past and present are able to connect with one another and gain a forum to voice their thoughts. Clients are asked what they want for the future, and the opportunity to voice demands and to provide feedback on the legal aid process can be empowering.

Different types of Complaints received in 2013



Different types of Complaints in 2014



Civil Cases

In civil cases, such as family disputes, the staff first investigates by visiting the area where the incident occurred and speaks with the parties, neighbors, and any other community members who are aware of the dispute. Even prior to bringing the issue to the legal aid clinic, the staff often attempts to resolve the matter through ADR at the community level. If it is impossible to resolve the dispute informally, the staff attempts to bring the parties together for a shalish at the BNWLA office. Local level lawyer and paralegal acts as a mediator, and each party is entitled to bring witnesses, representatives, and family members. In shalish, both parties speak and voice their demands. It normally takes between one and five shalish sessions to fully resolve a dispute. If the shalish is unable to resolve a dispute, or if the defendant does not respond after several follow-ups, the client has the option of pursuing a solution through the formal system. If the client agrees, one of BNWLA's pools of panel lawyers (who are BNWLA member lawyers) is notified to file the case in court. Panel lawyers have their own private practices but represent BNWLA clients on a part-time basis and receive a nominal fee for their services. While many cases can be resolved through shalish, a number must be taken to the formal system.

Criminal Cases

BNWLA does not arbitrate or mediate criminal cases such as acid attacks, rape, human trafficking, and murder, but takes them to court. In reality, however, parties often do make compromises out of court and without the consent of BNWLA rather than seeking legal assistance. For instance, due to social stigma, survivors of crimes such as rape are often coerced into marrying the accused withdraw the case.

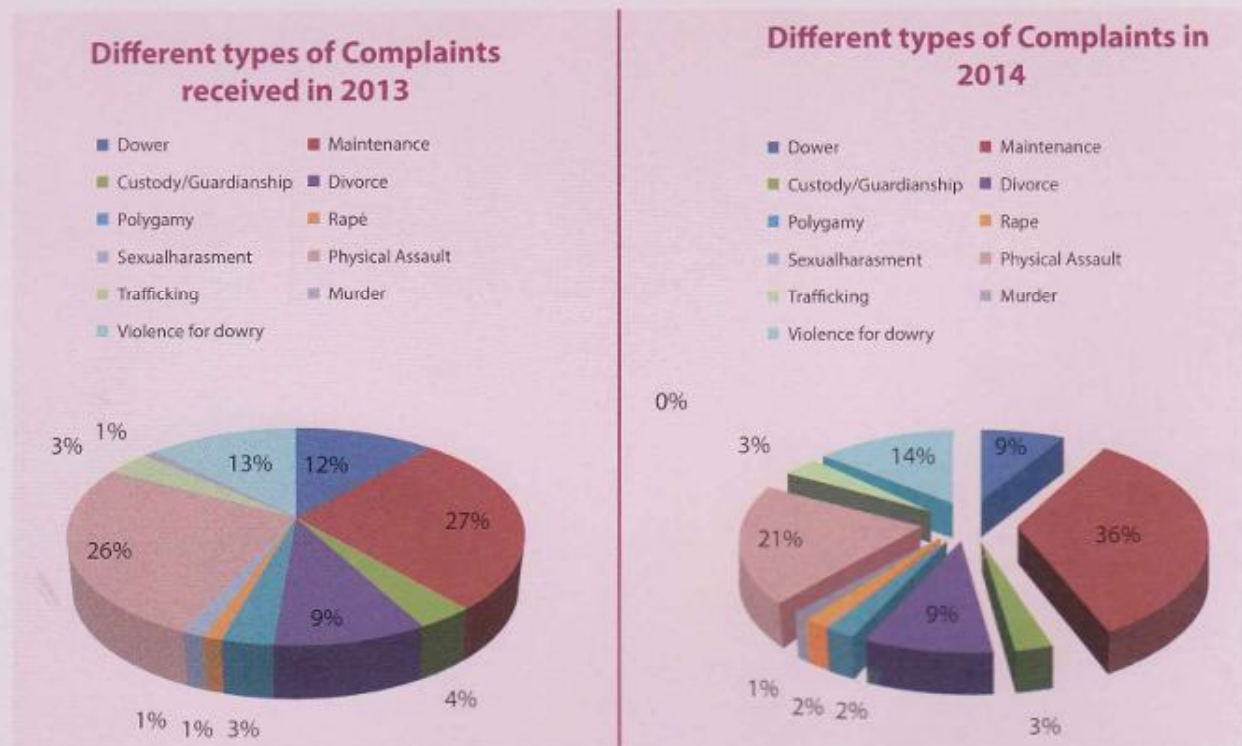
In a criminal case involving crimes of violence against women, the staff first ensures the health and safety of the survivor, taking her to the hospital and if she, or her family, needs safe shelter, place organization's shelters. The staff then begins investigation, which includes visiting the crime scene, arresting the suspect, collecting evidence, questioning the accused and other witnesses, and writing a case diary. The staff also contacts its respective lawyer and in some instance panel lawyer for the case.

In gender-based violence cases, a lawyer is crucial in securing a medical examination and report to corroborate the survivor's statement in court, helping a victim file a police complaint (known as a First Information Report), ensuring that the police give the magistrate judge a charge sheet recommending prosecution, filing a naraji petition to appeal a decision not to pursue prosecution, providing representation at court hearings and trials, and appealing the decision from the lower court to the High Court. Many of these steps are complicated and bribes are often demanded; having BNWLA's support can often reduce the level of corruption.

The Results

In last two years (2013-2014), BNWLA had received 29,693 complaints and resolved 10,047 through ADR. In total, 2147 cases have been filed in court and 624 judgments have been received. Most of the remaining cases are ongoing. Overall, BNWLA has managed to secure total monetary compensation of Tk 22.33245 for its clients.

The majority of cases and complaints brought to the legal aid clinics relate to family conflicts. The remaining cases involved murder, rape, sexual harassment, physical assault, trafficking and others.



In dower cases, BNWLA has been especially successful, with 69 percent of judgments in favor of BNWLA clients. Moreover, 58 percent of decisions in restitution of marriage rights, 71 percent in divorce and trafficking, 69 percent in dowry, and 63 percent in polygamy cases have been in favor of BNWLA clients. However, rape has the lowest conviction rate at just 29 percent, pointing to the difficulty of securing evidence and battling an often corrupt system.

Despite many successes, BNWLA's legal service delivery program—and more broadly, the legal empowerment approach—faces a number of challenges (i.e. lack of enforcement mechanism for NGO shalish mediation, threat to clients, biases of local government officials etc.). Though there are challenges, BNWLA's model, combining grassroots legal educators, community engagement, and a vast network of legal advice offices providing mediation services and access to the formal justice system, offers valuable lessons for legal empowerment organizations.

HOW WE ARE ENSURING PROTECTION OF WOMEN THROUGH CATERING COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE?

Many in Bangladesh experience a high and pervasive level of insecurity. This is due to both a lack of access to justice and weak crime prevention and deterrence. A Safer World survey found 31 percent report crime as a problem and 38 percent have experienced crime in the past 4 years. Lack of access to justice is due to a combination of poor capacity, political interference, and elite bias, lack of awareness of legal rights, corruption and high transaction costs. Bangladesh's formal justice system remains relatively inaccessible for the vast majority of the public. Vulnerable groups, including women and children, ethnic minorities, the poor, and people with disabilities face particular difficulty in accessing timely and affordable justice. Large case backlogs, estimated at around 1.8 million cases, are slowly overwhelming the court administration and undermining access to justice. There is increasing acknowledgement that this is critical governance, access to justice and rule of law issue that needs to be addressed.

The Village Court and Arbitration Council form the lowest tier of the formal justice system, and are in theory the most accessible to poor people. But they operate effectively in only 10 percent of the country. Most poor people therefore resort to traditional 'Shalish', community-based mediation, which often takes the form of a religious court. Shalish decisions are often out of line with the law and biased against women, the poor and the marginalized. The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) legal aid system spends less than 25% of its funding. NGO-delivered community legal services (CLS) have been shown to be the most effective mechanisms for the poor and vulnerable. But they are only available in 35 percent of the country, and are not targeted towards those most in need. The Bangladesh Police has a colonial legacy as a police 'force', established to protect the elite. Citizens remain hesitant to report crime or visit a Thana (police station). The police are perceived as the most corrupt government agency. Nevertheless, the Police Reform Programme (PRP) has achieved some real improvements in security for the most vulnerable, albeit from a low base. The result is that the poor are unable to protect themselves, their assets, or their interests. This has a direct impact on poverty reduction and achievement of the MDGs. There are also concerns that insecurity and a lack of access to justice are drivers of state fragility and extremism.

Considering the above issues, BNWLA had initiated community legal service (CLS) interventions with aim to protect poorest and disadvantaged women from different forms of violence at 64 unions of Bangladesh. Organization's CLS interventions is supporting sustainable improvements in the way that formal justice is dispensed at the local level, ensuring that the system is more responsive to those most need.

Amena got back her happiness and glory

Amena (28) got married when she was 22. First 6 month she was happy with her husband Mr. Ali. Her happiness gone astray from her life while Ali demanded money from her and started to torture. Her in-laws also used to suspect her with trivial matters, began to humiliate and torture her both physically and psychologically. They instigated Ali to overthrow Amena from the house propagating ill-words about her character. Consequently, misunderstanding and altercation arose between Ali and Amena. Amena's husband rebuked Amena with abusive words and also threatened. Mediation was held to settle the issue but it turned to be failed. Amena applied to BNWLA seeking legal aid and a case was filled under the Domestic violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2010. The court passed an order for protection in favour of Amena.

From above case study it seems that BNWLA provided legal aid to the victim and made a platform to be safe from physical and mental abuse. The victim realised that domestic violence is not mere a family affairs as relief is available under law. On the other hand the victim became aware about her rights and went forward to fight against close relatives like husband.

Beside, this interventions is contributing directly to addresses the Bangladesh Country Plan (CP)'s core objectives of better demand-side governance (greater voice to citizens) and supply-side governance (supporting a more accountable and responsive state).

Community Legal Services provides free legal advice and representation to members the community at door level. It's a kind of voluntary service that provides free legal advice and related legal supports to the targeted communities based on their existing status quo and expectations intended for the best interest of ensuring human rights and social justice. The service emphasizes on resolving community disputes at different levels through mediation, arbitration and counseling with participation of community members, train-up community solicitors and paralegals to handle with legal issues, provide legal aid for poor, marginalized and socially excluded communities, activate village courts and arbitration councils and train-up the respective staffs to resolve clashes at community level, mobilize communities through legal and human rights awareness sessions, conduct advocacy for pro-poor and gender-friendly changes in policies and practices and combat violence against women through legal action, advocacy, research and policy reviews through providing face-to-face advice or through helpline number or internet based video conferencing service. These services are mainly provided by BNWLA in order to promote justice and equity, uphold women rights and therefore to ensure women empowerment.

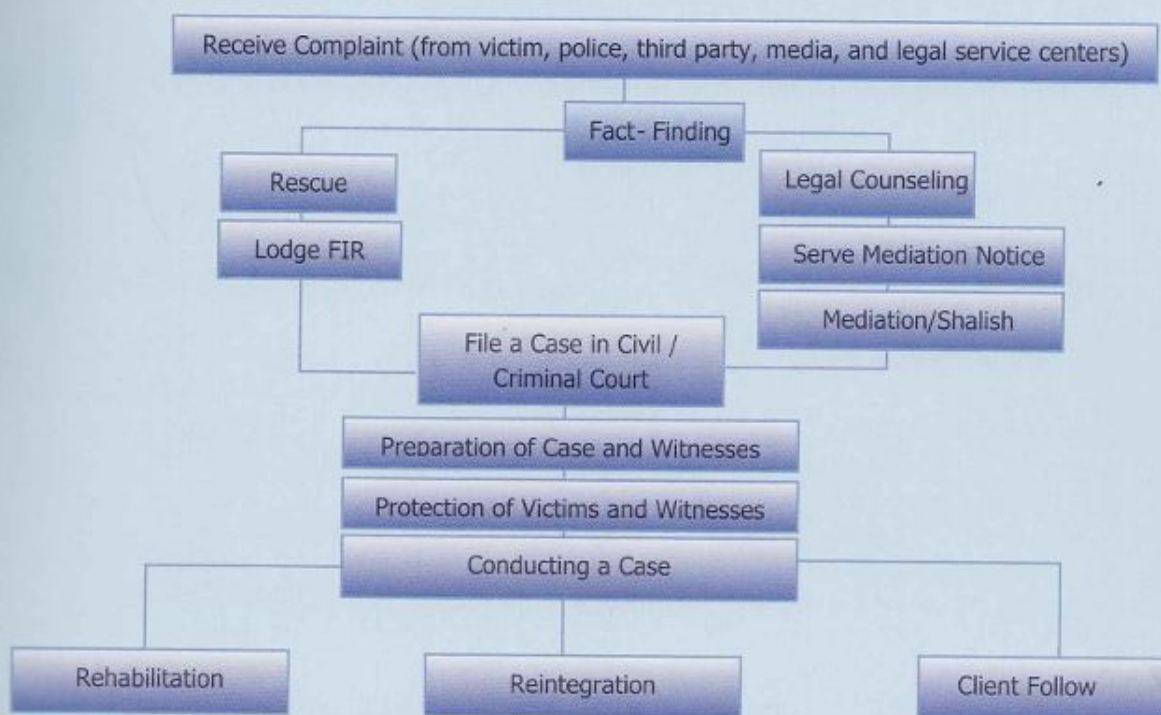
BNWLA had set and operating 64 community legal service delivery centers at selected 64 unions of 16 upazila under 12 districts. Five partners NGOs (AVAS, FAIR, MKP, NUSA and SEDA) are partnering with BNWLA to implement this intervention at grassroots level. The main modality of this intervention is to make community based legal service faster, easier and accessible to the poor, marginalized and socially excluded communities in Bangladesh.

All of Community legal service centers are located in accessible, shop front locations, in areas of significant socio-economic disadvantage, or hubs easily accessible by public transport. BNWLA had set these centers in rural and remote areas in order to make services accessible to far-flung communities or to people who have difficulty in coming to them. Sservices of these centers are tailored to the needs of the women and cover a range of legal areas including domestic violence, divorce, marital problem, dower, dowry, sexual harassments, inheritance, child care & support.

Community legal service follows a specific process which can be split into six areas:

1. **Identifying a victim and ensuring her safety:** This involves identifying a woman or child as a victim of a verifiable human rights violation or criminal act and, if required, ensuring her immediate safety.
2. **Complaint:** BNWLA formally take legal steps to seek relief for the complainant, first by accepting her as their client and then by looking for a solution outside of court through mediation and settlement.
3. **Pre-Trial:** The client has agreed to take her case to court for a formal trial. The lawyer initiates a case in court and, if it is a criminal matter, a police investigation carried out, along with any petitions for bail.
4. **Trial:** The client appears in court with the BNWLA lawyer as a representative to seek a legal solution to their complaint.
5. **Post-Trial:** BNWLA complete the legal process by implementing the judgment and ensuring the client is successfully rehabilitated into their own community/family.
6. **Extra-legal roles:** Community legal service delivery centers often performs several functions that do not form part of a client's case but are still crucial to an effective, women and child friendly service.

See Figure 1 below for a visual representation of BNWLA's various legal activities.



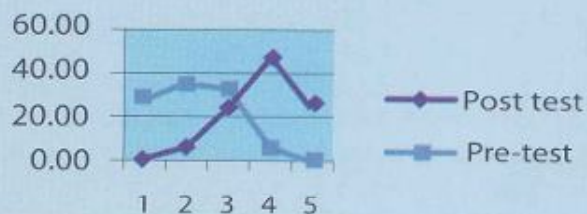
BNWLA's CLS intervention follows a comprehensive and holistic approach to make targeted women better protected from different forms of violence. Four different pillars (direct service delivery, capacity building, advocacy and knowledge management) had set to achieve the desired results of the interventions.

BNWLA with its partners are presently catering comprehensive legal support to poor & marginalized women. Supports includes legal counseling, fact finding, mediation/shalish service, court case filing provision and prosecutorial supports during court case conduction, rescue/release of victimized or potential victims from different forms of confinement, and their access to safe shelter homes as well as their long term social rehabilitation and reintegration. Direct legal assistance was delivered to 1, 13065 clients in last 3 years (2012-2014). Cases, those cannot be mutually settled, are mostly referred to district legal aid committee (DLAC), village court and other relevant institutions.

The organization is providing internet based free legal information on legal matters through its 5 digitalized legal services centers (Bhurungamari, Gobindoganj, Fulbari, Sarishabari and Dakope). The objective of operating this service is to provide greater access to justice to the poor, marginalized and socially excluded communities in Bangladesh. Through this service, women, without leaving their homes, have the direct access with Dhaka (BNWLA Head office) lawyers' through video conferencing system (Skype service). Beside, organization had created an opportunity for clients to call BNWLA-CLS Helpline Number (+880-1198-800400) for legal help and other information.

Alongside legal service delivery, BNWLA's CLS intervention is also working to build capacities of partner organizations, communities' members, and community based organizations/ local NGOs, shalish committees 'members; arbitration council members/local government representatives and village court judicial about the rights of women and their current rights violations.

Level of capabilities of local gov. bodies



Total of 14 Gender Sensitive Legal Service training at 14 upazillas, 2 sharing workshops on Gender Sensitive Laws in Khulna and Rangpur, 16 upazilla Reflection Workshops at upazilla level, 64 Effective Salish Training at 56 unions and 8 wards under City Corporation, 2 Integration of Community Legal Service training at Uddipan, Dhaka and Proshanti Training Center, Gazipur, 3 batches of Skill Development Training, 1 Training Need Assessment Workshop were organized with participation of District Judges of Rangpur and Khulna, Union Parishad members, local NGOs, partner NGOs and community members, union solicitors, paralegals, UP chairman, Salish committee members, arbitration council members, representatives of local govt, village court judicial, multi-disciplinary group members (who directly involve and conduct local Salish) in where almost 2500 participants were presented to build up the volume of their capability to deal with the issues of women rights and their human rights violation, women empowerment, gender equality, social justice and so on and to provide better service to the destitute, marginalized and socially excluded women in Bangladesh. From these graphs, we find the increasing level of knowledge and expertise of local govt. bodies on VAW related issues through Gender Sensitive Legal Service training at Upazilla level in where 545 Village Court Judicial were attended and from the other one, we find the exact depiction of women mobility in community based program.

Comparison female and male attended Upazilla Reflection workshop



Knowledge Management is important for BNWLA CLS intervention. Evidence based research as well as reflective learning techniques will also contribute to enhance the quality of care and support services for the women victims of different forms of violence and are an integral part of standard operating procedures.

Total of 7583 awareness events (of these 1332 legal literacy sessions, 6242 courtyard meetings) were organized and conducted till December 2014 at the national, regional and local levels by BNWLA and its partners. As part of its mass awareness campaign, BNWLA has taken the initiative to form Multi-disciplinary group in its working areas and plays a vital role to activate Union Legal Aid Committee (ULAC) and Upazilla Legal Aid Committee (UPLAC) to function properly to fight against VAW related issues.

More than 130000 IEC Materials e.g. Brochure (64000), Sticker (32000), Flyer and Leaflet (64000) and Annual Newsletter (7600) were produced for distribution at both national and local level to sensitize the audiences about gender roles, domestic violence, women legal rights and the current women rights violation to change behavior and mobilize communities to take action.

BNWLA, through its partner NGOs under the program are mobilizing rural communities to ensure that the messages reach rural populations with low literacy level.

At a glance, number of beneficiaries in ULAC (Quarter basis)



BNWLA CLS intervention is contributing to avail legal services at union level, to receive quick advices, immediate supports and get permanent solutions of the problems. As a result of receiving services, targeted women have increased their levels of income, through receipt of welfare benefits and have been helped in resolving debt problems. Maximizing income and reducing debt have a positive effect on the overall quality of life, including the health, of the individuals concerned. Learning of community services is assisting organization to develop a strategic action plan to improve the service delivery. In many instances services is assisting BNWLA to reach those target women, who yet didn't seek any sort of legal assistance from anywhere.

HOW WE ARE PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY ESPECIALLY FOR GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN?

Bangladesh's socio-cultural environment contains pervasive gender discrimination, so girls and women face many obstacles to their development. Girls are often considered to be financial burdens on their family, and since birth, they receive inadequate investment in their health, care and education. With the advent of puberty, differences in the ways that adolescent girls and boys are treated it created more discrimination. Adolescence is not viewed as a distinct phase of life; instead the onset of physical maturity is seen as an abrupt shift from childhood to adulthood. At puberty, girls' mobility is often restricted, which limits their access to livelihood, learning, participation in recreational and social activities. In Bangladesh rates of child marriage and adolescent motherhood are among the highest in the world. Maternal mortality rates also remain extremely high. Poor maternal health is the result of early marriage, women's malnutrition, a lack of access to and use of medical services and a lack of knowledge and information. Most women give birth without a skilled attendant. In the home, women's mobility is greatly limited and their decision-making power is always restricted. For instance, about 48 per cent of Bangladeshi women say that their husbands individually make decisions about their health, while 35 per cent say that their husbands individually make decisions regarding visits to family and friends (UNICEF 2007). Violence against women is another major impediment to women's development.

Nearly all countries of the World are committed to establish equal rights for women and girls by ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Signatories are legally obligated to meet the commitments specified by them. Often described as the international bill of rights for women, CEDAW provides for women's equal enjoyment with men of civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights. It is unique in establishing legal obligations for state parties to ensure that discrimination against women does not occur in the public sphere or the private sphere.

BNWLA is committed to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. The inclusion of gender equality and women's empowerment as Millennium Development Goal 3 is a reminder that many of those promises have yet to be kept. National and international women's movements have worked to hold governments accountable for the legal and political commitments they have made through CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action, and other international agreements. It is women's activism and social mobilization, combined with innovative responses from some governments and civil society organizations that have led to significant improvements in women's and girls' status. BNWLA is one of the organizations to hold the governments accountable for achieving Millennium Development Goal 3.

Promoting gender equality through service delivery, knowledge and skills building:

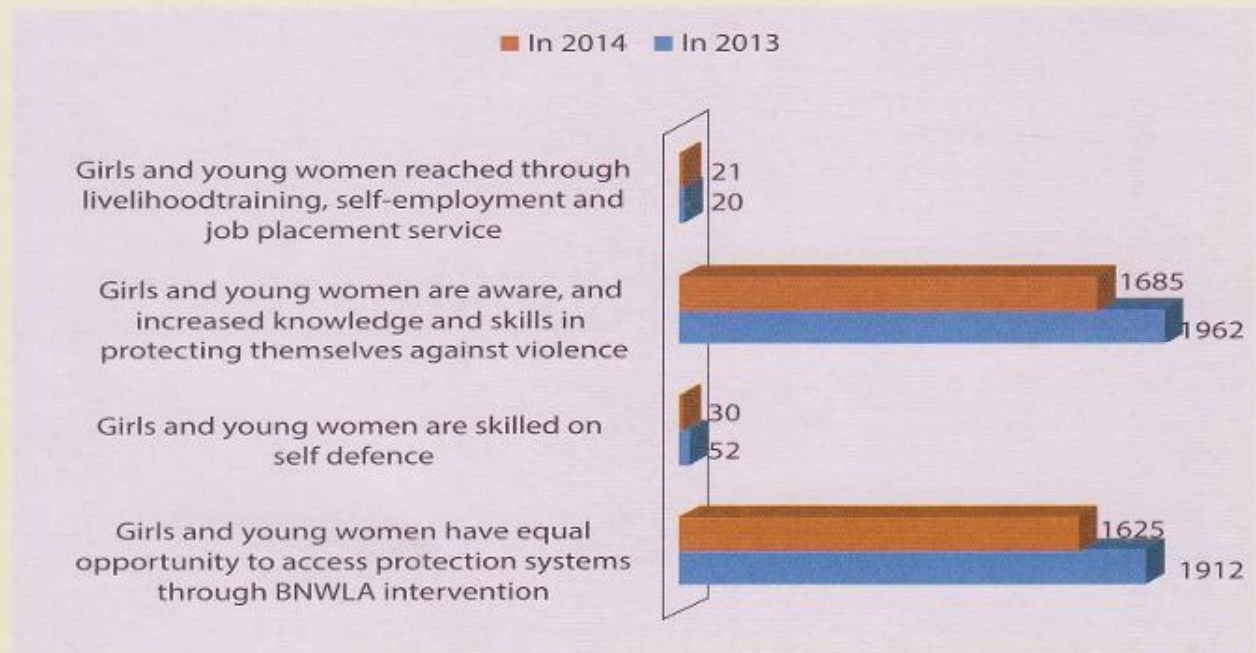
Genuine equality means more than parity in numbers, which can sometimes be achieved by lowering the bar for all—it means equality is achieved at high levels of well-being. Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers Association (BNWLA) as a Human Rights organization with a special focus on establishment of girls, women and children Rights, is always appeared as a pressure group to the government, international bodies and tried to keep the realities for girls and women in the public eye. BNWLA had taken various initiatives for promoting equal rights and opportunities for girls and young women. BNWLA always tried to ensure better protection for girls and young women through increasing access to child protection system. BNWLA provide community legal services in comprehensive and holistic approach to keep girl and young women better protected from different forms of gender base violence. Alongside, BNWLA also work to build capacities of various stakeholders and conduct researches for knowledge management.

In 2013-14 BNWLA delivered basic self defense (karate) training to 77 girls and young women. One of the key factors behind violence against girl and young woman is lack of their protection

in the society. For this reason, family members of a girl do not allow them to come out from home which restricts them to get access in social, economic and political involvement. For fear of being victimized, girls and young women sometimes restrict themselves also in such involvement. They think themselves weak and helpless. Karate not only assists them to learn self defense training, it empowers them psychologically. After receiving karate training girls are much confident now to move forward.

In 2013-14 BNWLA imparted life skills trainings to 4403 girls and young women in order to increase their awareness, knowledge and skills. These trainings help girls and young women to protect themselves against violence and claim their rights.

BNWLA made feasibility study for analyzing the job market and linked victims and high risk group in different jobs. Livelihood trainings had delivered to targeted girls and young women. The organization had supported 43 numbers of trained girls and young women to start their small business.



In 2014, rate of child marriage in BNWLA's project's (named "Girl Power") working areas has been reduced and the girls are getting better protection comparing to previous years. Child Protection Groups (CPG) is more active to ensure protection for girl and young women. The reporting system is also developed. Girls and young women are now engaging in decision making forum. Girls are now representing in the Stop Child Marriage Task force. These girls can directly

communicate with City Corporation's Zonal Executive office. The girl's forums are representing their community in many local level events. For example Girl Forum President Sumi was participated in the workshop on "Boys and Men Engagement to Reduce Gender Based Violence" on 11th December, 2014 at Senate Bhaban, Dhaka University organized by Plan International Bangladesh.



The Karate trainees are providing free training to their neighbors and friends. Girls are getting more confidence and developing psychologically.

Launching a comprehensive strategy to prevent and respond to gender-based violence

BNWLA's interventions at socio cultural level created impacts in such way that inspires local communities to show zero tolerance on the issue of violence against girls and young women. BNWLA conducts mass awareness through TFD shows (on the issues of violence, child marriage, birth registration,, child rights, child protection) in the community level ,gender orientation sessions for local elites, CBOs and other groups, girls & young women forum formation , meetings and annual conventions. TFD is one of the important and relevant tools for raising mass awareness. In 2013-14 BNWLA formed total of 5 TFD groups in Dhaka and 36 groups outside of Dhaka. TFD show is a regular activity of BNWLA. TFD shows worked as a magic to change perception of community on gender discrimination. Organization had received lots of cases for legal supports immediate after completion of the each of the show. TFD shows had also changed the knowledge, attitudes and practices of people which leads equal rights and opportunity of girls and young women.

Girls are usually isolated in the society. Due to this, organization had formed girls and young women forums at community level. Objective of forming these forum are to increase participation of target girls and young women and also to raise voice in decision making forum. Activities of girls and young women forum includes planning meeting and develop action plan, organize quarterly meeting, participate and take part in organizing annual convention, support to develop TFD team and to organize community level TFD show, support to organize life skills, child Protection and gender training, participate and contribute day to CPG, participate in different socio-cultural activities, sports & game, and national and international day observations.

In 2013-14, total of 16,946 community members (living in 45 targeted communities at Dhaka) became aware about the necessity to protect girls and young women from gender based violence. Besides these community members had also been trained on gender equality, child rights and protection issues of girls and young women. In Dhaka 5 forums are capable and active to promote girls and young women issues in the community. In Manikong there have 99 children groups and 11 youth groups of BNWLA. These group works as protection group. Youth volunteers sensitize them on Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Child Marriage, Sexual Harassment and other types of violence. Youth volunteers also monitor Child Rights situation using different monitoring tools. They submit those reports to Union Parishad (UP) and UP take stapes to ensure those services. To make Union Information Corner (USC) more usable for girl and young woman, youth volunteers make campaign and assist USC entrepreneurs. To make UP complain box more functional, youth volunteers make campaign and explain how to complain any violence issue. BNWLA formed Complain Response Mechanism Committee in UP level. Lots of girls and young woman are being benefited now through this committee. BNWLA also takes moral class in selected 67 schools which focused on woman and child related issues.

Promoting gender equality through advocacy

BNWLA had conducted series of advocacy events and sensitize government officials for better protection of girls and young women. BNWLA had contributed in drafting special laws including Women & Child Repression Prevention Act 2000, amended 2003, Birth and Death Registration Act 2004, Domestic Violence (Prevention & Protection) Act, 2010, Pornography Act 2012, Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act 2012 and many other laws. Recently BNWLA had drafted Child Marriage Restrained Act 2014 and already submitted to Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA). All laws related to women and children have some limitations and some laws still doesn't have Rules of Procedure. For this reason Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA) has developed a committee including BNWLA to find out these gaps and also developed the necessary Rules for concern law. BNWLA had recently been included as Honorable Member of this Reform Committee. A sharing meeting was held on 23rd

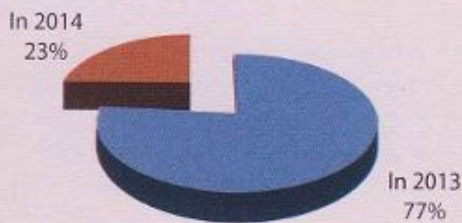
November 2014 at Shishu Academy. Through this meeting, some gaps were identified which includes provision of punishment, provision of compensation, provision regarding fake cases, and others. BNWLA is presently assisting government to enact existing laws and its Rules.



BNWLA form task force committee to stop child marriage as well as to declare communities as child marriage free Zone. These committees are headed by local government administrative bodies. Local elites, CBOs, Religious leaders, Teachers, Marriage Register, Imam and other groups are the member of this committee. This committee is working to monitor child marriage situation and also to end child marriage in particular locations. Mr. Md. Nuruzzaman Sharif, Deputy Secretary, GOB, Zonal Executive Officer, Zone 3, Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) is the president of Stop Child Marriage Task Force Committee, Zone 3, DNCC and Mr. Md. Abu Said Panna, Ward Shachib of 2 and 5 no word of Zone 3, Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) is the president of Stop Child Marriage Task Force Committee, Zone 2, DNCC. Community people presently had an access to directly call them regarding child marriage issue.

BNWLA has facilities of shelter support for the victimized/high risk girls and young women. Besides, the organization is delivering financial and technical assistance to government shelters for improving their services in arenas of non formal education, counseling, medical and reintegration. BNWLA conduct child rights, child protection and gender orientation session for Union Parishad, CPG, Upazila and district level government officials. BNWLA is a pioneer of introducing Citizen Report Card on girl's protection issue. This Citizen Report Card evaluates the quality of girls' protection services which is guaranteed by the Constitution of Bangladesh & other policies. Citizen Report Card (CRC) is using to examine the availability, accessibility and usage of state-authorized protection services for the girl and young women, to determine the

Initiatives with Govt. officials through advocacy & Capacity Building on Protection issue



quality of care provided, and overall satisfaction and to compare the quality of services and identify the best practices of government services for protection against violence.

Child Protection Group (CPG) is formed and activated. CPG members includes Standing committee of Women & Child repression and prevention, UP Chairman, Teacher, Religious leader, Marriage register, Representative of LEA, Doctor/Health person, Lawyer, Community representatives(CDF/CBO/VDC), Children representatives, Elected women

members of UP and others. BNWLA received number of cases for legal support through CPG members. In 2013-14 various government institutions (at national, departmental and local level) that have improved their support to protection and describe the change (for example: approved law, child protection policy, increased budget for child protection). 5 Zone of DNCC has functional Child Protection Group (CPG). 117 government officials (duty bearers) became aware and on gender equality, child rights and protection issues of girls and young women.

Leading joint efforts to advance gender equality and strengthening partner organizations

Since 1991, BNWLA is working with 42 partners and advancing their capacities on women and children rights related issues. Major objectives of partners' capacity building are to disseminate primary information of law and to solve the primary legal problems arising from the community. The partner organizations have been brought a huge number of beneficiaries under their program coverage. They are registering the complaints and according to that conducting mediation/shalish and solving the disputes. Since they have no establishment for legal assistance they are referring cases to BNWLA for legal action.

BNWLA strengthened CSOs (civil society organizations), established networks and made partnership nationally and internationally to maximize the support for girl and young woman. BNWLA conducts child rights, child protection and gender orientation session for CSOs, sensitization workshop for journalist (on gender and child protection issues) delivered awards to journalists for their best reporting, training for CSO on advocacy and local level lobbying, organize CSO network coordination meeting and exposure visit .

CSOs share information and knowledge among them as well as actively participate in joint initiatives regarding the issues of Girl Power Project. 25 civil society organizations are adequately involved and represent girls and young women. 30 CSO representatives received training on child protection and child rights. 33 CSO representative received training on gender and 60 CSOs trained on advocacy and lobbying. BNWLA also have Paribarik Nirjaton Prothirod Dal (PNPD), Nari Nirjaton Protirodh Dol (NNPD), Student Action Group (SAG), Cultural Group, Study Group, Adolescent Committee, Youth Committee, Village Development Committee, Vigilance Team, Forum against VAW etc who work on gender equality, child marriage and violence against woman related issues.

BNWLA has strong linkage with the different like-minded organization in Bangladesh. BNWLA is regularly maintaining liaison with different organizations who are working on the same field and whose services are moral less similar like BNWLA. ACD and INCIDIN Bangladesh are regularly sending the rescued survivors to BNWLA shelter home and providing information regarding different matters and also helping us to implement different project related works in their respective areas. Besides, BNWLA and these organizations are regularly arranging seminar or other events through joint endeavors and inviting each other in different occasion and informing about the different progress and continuing joint movement to promote equal rights and opportunities for girls and young woman.

HOW WE ARE IMPROVING ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR POOR AND MARGINALIZED PEOPLE THROUGH ACTIVATING GOVERNMENT LEGAL AID COMMITTEES?

The formal justice system in Bangladesh faces multiple challenges. It lacks capacity, some of its procedures are complex, some of the laws under which it operates are outdated and at present there are too few incentives to resolve cases speedily. Furthermore, the current structure of the system does not encourage coordination and cooperation between justice sector institutions, even though they rely heavily on each other to carry out their various functions. These factors combine to cause a slow rate of disposal which has in turn led to a large backlog of cases. This makes justice less accessible and less affordable than it should be, reducing citizens' confidence in the system's ability to deliver an acceptable level of service.

Vulnerable groups, including women and children, ethnic minorities, the poor, and people with disabilities face particular difficulty in accessing timely and affordable justice. Although this paints quite a bleak picture, on the more positive side there is increasing acknowledgement among justice sector stakeholders of the need to tackle these challenges. There is also an increasing political will to act, with a number of initiatives combining to present a window of opportunity for improving the administration of justice in Bangladesh.

The Government is reviewing the criminal and civil procedure codes and the Evidence Act. It is also introducing alternative means of dispute resolution and establishing mandatory time frames for each stage of a lawsuit. Legal aid services are being bolstered and there is increasing use of ICT solutions in tackling case-backlogs. Other structural changes such as moves to establish a more independent Judiciary and the Supreme Court Special Committee for Judicial Reforms demonstrate an appetite for change and this is supported within the Government of Bangladesh's Sixth Five Year Plan (2011-2015).

The Government of Bangladesh had introduced legal aid program under the legal framework of the Legal Aid Services Act (LASA), 2000. Legal aid is a right of the poor and underprivileged section of the society. Despite constitutional rights guaranteeing every citizen equal rights before the law irrespective of poor or affluent, a large number of people remain deprived of justice because of financial constraints. The marginalized and underprivileged sections of the society often become victims of social injustice.

The National Legal Aid Services Organization (NLASO) of Government of Bangladesh, in an effort to mitigate such hardships of the poor litigants, has introduced legal aid offices in all districts. Though NLASO had taken various steps to ensure justice for the poor people, there are still some challenges exists which need to be addressed on priority basis. Challenges are: a) making District Legal Aid Offices as 'ADR Corner' or Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre to dispose of cases forwarded by Court or Tribunal with the District Legal Aid Officer as the intermediary; b) ensuring legal aid services for poor people beginning from Village Courts up to the Supreme Court at Government expenditure; c) ensuring waiting rooms, rest rooms and pure drinking water for all children and women arriving at the local level legal aid offices from faraway place; d) to provide a 'package service' which comprises of legal aid services for the poor and underprivileged community through joint initiatives of the GO-NGO governed by the public and private sectors; e) to clear ad valorem court fees and other ancillary costs for the poor and underprivileged litigants under the Government legal aid services and f) building sensitization about different level (both upazila and union) committee members' roles and responsibilities.

Notwithstanding the progress made by the government & other actors since the independence of Bangladesh in establishing an effective and functioning judicial system, enhancing legal capacities and providing access to justice for the poor and marginalized women, the challenges

¹ The survey interviewed 2,400 respondents from the same number of households in 19 districts of all seven divisions between August and October 2013.

facing the country to establish a real rule of law culture remain daunting. One key area of concern is that the vast majority of the poor and marginalized women in Bangladesh and especially rural communities remain virtually unaware of the law and institutions that have been put in place by the government.

Perception Study 2013 of Community Legal Service (CLS) program reveals “ninety-five percent of the country’s poor population does not know how to lodge a first information report (FIR) or a case while 73 percent are unable to file a general diary.” While the poor and marginalized people, especially those in the rural and hard-to-reach areas, prefer local justice system, known as Salish, and other community level arrangements to formal legal system, 68 percent respondents have no idea about the District Judge’s Court. The preference for alternative dispute resolution (ADR) has sprouted because these people not only want to avoid the expensive and complicated formal legal system of the country, but also have a low confidence in the existing justice delivery system.

CLS study had also found that 91 % of people surveyed² are not aware of the legal aid committees. Also, 65% of people with legal issues do not do anything about them, much less seek legal aid or go to the police. The picture of this shockingly poor awareness among the country’s destitute people about legal issues, human rights and its implication has been exposed in CLS perception study. The study had recommended active participation of NGOs in the legal aid committees at various levels; activate legal aid committees at the Upazila and Union levels; create awareness of the law, human rights and the availability of legal aid; use the legal aid committees as a platform for monitoring the quality of service of the panel lawyers. The study had also given a focus on the importance to ensure that the lawyers are providing quality service, and this can be secured through feedback from the clients.

An independent and competent judiciary is indispensable for establishment of a true democracy, advancement of rule of law and protection of human rights. Judiciary is an important organ of the state which derives its judicial power from the Constitution and laws. But it exercises its judicial authority predominantly with its moral and ethical force. The core strengthens of the judiciary lies in public confidence in its competence, integrity and impartiality. Independence of the judiciary is a precondition for gaining confidence of the people in the justice system. People’s confidence in the independence and competence of the judiciary and moral authority and integrity of the judges is of utmost importance for making the judiciary truly effective and functional.

The recent Judicial Baseline Survey 2014, conducted by UNDP JUST (judicial strengthening) project revealed that around 70 per cent of court users are not satisfied with the current formal justice system while they also cited corruption, case delays and excessive cost of litigation as the main impediments to fair and speedy justice. Of the respondents (4,320 households and 825 court users), 23 per cent seek judicial remedy from both formal and informal system while 10 per cent of them are purely relying on formal Court system. Despite having disputes, 39 per cent do not seek judicial remedy.

Deficiency in public confidence in the judiciary has a disastrous effect on the rule of law and over all development of the country. It discourages people to bring their genuine disputes to courts and encourages them to resort to extra-judicial means of dispute resolution. This seriously affects the genuine interests of the poor, women, children and other vulnerable group of people and further aggravates their position in the society. To promote confidence and to increase use of formal justice system, the judiciary needs to enhance its overall capacity, infrastructure, logistics and human resources, to deliver justice through continuous reforms and development. Besides, the Bangladesh judiciary needed to be familiar with international experiences and identify and adopt best practices for elimination of case backlogs and further improve its case management and court administration processes.

Considering above situations, BNWLA had started its interventions to improve access to justice

for poor and marginalized people through activating government legal aid services at selected upazila and union. BNWLA assist to form local level legal aid committees [i.e. Upazila Legal Aid Committee (UZLAC) and Union Legal Aid Committee (UPLAC)]; arrange orientations for UZLAC and UPLAC members about government legal aid services & members' roles and responsibilities. Committee members were also oriented about the use of government prescribed form for client, receiving and referral system of justice seeker, maintenance of register, conduction of bimonthly meeting etc. Different levels of government legal aid, legal assistance procedure, and maintaining liaison with the other UPLAC, UZLAC, DLAO (District Legal Aid Office) and NLASO (National Legal Aid Services Organization) had also been discussed during orientations.

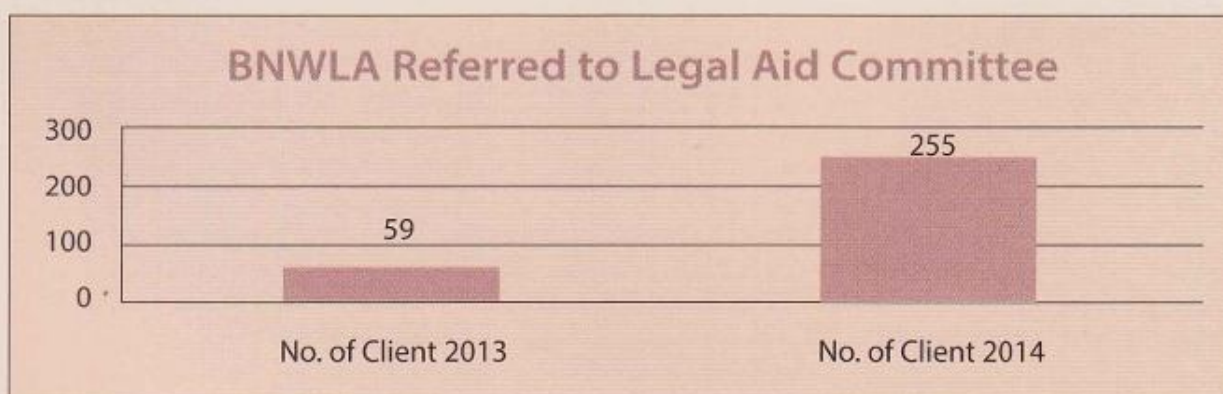


BNWLA had oriented total of 03 number of Upazila Legal Aid Committee (UZLAC) and 38 numbers of Union Legal Aid Committee of Savar, Keranigonj and Nawabganj Upazila of Dhaka. Total of 30 numbers of UZLAC members and 496 number of UPLAC members are presently aware about modalities of government legal aid services.

Alongside, BNWLA had sensitized large number of community people about the services of government legal aid program & their legal rights through different visible materials (i.e. billboards, signboards, poster and brochure) & awareness events (i.e. court yard meeting, drama shows etc).

BNWLA had initiated community legal education centre (MCLEC) at 5 Upazila of Dhaka district. A car has been used as mobile community legal education center. MCLEC equipped with laptop and multimedia to display the information, videos and others. Travelling lawyers pool members, community paralegal and project staffs jointly present the information on the issue of VAW (violence against women), women rights, legal assistance and others), listen and record the incidences of violence, deliver legal assistance and answer the legal queries of target groups. A guideline for MCLEC operation had made by organizational experts to make service effective. Mobile community legal education centre made monthly visits rotationally to 5 Upazila of Dhaka district as well as selected unions, village level market places, public place or parks, play ground of school, college premises and other areas with aim to cover large number of citizen especially women. The organization had aware total of 7853 community people through MCLEC in last one year.

BNWLA had referred total of 314 numbers of clients to government legal aid committees at Union, Upazila and District level in last two years.



Access to justice for poor women is also a priority of the government as started in Steps towards Change, the revised Poverty Reduction Strategy. The legal needs of poor women are an important focus of the government legal aid program. The Legal Aid Policies 2001 make special reference to distressed mothers, women and children trafficking victims, women and children acid victims, insolvent widows and abandoned wives. To strengthen the government legal aid system, LASA as well as legal aid policy and regulation have been amended. BNWLA's efforts to activate legal aid committees assist to ensure greater access of women in formal justice system.

HOW WE ARE PROMOTING BETTER ENFORCEMENT OF WOMEN RIGHTS RELATED LAWS AND POLICIES?

The issue of violence against women in Bangladesh is not a new one. Women of Bangladesh are victims of disparity, discrimination and exploitation. This discrimination stems from the fact that gender has a camouflaging role, where human rights of women cannot be exercised in full. Some laws are gender biased and discriminatory to women's human rights. The imbalance in these laws clearly points that it is male gendered, e.g. the unilateral right of divorce of husband. The increasing crime rate and violence against women indicate the interrelatedness of the various manifestations of gender discrimination. In this regard it is worthy to note that a very recent study by the World Bank shows that the countries that adopt measures to protect women's right and reduce gender gaps have less corruption and faster growth than other countries.

Nevertheless, the Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh is committed to uphold the rights of women and eliminate discrimination against women. In this respect Bangladesh is a party to several international conventions protecting women's rights and eliminating discrimination against them. However, the provisions of some of the conventions are yet to be incorporated in the domestic legislation. Nevertheless, both the Constitution of Bangladesh and several special laws guarantee equal rights and protection of women against violence.

It is, however, needs to be noticed that enforcement of these laws haven't been encouragingly effective in the past few years. An alarming increase in crime against women and female children has caused serious concern. According to Police Headquarter, up to November in 2014, a number of 19773 cases regarding violence against women have been filed. In One-stop Crisis Centers 2951 complaints has been received. In accordance with the findings of BNWLA, violence against women has been increased 11% in 2014 than previous year. Moreover, domestic violence 44%, rape 10%, persecution against domestic worker 9% has been increased. 1910 women were killed and 449 women committed suicide due to different forms of violence upon them. According to a survey published by UN Women in 2014, 76% women become victim of sexual harassment. In public and private universities 87% female students face sexual harassment. Rape became a common incident. Even children are not getting rid of such violence. In 2014, number of rape is 789. These data are the evidence of the ineffectiveness of law in dealing with women's oppression.

Information of Police Headquarter up to November, 2014 shows that 456 cases have been filed under Human Trafficking Prevention and Deterrence Act, 2012. Thus, the alarming increase in crime against women needs serious attention. The women's cell on violence against women monitors' violence but in some cases is not empowered to take action against the accused.

Proper enforcement of laws is essential. It is impossible to find out one single approach through which violence against women can be stopped. The citizens of Bangladesh have much to celebrate in terms of cultural and linguistic freedom and miraculous achievements in terms of economic growth, literacy, health, education and diffusion of technology. But if ordinary Bangladeshis have been waiting for the cherished emancipation of mind or sanctity of life and humanity, unfortunately they just have to keep waiting. Meantime, country is getting increasingly mired in the abyss of lawlessness in all forms of violence against women, seething corruption, plunging morality, broken governance and self-serving politicking.

Is it possible to clean up such a gigantic mess? Yes, if only we have the will to do so. BNWLA in its series of advocacy workshops (on law enforcement) had focused on four essential ingredients (independence, resources, motivation, and efficient administration or management) of law enforcement in implementing women rights related laws and policies. Find below workshop discussions in detail:

During 2013-2014, BNWLA had conducted series of advocacy workshops to promote enforcement of DV Act 2010. Through these workshops, BNWLA had tried to develop a better coordination mechanism with joint efforts of different level stakeholders (both GO and NGO) and ensure easy access of DV survivors to different sort of government & non government services. Workshops had revealed following recommendations for proper enforcement of the DV Act:

- 1) Set up woman friendly police station where most of the police men should be women;
- 2) Establish shelter homes in all 64 districts;
- 3) Aware woman about DV Act,
- 4) Ensure financial prosperity for woman to reduce violence against woman;
- 5) Recruit adequate number of manpower as Enforcement Officers for better and speedy service;
- 6) Combined efforts are needed to end domestic violence;
- 7) Family Court should treat as appropriate court rather than judicial magistrate court to consider the objective and nature of relief under DV law;
- 8) The Act should be non-cognizable;
- 9) Enforcement officers need to train on counseling and mediation process;
- 10) Mediation power needs to deliver to enforcement officers.

A provision in relate to this can be added during amendment of DV law;

- 11) Autonomous practices should be exercised by civil society to raise their voice to end VAW.

The organization had shared workshop findings with Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA) for possible adaptation of these recommendations in their policies and programs and also forwarded to other relevant ministries (i.e. Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Law) for further actions.



BNWLA had analyzed Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 and Muslim Marriage and Divorce (Registration) Act, 1974 through intensive research and tried to identify loopholes within these laws and the need for amendments.

Research had indicated the need of social awareness and effective enforcement of Act to end child marriage. Most of the respondents (81.12%) felt the punishment was not adequate enough to control the menace of child marriage. Higher punishment in comparison to the existing legislation was prescribed by them. Force Marriage and the use of force and abuse were suggested to include in the proposed amendment. According to the respondents, Section 5 and Section 6 of Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929 respectively need to be amended in order to increase the punishment for person solemnizing the wedding and also for the guardians. Section 9 (which talks about the duration of taking cognizance of the offence) has also been suggested to be amended.



The judicial authority must have a discretionary power to take cognizance of the offence even after one year if there are sufficient cause and reasons for such delay. The respondent also assumed that under section 5 of Muslim Marriage and Divorce (Registration) Act 1974 there should be a fine imposed for the delay per day after the thirty-day period. There should also be the liability of person solemnizing marriage to report such marriage to the Marriage Registrar. However, the punishment for contravention of Section 5 should be increased.

There should be a penalty and liability for Marriage Registrars registering illegal marriage such as forced or child marriages. In cases where the Marriage Registrar is not solemnizing the marriage, there should be an insertion to include liability on such person who is solemnizing such marriage such as the Imam or Religious Leader. There should be an insertion in the law to follow and ensure compliance of the Muslim Family Law Ordinance 1961. There should also be an insertion of liability on the Marriage Registrars for reporting the incidence of child marriage. It is often noticed that the Registrars do not maintain the records properly and there is a lot of tampering with the Register, hence there should be a penalty imposed on any person tampering or destroying the Register or any part thereof.



Based on research findings, BNWLA had drafted new Child Marriage Restraint Bill 2014 and Muslim Marriage and Divorce (Registration) Bill 2014. Immediate after drafting, bills were shared with different level stakeholders; collected opinions and further tuned following sharing meetings' recommendations. Organization had submitted drafted Child Marriage Restraint Bill 2014 to MOWCA (Ministry of Women and Children Affairs) for their review and adaptation.

BNWLA had conducted **"Judges Sharing Session"** on the issue of **Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act 2012** with aim to sensitize judges about the use and sensitivity of the Act. Total of 68 judges from lower judiciary including Magistrate of three districts (Mymensing, Gazipur and Kishoreganj) were present during the session. Honorable Chief Justice of Bangladesh Mr. Justice Md. Muzammel Hossain graced the program as Chief Guest. Mr. Md. Nurul Huda, District & Session Judge, Mymensing, Mr. A. M. Md. Sayeed, District & Session Judge, Kishoreganj and Mr. Amir Hossain District & Session Judge, Gazipur discussed in the event.

Alongside, BNWLA had also arranged wide range of sharing sessions with judges and series of trainings with police, lawyers, prosecutors and women affairs officials with a view to make them familiar with the newly adopted laws and enhance capacity so that they can provide appropriate and quality services following the provisions prescribed by the laws. During 2013-2014, BNWLA had oriented 645 numbers of judges; 256 numbers of lawyers, 185 numbers of government officials and 362 numbers of police on women rights related laws, policies, public interest litigations, good practice and others.

BNWLA had filed public interest litigation (PIL) for getting immediate and long term result to establish women's human rights and use PIL's directions as an advocacy tools for making law and policies. During the period of 2013 to 2014, BNWLA had field total of 04 writ petitions in the High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. See below the reflection of the highlighted results of PILs:

Writ No	Parties	Issue	Results
445/2014	BNWLA VS Govt. of Bangladesh and others	Recognize the 'Birangonas' as 'Freedom Fighters'	<p>Rule Nisi issued upon the respondents (The Government of the people's Republic of Bangladesh and Others) as to why they shall not be directed to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide State recognition and honor to the 'Birangonas' as freedom fighters. ● Given all the facilities, benefits and privileges as adopted by the Government for the freedom fighters of Bangladesh and/or pass such other or further order or orders as to this Court may seem fit or proper.
5313/2013	BNWLA VS Govt. of Bangladesh and others	Custodial Rape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On July 21, 2013, the Honorable Court delivered judgment and gave its opinion that the learned session judge, Shariatpur, is at liberty to consider the bail of the detainee Baby
784/2013	BNWLA VS Govt. of Bangladesh and others	Sexual Offences	<p>Rule Nisi issued upon the respondents (The Government of the people's Republic of Bangladesh and Others) as to why they shall not be directed to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct a comprehensive study in order to review implementation of the existing laws and legal framework of Bangladesh providing women and children protection from sexual offences including stalking, harassment, rape along with pornography, blackmailing cyber offence along with the mobile testing etc. ● Frame Rules as provided in section 33 of the Nari-o Shishu Nirjatan Daman Ain, 2000
8766/2013	BNWLA VS Govt. of Bangladesh and others	Preventing publication of defamatory and slanderous statement in the media on victims of gender violence	<p>Rule Nisi issued upon the respondents (The Government of the people's Republic of Bangladesh and Others) as to why they shall not be directed to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare guidelines to prevent publication of defamatory and slanderous comment on women/girls in the media for safeguarding the rights of the victim of gender violence as per fundamental rights.

HOW WE ARE STRENGTHENING LOCAL LEVEL SURVEILLANCE AND RESPONSE SYSTEM TO REDUCE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

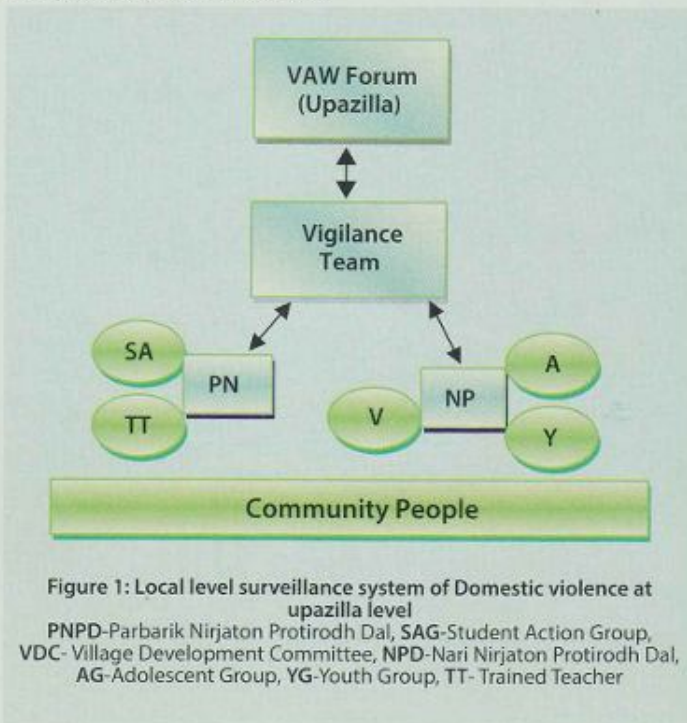
Nearly nine out of 10 husbands abuse their wives in Bangladesh, according to a recent nationwide survey conducted by the government (Violence against Women Survey 2011, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics). The survey conducted on 12,600 women randomly chosen across the seven divisions says an astonishing 87 percent of married women are abused by their husbands. Around half of the victims said they had suffered severe injuries and had to go to the hospital. One-third of them refused to visit a doctor despite severe injuries in fear of their husbands' further actions. The survey presents an alarming picture of the husbands having permanent habit of abusing their wives as 77 percent respondents said the last time they were abused happened within last 12 months. Compared to this, only 8 percent of women said they had never been abused by a man other than their husbands.

Violence against women is a common phenomenon in Bangladesh and occurs in different forms with one of the most prevalent forms of violence being domestic violence. It is so common that it is often not thought of as anything other than an accepted part of daily life. In many instances, women are deprived of her economic rights like dower, inheritance rights, and even of her own earnings. However, BNWLA made concerted efforts for sensitizing and increasing capacities of selected groups handling cases of domestic violence.

BNWLA had established local level surveillance and response system on domestic violence at 190 unions/municipal wards under 30 upazillas of 23 districts in Bangladesh. The organization had formed different level groups [including Parbarik Nirjaton Protirodh Dal (PNPD) (in english : family violence prevention group), Student Action Group (SAG), Village Development Committee (VDC), Nari Nirjaton Protirodh Dal (NPD) (in English : violence against women prevention group), Adolescent Group, Youth Group & Multi-Disciplinary Groups] with aims to collect true fact of the incident and also to take different steps (i.e. information collection, assess the fact, visit the house and meet the family members & neighbors, discuss with other group members, refer to higher group or BNWLA staff) to address violence.

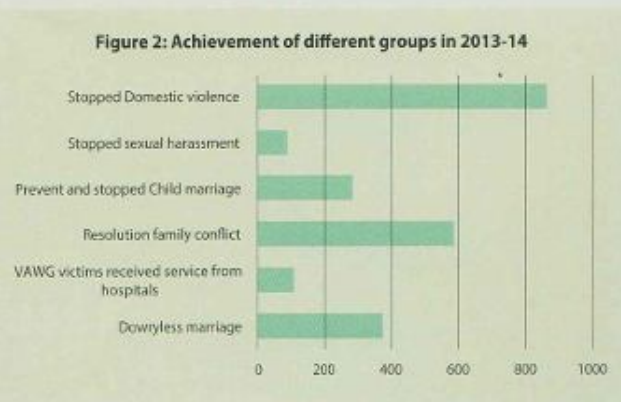
In line with prevention interventions, BNWLA had tried to inform and educate the general community on DV (domestic violence) issues. As the overall process intended to strengthen local level surveillance system through regular, meeting, sharing, training and practicing, the organization had developed relations among different level groups and service providers to make system more effective. Local level groups often tried to solve the complaint of DV through shalish. Sometimes they refer cases to BNWLA lawyers for court case filing and conduction.

The primary groups PNPD and NPD mitigate family disputes in their respective areas. At the same time they monitor and identify the families where the dispute happened continuously. They also intervene to stop marriage with dowry, child marriage & polygamy.



During the years 2013 to 2014, total of 5054 facts were observed by different groups under the above surveillance system. 28 % facts (of 5054 facts) had referred to BNWLA legal service delivery centers for further assistance.

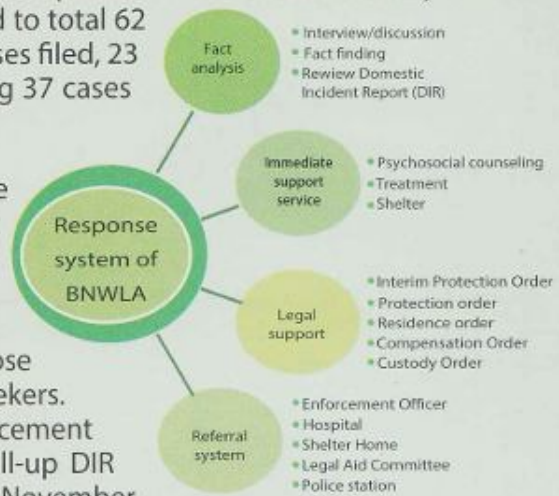
Surveillance groups are useful for improving victim services. Surveillance groups contribute to prevent domestic violence, sexual harassment and child marriage as well as assist survivors for getting support services from government and non-government organizations. Figure 2 shows that the groups stopped 871 incidents of domestic violence through their group and personal initiatives, conducted 374 dowries less marriages, resolved 587 family conflicts, prevent and stopped 284 child marriage and 85 incidents of sexual harassment. Alongside, groups had assisted 107 victims to receive free medical services from hospitals.



BNWLA had filed country's first case on DV (case filing date 24 July, 2011) immediate after enactment of Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act [in short DVPPA] 2010. This first case was significant in creating momentum necessary to bring cases under this Act. However, BNWLA had developed a strong response system for reported cases under DVPPA. Figure 3 illustrate BNWLA's response system for the reported cases of domestic violence.

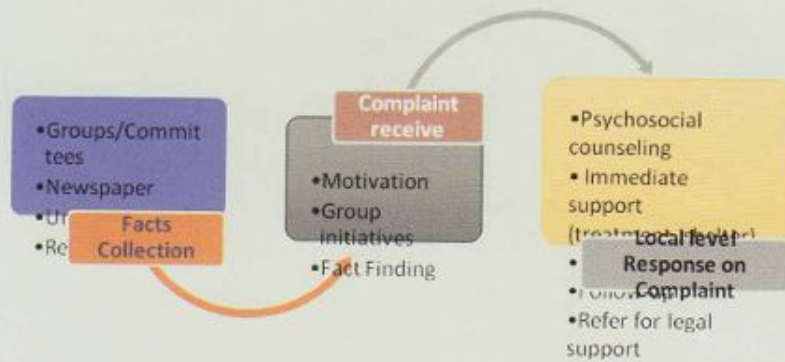
Figure 3 shows BNWLA's intention to provide quality supports to the real victim whose fact is true. First, the assigned lawyer analyze the fact through interview or discussion with the victim/victim's family to get clear information about the domestic incident. Then, s/he review Domestic Incident Report (DIR) of victim as part of assessment of needed supports. Second, the lawyer takes initiative to provide immediate supports (i.e.psychosocial counseling, treatment and shelter based support based on requirements).Third, BNWLA provides legal assistance to get interim protection order, protection order, residence order, compensation order and custody order in favor of victim. During 2013-2014, BNWLA responded to total 62 domestic violence victims under DVPPA. Of the 62 cases filed, 23 have been disposed, 02 dismissed, and the remaining 37 cases are still pending as of December 2014.

Fourth, BNWLA has a referral system to make responsive the assigned authorities of government and non-government under this law. However, domestic violence victim refers to enforcement officer, hospital, shelter home, legal aid committee and police station to seek quality services. It makes close relationship between service providers and service seekers. BNWLA has been assisting to the office of 06 Enforcement Officers to receive domestic violence information, fill-up DIR format, filling case and reporting as pilot basis since November 2013.



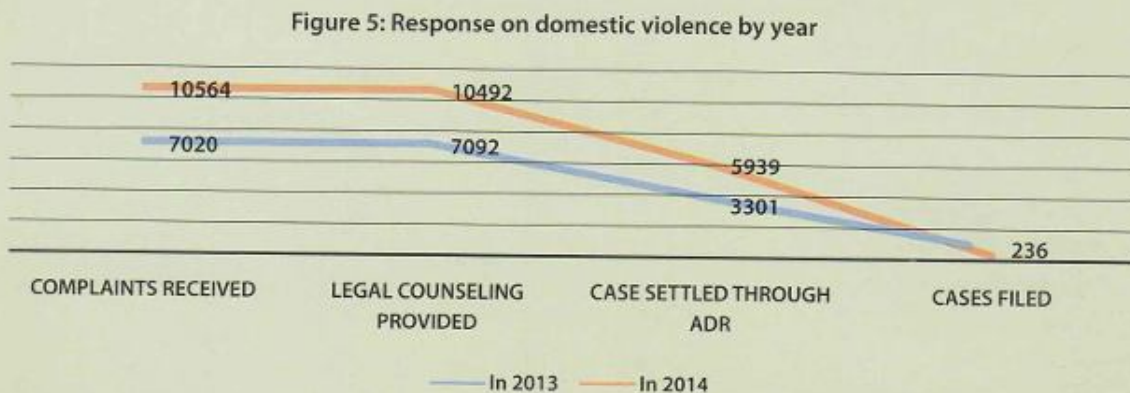
BNWLA collects information of various incidences of Domestic Violence from various primary and secondary sources under local level response system. The members of the different groups/teams, local and national newspapers and other relevant sources provide information on domestic violence. Moreover, BNWLA staff collects DV related information including GD, filed cases etc. from police station, hospital and court on monthly basis. Based on the collected information, different committee/group members take proper action to protect the survivors of domestic violence and ensure their support.

Based on significance of violence, group members and BNWLA staffs conduct fact findings for smooth completion of mediation/counseling/shalish. Fact findings also help to frame legal steps and bring witness in favor of the complaints. Figure 4 project BNWLA's local level response system for unreported incidents of domestic violence.



BNWLA's community law/legal service delivery centers at union level receive & register complaints from the survivors of domestic violence. Registered survivors of domestic violence are brought under counseling/mediation with a view to reconcile the complaints. BNWLA's lawyers usually conduct mediation with participation of all parties. Program staffs/BNWLA lawyers in cooperation of the members of the vigilance team/multi-disciplinary group put their maximum efforts to settle the complaints within the stipulated time. During the shalish period, the group members and BNWLA staff try to practice gender sensitive knowledge and skill to deliver pro women judgments. Immediately after shalish, group members and/or BNWLA staffs conduct follow up to implement mediation decisions successfully. BNWLA had developed an index of family violence complaints for taking proper initiatives.

It has been revealed from figure 5 that local level surveillance and response system has been strengthened. In 2014, around 34% complaints increased and 44% ADR increased to resolve complaints compare to the year of 2013. Moreover, the victims had agreed to file case under DV law which is increased up to 08%.



BNWLA file court cases based on receive complaint. While mediation is unsuccessful, court cases filed for dispute resolution. BNWLA engaged its staff and panel lawyers to file and conduct cases countrywide.

Before enactment of law, domestic violence was seen as a personal issue. However, the enactment of a law alone is not enough to prevent domestic violence. There is a need to change patriarchal view of women within Bangladesh society. Domestic violence has significant adverse effects, not only on individual victims, but on society at large. A strong local level surveillance and response system can reduce domestic violence. Thus, it needs to an institutional shape. Social and political commitment is also needed to end violence. It is the duty of every individual to form a society that prioritizes the elimination of violence.

HOW WE ARE MAKING LOCAL GOVERNMENT CHILD FRIENDLY?

Child Friendly Local Governance (CFLG) can be defined as a strategic framework that places children at the core of the development agenda of local bodies, government line agencies and civil society, promoting child rights through good governance at the local level. It provides overall guidance to realizing and mainstreaming the rights of children (to survival, development, protection and participation) in local government systems, structures, policies and processes. CFLG also facilitates and coordinates the realization of child rights at the national (macro) and sub-national (meso and micro) levels, and enhances the integrated delivery of local services related to children.

Following paragraphs illustrate BNWLA's progress in recent years (2013-2014) in implementing CFLG, with a focus on how local government and donors cooperation has advanced the process. CFLG is considered by BNWLA as well as donor to be an important means for mainstreaming child rights in local governance and ensuring that the country can achieve its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly those related to children and women.

The Government of Bangladesh (Govt. of Bangladesh) is committed to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) but implementation is hampered by a lack of systematic integration of child rights into the government infrastructure of laws, policies and institutions. The Govt. of Bangladesh has not fully developed the framework to deliver on the commitment to the UNCRC. Some legal reform has taken place at the national level but this has not been integrated at the local government level. This is seriously impacting disadvantaged children. Local governance has an important role to play in ensuring the rights of children. Local development plans and budgets are made at this level and government services such as education, health, water and sanitation, birth registration and social protection programs are delivered through local government institutions. Children's needs are mostly neglected when local development plans and budgets are made. Children, representing 45 % of the population, are seen as unimportant and without political capital. Their specific problems and needs are not addressed. Children are also excluded as participants in local level planning, budgeting and implementation and denied their citizen's rights. As such, decision makers do not take the perspective and knowledge that children possess into consideration and children miss out on an important democratic experience.

The Local Government (Union Parishad) Act 2009 outlines seven functions with a direct impact on children, including responsibility for birth registration, child welfare and reducing crime. The Act encourages enhanced citizen participation including mandatory public participation in planning and budgeting, greater financial transparency and the introduction of citizen charters. This is an important opportunity that provides the potential for integrating children's concerns at the local level. Locally elected members are the ideal link between service delivery mechanisms and the citizens and can provide children and young people an opportunity to influence policy decisions. However, demand for transparency and accountability needs to be created within communities and supported through advocacy at the national policy level.

BNWLA started working with rural local government authorities in 6 unions of Manikganj, Barisal and Jessore Districts to establish Child Friendly Local Government in 2011. Activities included awareness raising, capacity building, child rights situation monitoring and advocacy. As a result of these activities, BNWLA had ensured children participation in union, ward level coordination meetings, development planning of local government, budgeting and increasing support services for children. Total of nine unions under Manikganj Sadar Upazila had entered into agreements with BNWLA to make UPs (union parishads) child friendly. Following agreements, nine union parishads allocated budget for child development and created a space for children to actively participate in different development program of UP. Alongside, UP is presently delivering direct services to children through its family conflict eradication women and children welfare committee, shalish committee, union legal aid committee, complain and response mechanism committee.

BNWLA had set and activated complaint and response mechanism at union level under CFLG program. The method of this mechanism is to collect complaints of violence through complaint boxes, face to face interviews, direct field visits, regular monitoring and telephonic reporting & response accordingly.

Organization follows standard procedure to register complaints from different communication channels. Collected complaints compiled by BNWLA project office at union level. Complaints received by face to face interviews and telephonic reporting registered at UP by union parishad secretary, members, organization's lawyers and project staffs. Children and youth group monitor local level child rights violation scenario and report to BNWLA, UP and local administration regularly. Complaints revealed through monitoring that also register at UP.

Alongside, the organization had set complaint boxes at nine UPs of Manikganj Sadar Upazilla to receive complaint directly from child. Individual complaint box opening committee at each of target union had formed & functional with involvement of 1 child, 1 youth volunteer, 2 defender committee members, president & member of union parishad standing committee on women and children welfare, lawyer of BNWLA and Chairman of the Union Parishad (also chairman of this committee) and UP secretary. Complaint box opening committees usually open boxes at the end of each of month. Complaints received through complaint boxes registered and preserved by respective UP Chairman.

Complaint box opening committee at each union reviews and classifies complaints according to the degree of problems. They also identify the complaints which can be addressed locally (under the jurisdiction of union parishad chairman) and which need to refer to BNWLA lawyers for starting the legal procedure. According to the merit of the cases, committees deliver responsibilities to different actors (i.e. UP member, children & youth group, lawyer, project staff, defender committee, village police and chairman of UP) to solve the cases. These actors investigate and validate the cases. After validation, actors takes different sort of actions i.e mediation, social punishment, motivation, counseling to end violence. In case of extreme violence, actors filed cases and conduct regular follow up of the cases. It is seen that extreme cases i.e rape, child marriage etc are directly reported through face to face or telephonic communication and response taken by the actors immediately. If the case is out of the jurisdiction of UP it is referred to BNWLA lawyers. In all steps BNWLA maintains victim and witness confidentiality strictly. Complaint and response mechanism at UP level is helping victimized/high risk children to protect from different forms of violence and also to create child friendly environment at local level especially in service delivery.

As a result of repeated awareness sessions, local government representatives at different levels are aware about the issues related to violence against children and its support services. Local government had allocated budget for children development; functional three UP committees (committees on family violence elimination and Women and Child welfare committee and union legal aid committee) and ensure easy access of children to local government's services.



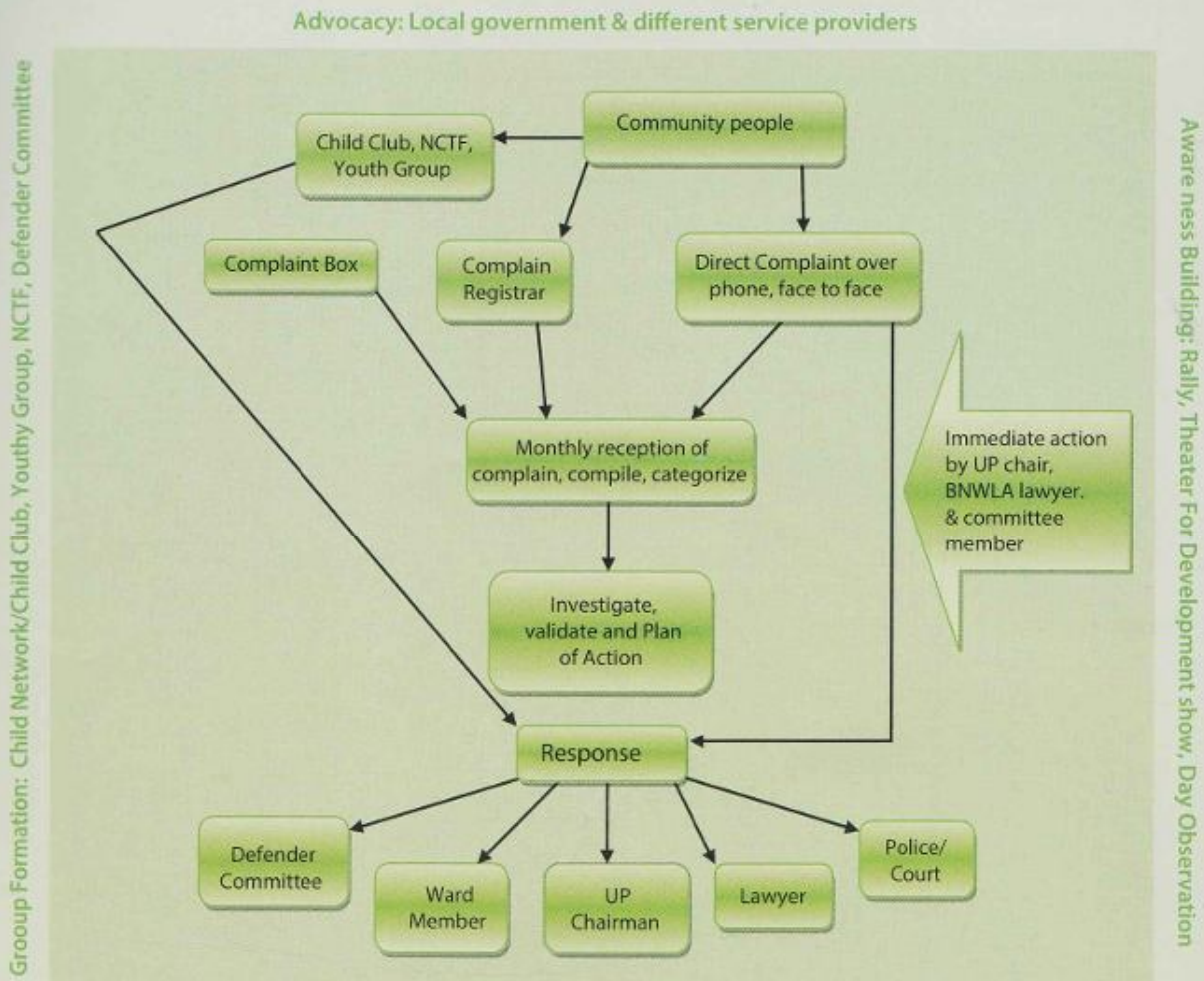
The committee members open the complaint box at union parishad premises



UP organized open budget session for children and women development

Alongside, local government had delivered a space to selected children to participate in UP coordination meetings. During last two years, local government had received total of 1191 complaints from different sources. Out of 1191 complaints, local government had settled 297 complaints through mediation; filed 4 cases, refer 25 cases to government legal aid committee and 865 cases are in process of settlement. Local government had taken steps to stop 37 child marriages and 56 stalking at Manikgong areas.

Child Friendly Complaints and Response Mechanism flow charts in rural setup



Child Rights monitoring: Door to Door visit, Court Yard, Meeting with different community group

BNWLA had also established a child friendly service in the communities on registration system. Objective of this intervention is to reduce unsafe child migration by increasing awareness and capacity of local government institutions as well as its members.

LG (local government) members who had received series of trainings on child protection, trafficking and unsafe migration are currently engage in community based child protection mechanism building and performing roles to prevent unsafe migration. This action made LGs more accountable and cooperative to provide support services to children, to prevent or mitigate child migration.



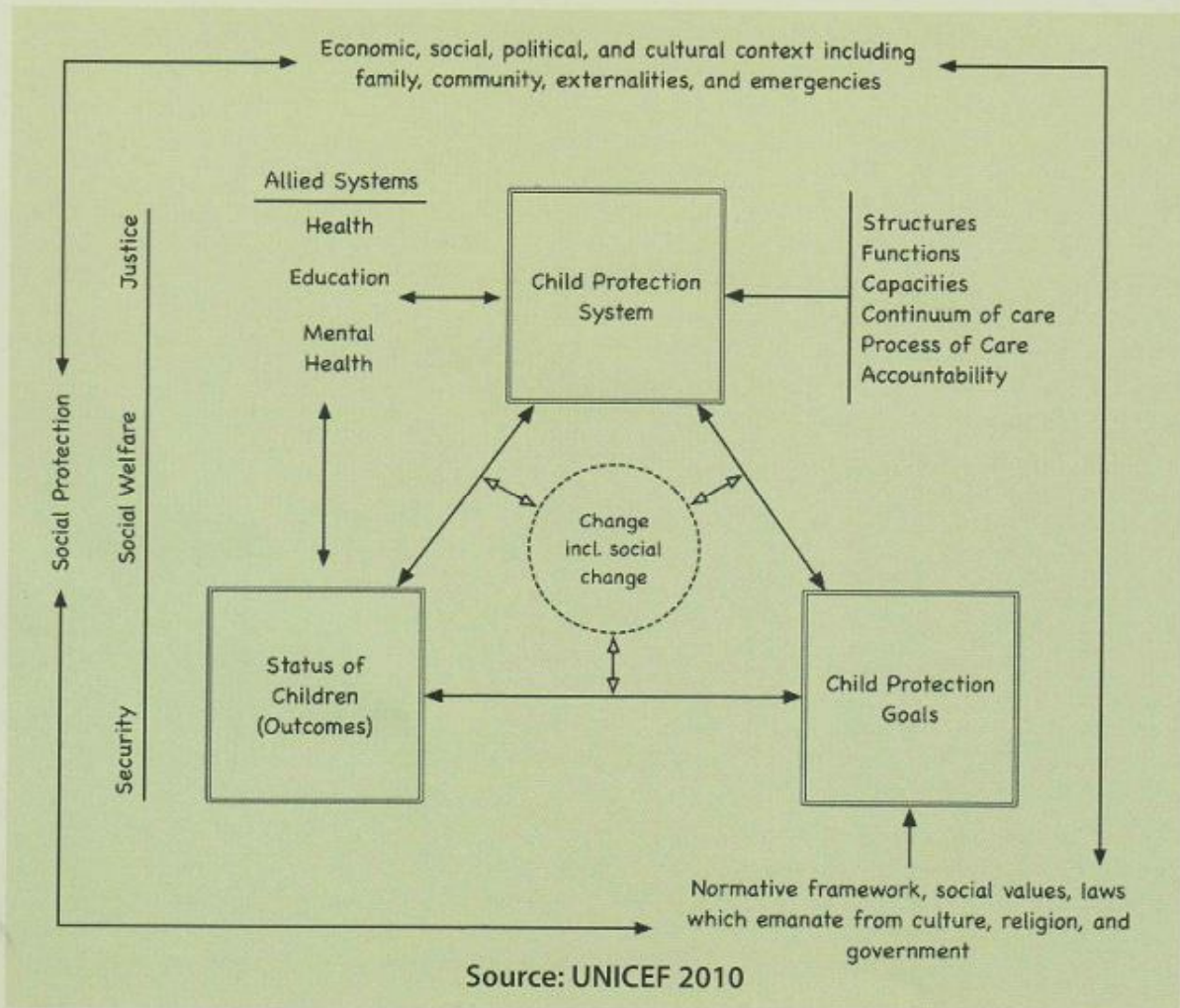
Child registration is going on

BNWLA had established a registration system database in 14 union parishad. LGI members have received orientations on the use of registration system. 21,882 vulnerable children registered themselves at 14 unions. Out of 21,882 registered children, 7,466 were migrated children, 14,416 were children are at risk of migration. Total of 19,562 children had received ID card from the UP. Besides, BNWLA had established Community Information Centers at union parishads and also in different places to provide information on the safety net program of Government and advice to the community members on how to request the services as a kind of preparation before they finally approach the LGs. Community people became aware about access and availability of safety nets, social protection and legal services. As a result, demand has been created and people make requests towards duty bearers like LGs, health centers and schools.

Although CFLG is still at an early stage in Bangladesh, eventually this type of localized planning should result in a noticeable improvement in MDG indicators aimed at bettering children's lives. This is particularly important in Bangladesh where local disparities can sometimes be very wide and national policies cannot always reach all intended beneficiaries with equity.

multinational organizations, one has to identify the common purpose toward which the effort in the system is being placed.

The systems approach to child protection begins with a normative framework. The framework helps define the formal boundaries of the system and legitimates the work of the system in a given social, political, and economic context. The framework also establishes the basis for accountability and forms the basis for making claims of duty bearers on behalf of children (i.e., enforcement). The normative framework also connects the child protection system to broader system of social protection by drawing attention to the interdependencies.



In Bangladesh a large number of children are deprived of their basic human rights due to unacceptable health, nutrition and education as well as social conditions. In addition, children are exposed to severe forms of physical and mental violence at home, in the work place, in institutions and other public places. The nature and extent of violence against children irrespective of age, sex and class has been increasing day by day.

Broadly, violence against children can be defined to include physical, emotional or psychological violence or threat of violence against children perpetuated by individuals, as well as by institutions or society at large. Child sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking remain largely taboo in Bangladesh society. Because of this, there is little reliable quantitative data. Gaining qualitative data is also challenging because of the shame and culture of silence associated with abuse.

A major underlying issue behind child sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking is that children are often unaware of their legal rights, or are made to feel they cannot exercise those rights. In general, the rights and desires of children are often overlooked, particularly for the most vulnerable groups, such as adolescent girls. Poor law enforcement compounds this. Inequality is another critical issue. Often disabled children and girls are more vulnerable. Isolated or impoverished regions are also more attractive to gangs of traffickers because it is both harder for parents to seek law enforcement but also easier to sell the idea of "lucrative jobs" to impoverished parents. In general, services for exploited or abused children are scarce, but it is even more so in these areas. Children who have a lack of economic opportunities and poor education are also more at risk of being trafficked, abused or exploited.

Reintegration into mainstream community is another issue that cuts across child sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking. Many child survivors of these practices require psychosocial counseling and life skills training.

The Government of Bangladesh has approved the Children Act 2013, Children Policy 2011, the National Plan of Action (NPA), and the National Child Labor Policy. The Government has also enacted the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act (2012) and the Pornography Control Act (2012). A children law following the minimum standard of care for children was formulated and approved by the cabinet on 30th December in 2010. The Government also adopted the Guideline to Prevent Sexual Harassment and banning Corporal Punishment in Educational Institutions. The Government has formed the Rescue, Release, Repatriation, and Integration (RRRI) task force. The Government has formed the National Children Council and inter-ministerial committee for ensuring child protection. Even a judgment passed by the Honorable High Court Division has fixed minimum twelve years for domestic workers.

The Government of Bangladesh is working to develop a strategy to stop violence against children. It has formulated the National Child Protection Policy. Also, the Government has begun monitoring the child labor situation, and has established the Child Labor Welfare Council. A review of the Labor Law of 2006 and the Disaster Management Act is in process. The Government is formulating a National HIV/AIDS prevention policy, which will include provisions for protecting children.

Nevertheless, in spite of these developments, the violation of children's rights is still extensive. The sexual exploitation of girl and street children is widespread. Birth registration rate is very low for which proof of age of children are difficult. Children are often forced to illegal drug transport by the drug dealers, and they are also forced to unsafe migration. There are no separate safe custody centers for endangering children at police stations. In practice the offenses committed by children are treated similar like the adult offenders for which imprisonment of children are more seen rather than addressing them through rehabilitation, reintegration, and development. There is insufficient number of counseling support and the defense prosecutors and the law enforcing agents also do not enter the real age of children due to their insensitivity and lack of awareness of the existing law.

In Bangladesh, Children are often victimized in family and community through different forms of physical and psychological torture. Due to absence of community based protection mechanism, children and their family members regularly deprives from legal and social justice and more over victimized second time by the community. Though government had adequate provisions to develop community based child protection structure through forming different types of committees or forums with participation of local government and civil society members, however these provisions are not properly implemented countrywide. Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers Association-BNWLA realized the lacks and gaps through regular interventions with the community for ensuring protection of children since its inception in 1979.

'We are helpless and we have nothing to do against the perpetrators because they are much powerful than us, they have huge money and even manpower to demolish us within an hour.' This is the comment of a father of victimized adolescent girl.

Exactly, the evil power had made a painful reality and helpless situation for the common people regarding safety and security of women and children. BNWLA knocked at the door of law enforcing agencies, local government, civil society members and common people to break the situation for promoting the safety and security of women and children in community.



Organization had intended to develop community based child protection structure with involvement of people from all corners of the society and have been able to regulate the wheel of community to make sustainable complaint and response mechanism for the betterment of women and children. As part of this vision, around 100 community care committees, 75 Child protection committees, 140 legal clinics, 6 community based information centers, 120 Child clubs, 36 Counter trafficking committees, 1 helpline system through mobile phone, 4 community based Child protection committees (CBCPC) were formed, established and activated by BNWLA. These initiatives had back to establish effective complaint and response system in BNWLA's targeted communities.

Information related to violence against children registered at BNWLA community legal clinics by victims or their family members. Alongside, on the basis of information an effective measure was taken by BNWLA against perpetrators. Around the year 2013 and 2014, a total of 700 complaints were registered at centers and out of those complaints 238 cases were filed against the perpetrators. During this period, a total of 5 perpetrators were punished for life term imprisonment by the different courts of the country.

In cases of violence against children, community became united against perpetrators and came forward to take actions against Community people learned how to protest against perpetrators, how to take legal actions, how to communicate with law enforcing agencies, where and how to register complaints and how to create mass movement against perpetrators for ensuring appropriate legal punishment. Besides, community ensured psychosocial supports to the victims through their own management.

During the reporting period (2013 & 2014) community based institutions played proactive role in ensuring protection of children through their own expertise and human resources. Community schools, madrasa, clubs and mosques took effective initiative to ensure necessary supports to the vulnerable Children. On behalf of BNWLA, several training were provided to the female teachers of community schools, house wives and social leaders on how to handle the traumatic situation of Children, how to ensure essential supports for the victimized Children instantly and on basic counseling methods. By having the mentioned training, a group of people developed themselves in providing instant supports and they provided meaningful supports to the Children during the project period. As for instance, Community people provided meaningful supports to the rape victim in Manikganj just after the incident on Shvajatra bus in 2013.

support of local police. BNWLA member lawyer along with trained community female volunteer instantly met with the victim and provided meaningful psychological support to her. The victim regained her mental strength and raised voice for taking legal actions against perpetrators. In this case, people from all walks of life came forward to protest against the incident and they made mass movement for ensuring exemplary punishment for perpetrators. A court of Manikganj finally awarded life term imprisonment for the accused.

Community people rescued her from harmful situation and ensured protection for her with the During the year 2013-2014, the Children who faced problem in relating to Child marriage, stalking, sexual abuse, exploitation, unsafe migration and trafficking were supported continuously through community based protection structure which made with combination of adult, children and G.O and NGO network. Children at high risks situation able to submit their complaint at community and instant actions were taken by the BNWLA and community support groups. Through the intensive work of the organization , strong community support groups were developed in favor of Children interest and to ensure protection of Children from high risks situation. Those groups played a vital role as alternative positive power in ensuring Children Rights and in ensuring all sorts of psychological, physical, social and material supports for the Children at risks situation in community. Due to develop mentioned protection structure in community ,Children, parents and guardians became much empowered in protesting against perpetrators and in taking legal actions against offenders.

Due to strong community network and referred services, children who were sold in brothel became free from their suffering and were protected from harmful force prostitution. Around the year 2013 to 2014, total of 31 Children were rescued from Faridpur and Dawladia brothel with the support of partners NGO and law enforcing agencies. Alongside, tremendous changes came out in related to the practices of law enforcing agencies of local police stations.

Partners NGO's who were working with the brothel children from long ago would never maintain general diary in police station while they rescued children from brothel. They avoided the procedure due to demand of 500 tk. bribes by the police. BNWLA was informed about their role in this regard in a discussion meeting in early 2014. BNWLA sensitized the partner organizations regarding long term bad consequence of the interventions. It was also discussed that the bad consequences not only for children but also for the concerned staff or caregivers. It was also clarified through discussion that the practices make difficulties in improving National Child Protection Systems, changing mindset of the members of Law enforcing agencies and in using of laws relating to Child protection or best interest of children. Alongside, BNWLA shared the issue with police department and raised voice for providing supports in maintaining legal procedures sincerely. Note that the police department had also taken departmental actions against one responsible officer (faridpur) for his unwillingness to register General Diary (G.D) in 2014. Due to mentioned step ,a significant protection mechanism was established in relating to ensure protection of brothel children in community. Following results came out through the process and strengthened the protection structure.

- Established legal system in relating to rescue children from harmful situation.
- Changed practices of police officers regarding execution of laws and policies.
- Established Rights of Children and they became free from legal barriers.
- Changed practices of partners NGO's and they became free from legal barriers.
- Parents, Guardians and Children became sensitized regarding their roles and responsibilities.

In developing effective community based response towards the vulnerability of Women and Children, BNWLA provide importance to break the traditional harmful values and culture that make troubles in the life of women and children. Social norms and values based on culture and religion also has a very powerful effect on our lives. In Bangladesh, attitude towards women and children are often quite oppressive or negative and this always affects their psychosocial wellbeing. During the year 2013 to 2014 BNWLA had an utmost struggle to improve this situation by establishing sustainable complaint and response system in community and the organization brought tremendous change in this issue.

HOW WE ARE REHABILITATING, RECOVERING AND INTEGRATING SURVIVORS OF DIFFERENT FORMS OF VIOLENCE?

I do not want to back my family again, I want to kill myself, I have already been died socially due to being engaged myself in a nasty profession in brothel'. Fourteen years old X (pen name) expressed her opinion while she was rescued from brothel with the supports of law enforcing agencies in June 2013.

Like X, many other victimized women and children showed same attitude at the time of arrival at BNWLA safe homes. But, they became positive to their own life by having comprehensive psychosocial supports. Alongside, victimized women and children had been able to cope themselves in the mainstream society after their integration in family. Every human life always goes through series of diversified struggle, pain, sorrows and even joyful moment which are reflected in various ways in the stories of life of victimized women and children .Since January 2013 to December 2014, BNWLA brought a significant change in improving positive attitude, behavior, family bond and socialization of 522 women and children through comprehensive psychosocial services.

BNWLA follows minimum standard care, case management and reintegration guidelines in delivering comprehensive psychosocial services. Organization is presently operating a long term safe home at Gazipur and five transit safe homes at Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna, Benapole and Coxsbazar for victimized/high risk women and children. Group residential rehabilitative facilities, or "safe homes," for victims/high risk group play a necessary part in a comprehensive effort to address violence against women and children that includes prevention, protection, and prosecution. The essential services that safe homes provide can help victims/high risk group to recover and move toward reintegration into society. BNWLA exercise basic humane & victim friendly approach in operating its safe homes. BNWLA's safe homes provide direct restorative support to empower survivors both at individual, community and societal level. The objective of BNWLA long-term shelter is to assist individuals with the reintegration process. The length of stay in long-term shelter varies; most provide support and assistance for up to six months or more. As with transit safe homes, the capacity of long-term shelter varies; some are fairly small, with a capacity of 10 to 20 people, while others are much larger and can serve 100 victims and at times operate at full capacity.

One important component of long-term shelter care involves preparing victims for integration into society, within their families, or in communities. During the process of integration, which can take up to three to six months, the women and children remain in the shelter, receiving counseling services, educational and vocational training, and medical assistance at a nearby hospital. The children may go to public schools while the older youth and women receive skills training.

Transit centers are similar to emergency centers but are distinguished by their strategic location at significant violence prone areas. They provide assistance to victims, predominantly women and children, who are in the process of being victimized or became victim. Although transit centers most commonly refer victims to long term safe homes where they can get more comprehensive care, in BNWLA, it has been reported that victims stay in the centers for up to one month while the most appropriate care for their circumstances can be identified.

Critical factors in rehabilitation, recovery, and integration include the individuals' age; physical and psychological health; background; family life; culture; duration of their exploitation; and their perceptions of the damage done to their person and their future as a result of having been victimized. Vulnerable before they were victimized, after the abuse and exploitation, victims are often even more vulnerable. The long-term recovery, rehabilitation, and integration of victims involve meaningful educational and economic opportunities, as well as extended psycho-social care.

When victims lack educational opportunities their future prospects are limited, making them more vulnerable. BNWLA shelters provide a range of educational opportunities for victimized/high risk women and children, including formal and non-formal education and life skills trainings. Economic opportunity is critical in any successful rehabilitation. BNWLA delivers in house and external vocational trainings to victims on different trades.

Victims commonly experience severe physical and psychological trauma as a result of violence, rape, threats, addiction, and other means used by perpetrators to control their victims. During recovery, victims may fear that outsiders will find out what happened to them, or that returning home will bring shame to their families. They may feel guilt for having made such a grave "mistake," and anger at themselves for "letting it happen." They may feel anger at others for not helping, while feeling powerless to help them. They may need to re-learn to trust other people, make friends, and have healthy relationships. Overcoming all of these feelings is important to the recovery process. Psycho-social support and counseling help victims free themselves from the anxiety and depression brought on by their traumatic experience and begin the process of rebuilding their self esteem and self confidence.

The integration of victims often is a difficult, complex, and long-term process. Its complexity lies in the fact that it is different for each individual victim and that it involves not only the victim but also the environment and culture within which the integration is to take place. Integration of victims entails more than moving a child or woman back home or to another selected place. The process entails putting the pieces of the former victim's life together in a way that she can be re-united with a former life, a family, and a community, or helping the victim create a new life in another place in society.

The integration of victims into their home community presents particular challenges when supporting victims who do not want to return home or are unable to do so. These victims need assistance to create an independent life, sometimes requiring a long-term commitment by BNWLA providing support.

Out of 522 survivors in year 2013-2014, total of 30 integrated through non hazardous jobs, total of 447 integrated in the family and rest of referred to likeminded organizations for long-term comprehensive supports.

BNWLA's reintegration process starts through collection of information about survivor's present status from different formal and informal sources. BNWLA's member lawyers, legal service delivery centres, staffs, members of law enforcing agencies, representatives of international NGOs, foreign partners, Bangladesh Mission in abroad, local community people, pimps, customer of different brothel, direct and indirect beneficiaries of different projects, media persons, like minded organizations and as well as victimised women and children - are the main source of information collection. Besides BNWLA's countrywide helpline services also back to gather violence related information from different sources.

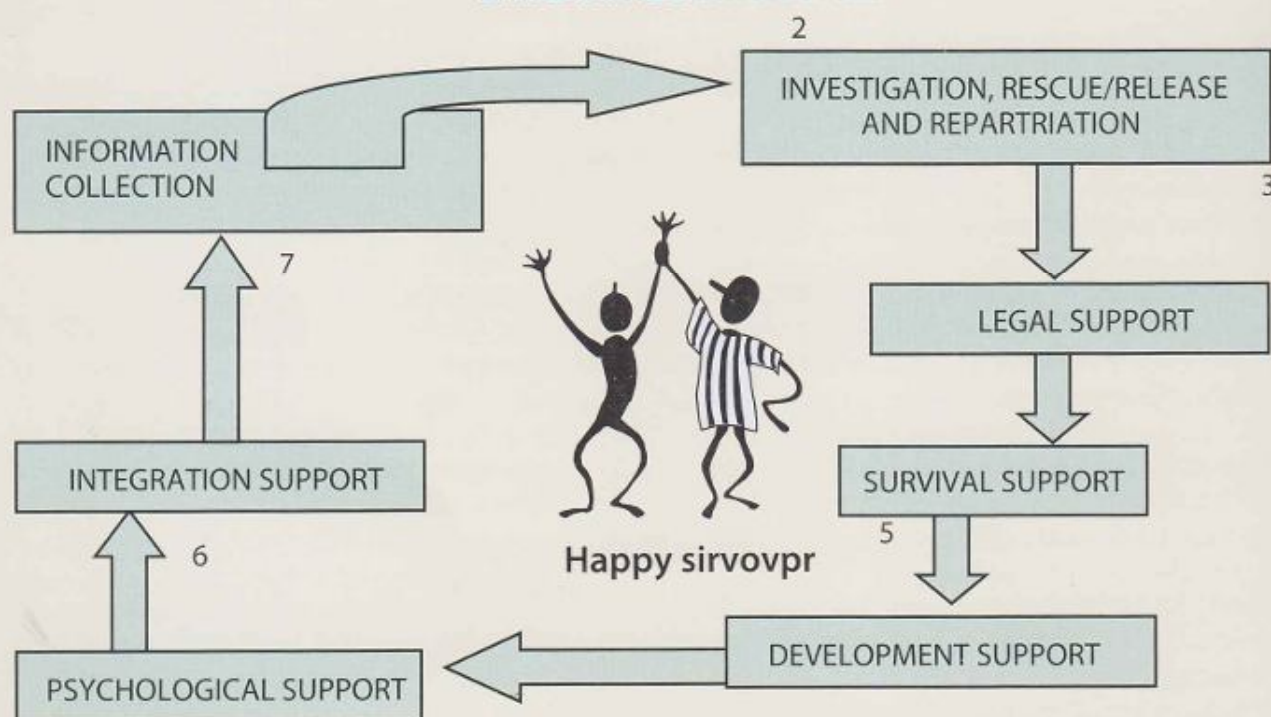
On the basis of collected information from different formal and informal sources, BNWLA'S investigation team investigated the cases and provides report to the management for taking appropriate action regarding respective survivor. According to the investigation report, BNWLA rescue the victims from different places and repatriate the respective victims from different countries.

If rescued survivors are bonded through any legal boundaries, then the BNWLA provides free legal aid support to the respective victim. In repatriation related cases, BNWLA maintain the entire connection with the Foreign Mission as well as the Home Ministry of Bangladesh and conduct legal cases up to that period, whenever the survivors become free of legal boundaries. During the period of investigation, if BNWLA found any cases against women and children oppression filed cases under the different existing Act of Bangladesh and actualise the compensation from the court and ensure their safety and rights to survive. Apart from that, BNWLA regularly conducts mediation and deliver legal advices for restoring survivor's dignity and status.

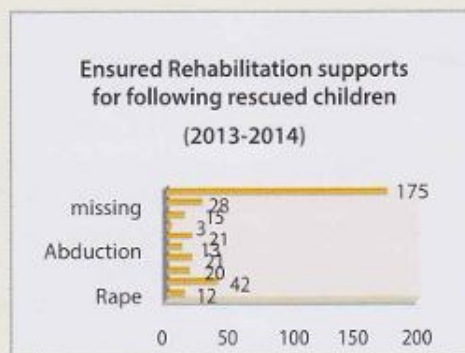
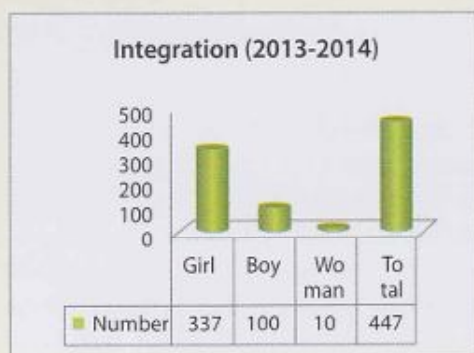
BNWLA provides survival support to the survivors including food, shelter, cloth, medication and others for meeting their needs.

BNWLA provides formal, non-formal and re-creative educational support to the survivors. Education is backing survivors to strengthen their decision-making and problem solving skills. Apart from that, BNWLA arranges several exchanges program, different cultural programs, drama presentation and special days observation for the survivors. This type of activities are backing survivors to grow up as knowledgeable person and becomes familiar about different existing development process which help them to sort out the strategy for life. BNWLA introduced life skill and santosh approach training for the survivors to cope up with stresses. Besides BNWLA is continuing its different initiatives for survivors' product promotion. Along with the above support, BNWLA provides various in house vocational training (like sweing, bakery and confectionery, pottery, dairy, candle making, cutting, hand and machine embroidery, household items) to the survivors and also providing computer, garments, beauty parlour and electrical and refrigeration, dress making and tailoring from outside of the safe home.

BNWLA's INTEGRATION CYCLE



BNWLA is conducting regular counselling sessions with survivors. A bunch of trained staffs are regularly observing survivors' mental status and on the basis of survivors mental status they take steps to overcome trauma and mental illness. BNWLA is regularly providing group counselling and as well as family counselling to the respective victim's family members in a group or individually. These types of counselling are strengthening survivors' mental capacity and enables survivors to cope up with socio economic stresses.



Along with the different existing supports, BNWLA continue its tasks to trace out the respective survivors' families and as well as the assessment of the survivors regarding integration possibilities. At the time of integration, BNWLA provides financial support to the respective survivor for his/her golden future and continue its follow up for three month and observe whether the survivors are living with her family happily or not. If any problems arise BNWLA tried to solve that with the support of local community people. BNWLA involves community people for maintaining survivors dignity within the society and as well as in the family.

In a nutshell, BNWLA is emphasising on the following interventions for social reintegration process.

1. Curative interventions > Under this part BNWLA is providing all types of necessary support to the survivors and tried to ensure the national, international standards and safety.
2. Counselling and care plans > Before integrating the survivor in the family, BNWLA is providing different types of counselling to the survivors and enable survivors to cope up with stresses.
3. Education, recreation, vocational training and cultural program > through involving survivors in these activities, BNWLA had ensured their other needs and enable them to fight with emergencies.
4. And finally along with the above activities, BNWLA staffs is continuously assessing survivors and their relatives wills to return them in their respective families as well as in the society.

BNWLA follow a 'Continuum of Care' approach in delivering services. The 'Continuum of Care' process is developed based on 'Case Management Process'³. Both these tools are adopted by the key Ministries who are facilitating the child protection (CP) system strengthening in Bangladesh.

The process starts through 'early identification'⁴ of the vulnerability in the working areas to bring the survivor into an 'assessment and registration' process. Yet for emergency cases, accessibility to services explored within the service options or through referral mechanisms. The Case Management Process started from the Early Identification phase. Through the Case Management process, service necessities explored through 'initial screening' of the vulnerability followed by 'detailed assessment' with the children, their caregivers both at service provision and community level. 'Intervention Plan' for provide services done through 'case conferencing'. A review after 3 months will be done through following the screening process to determine the next plan of action; if the child doesn't need any more support then he or she integrated with the family through providing socio-economic resilience tools (TVET, Asset transfer/ Conditional Cash Transfer etc). The follow up mechanism is a continuous process after the integration to ensure that the survivors are not falling under any vulnerability again.

In providing meaningful comprehensive psychosocial supports to the distressed women and children, BNWLA always maintains human rights values as well as minimum standard of care. Basic principles as non discrimination, survival and development, participation, indivisibility and inalienability are followed properly for ensuring best interest to distressed women and Children. Considering the importance of sustainable rehabilitation and integration of distressed Women and Children, BNWLA had given priority to address severe biological, social, psychological distress and provided appropriate interventions to bring normal state of every individual life as well as to fit them in mainstream society.

³ More detailed information can be found in the next page

⁴ For Victims, early identification of the vulnerability to identify the complex needs of the children.

HOW WE ARE DEVELOPING CAPACITIES TO REALIZE THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN?

BNWLA's training initiatives (started from 1997 and continuing still) were realized through the implementation of its organizational objectives that aimed at providing general awareness on human rights, child rights and women rights to all the general mass by organizing seminars, workshops, lecture sessions, in schools, colleges, universities, Governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, paralegal activists, and community people. The initiative was not accidental, rather perceived through years of experiences of the member lawyers. It was a general consensus that in order to make the efforts of the BNWLA in ensuring access to justice and establish rights of women & children by reducing violence and inequality, the training of the general mass has become an imperative.

Hence, the organization had established and functional an individual training cell and started delivery series of trainings, workshops and dialogue meetings on regular basis. The organization provides training to the partner organizations at local level. Besides, it imparts training for the members of the law enforcing agencies, judges, lawyers, journalists & others to sensitize them on the issue of different forms of violence against women and children.

The Objectives of BNWLA's Training cell

1. To build capacities/expertise of the staffs and members of the organization;
2. To build capacities of the partners organizations and stakeholders in combating violence against women and children.
3. To deliver assistances and facilities to different organizations in organizing trainings, seminars and workshops.

BNWLA delivers trainings to the following categories of people:

- a. Women Lawyers' (both practicing and student lawyer)
- b. Law enforcing & security agencies (Police, Border Police, Immigration Police, Bangladesh Ansar, Bangladesh Coast Guard, Village Police)
- c. Local Elected bodies (specially Chairman & women members)
- d. NGO staffs'/leaders along with CSOs and different groups (i.e. youth & child club)
- e. Government officials (trained officials of department of social welfare; department of women and children affairs; judiciary people (specially the assistant and joint district judges); officials from Detective Training School; Police Staff colleges; Bangladesh Civil Service Administration Academy)
- f. Community people (i.e. members of different community groups);
- g. Journalist;
- h. Religious Leaders (specially Imams from Imam Training Academy);
- i. Teachers (both primary, secondary, college, university level)
- j. Parents/guardian of vulnerable/high risk group;
- k. Vulnerable women and children
- l. Officials of different International NGOs (i.e. TDH Italy, World Vision, GTZ etc...)
- m. Internal staffs and members of BNWLA

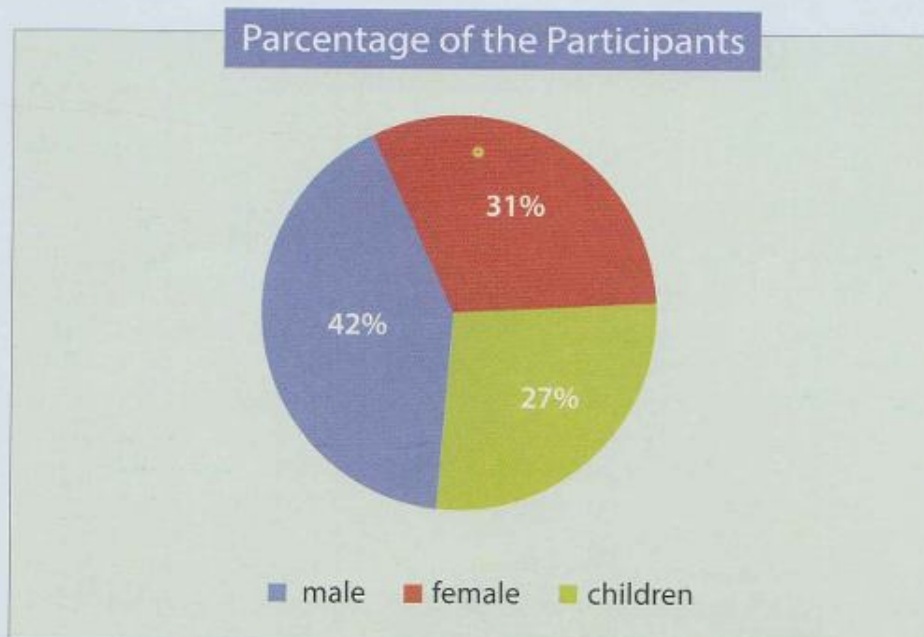
Capacity Building Cell of BNWLA conducted TNA through staffs of its projects and different types of participants applying some participatory & innovative methods & techniques. The TNA found out the gaps of knowledge, skills, practices and attitudinal factors of the participants. Based on the result of TNA's capacity building cell prepared manual on different issue and conducted training in the year of 2013-2014.

Under different projects, BNWLA had capacitated all staffs of the projects, state officials, law enforcement agency, social workers, health worker, human rights worker, land supports officers of char livelihood project, teacher, student, religious leader, upazila chairman, union chairman, child group member, representative of ansar VDP, micro businessman, shopkeeper, owner of hotel, representative of local government, BGB, police, journalist, member of VAW committee, girls and young women, local elites, Upazila and District level Govt. officials, District level Judges, DC, ADC, SP, ASP, SI, SI of CID, SI of SB, panel lawyer, paralegals, solicitors, president/secretary of BAR, Staffs of CBO's, and community people.

Information of participants in different training the year of 2013-2014:

Projects	Number of training batches	Female	Male	Children	Total
MWLR	113	787	1632	00	2419
PRVC	74	328	870	76	1274
GJP	185	5121	468	4493	10082
ICPRC	29	173	521	00	694
EVAWCA	24	412	150	27	589
GJP	58	477	499	00	976
PHR	111	635	1493	00	2128
ECLG	30	50	275	500	825
CFLG	10	20	50	200	270
Total	634	8003	5958	5296	19257

Capacity building cell conducted 594 batches of training. Total participants of the trainings were 17162. Among the participants 5633 were male, 7933 were female, and 4596 were children.



Capacity Building cell conducted Training on capacity building for staff level, Life Skills training, karate training, Livelihood Support training for women and children, Child rights and child protection orientation session, Gender orientation training, Child Protection, Case Management,



Figure 1: picture of different trainings

psychosocial support and Child Development training, Training on Repatriation Process, training on Orientation of MEAL, training of community legal service, training on gender sensitive legal service, TOT on Empowering women to lead change, Effective shalish training, Leadership training, Orientation on legal protection services & violence response system, The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1980, Nari O Shishu Nirjaton Daman Ain-2000, Orientation on Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010, for other participants. Some of the training was conducted at Dhaka and some were at different division, district, upazila and union level.

After conducting the training on mentioned issues participants learned about BNWLA activities, human rights, fundamental rights, different laws related to women and children, classification of law, implementation methods of human rights, legal problems in community and solutions and prevailing legal system in Bangladesh, violence against women, domestic violence, torture on women and children, reasons of violence against women, Muslim family law, Christian law and Hindu family law including dower, polygamy, divorce, dowry, guardianship, inheritance etc. and awarded about their role and responsibilities. Trained law enforcement agencies and police officers acted friendly with victims. Women and child rights are implemented by trained people. Women are joining income generating process and they become empowered. People are sensitized on gender rights and related laws.

BNWLA Executive Committee

BNWLA is a member based organization of professional women lawyers'. The organization has a governing body named Executive Committee (EC), elected every two years through direct votes of its 1200 women lawyers (known as general members) across the country. It has a fourteen member committee with a President, two Vice-Presidents, a General Secretary, a Joint secretary a Treasurer and eight members. The governing body- EC (final responsible body, entitled to take most important decisions in the organization) is independent and actively involved in the functioning of the organization, specifically on policy making, strategic development, monitoring and evaluation and advising the membership and staffs. Roles and responsibilities of the governing body for financial planning, reporting and related internal control, are formally defined and documented in organizational constitution, executive committee meeting minutes and financial manual of the organization. All members of executive committee are practicing lawyer of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh and engaged in pro bono services since long years. Executive Committee scrutinizes all the activities of the organization on monthly and quarterly basis. Besides executive committee arrange regular annual general meetings (in 2 years break), monthly meetings and need/issue based meetings

BNWLA Executive Committee



Adv. Fawzia Karim Firoze
President



Adv. Seema Zahur
Vice-President



Adv. Feroza Parvin Lucky
Vice-President



Adv. Hasina Rashid
General Secretary



Adv. Zakia Anar Kali
Joint-General Secretary



Adv. Jahan Ara Haque
Treasurer



Adv. Rebeka Sultana
Joint-Treasurer



Adv. Shahanara Begum
EC-Member



Adv. Selina Begum
EC-Member



Adv. Farida Yeasmin
EC-Member



Adv. Taslima Khatun Chanda
EC-Member



Adv. Jobaida Pervin
EC-Member



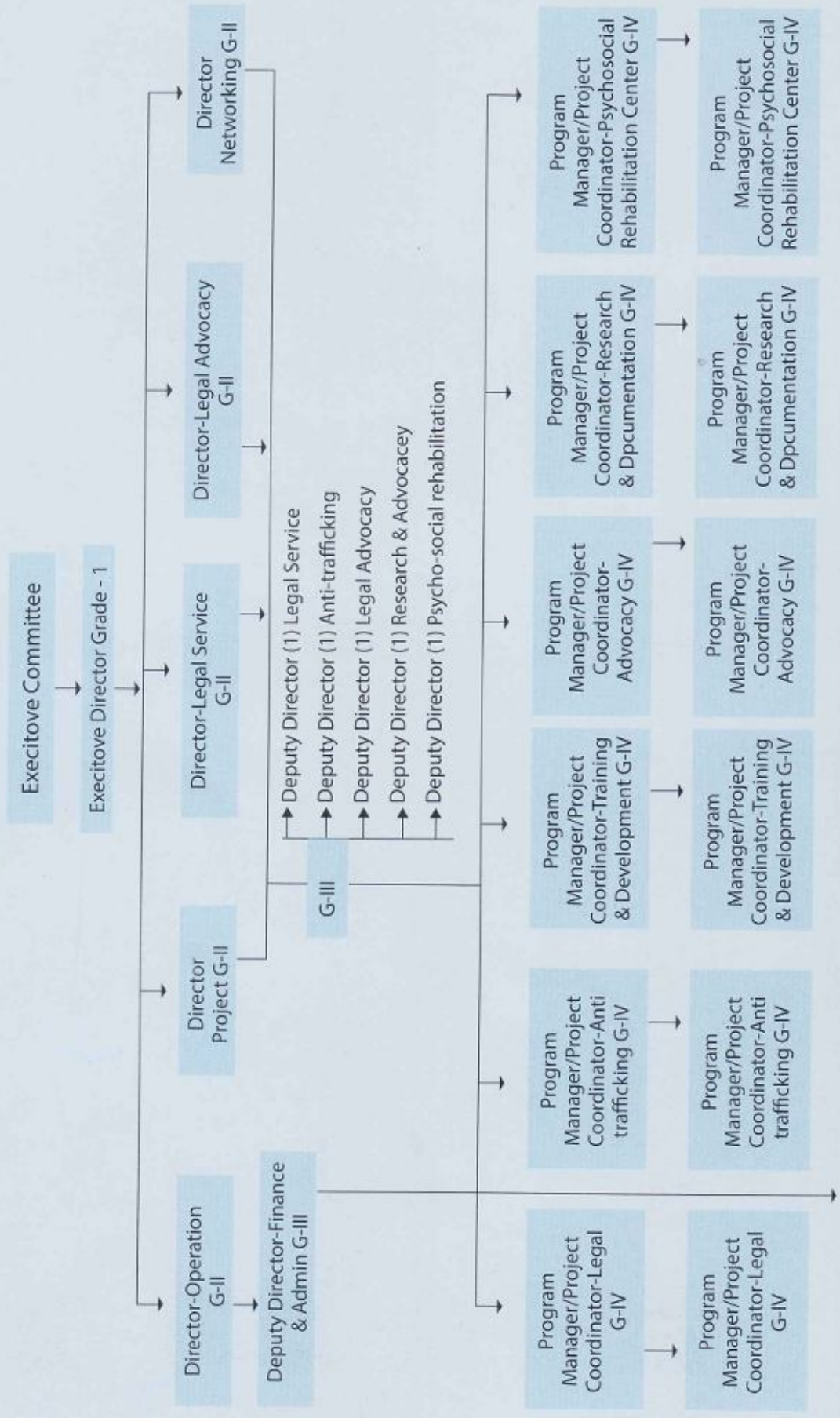
Adv. Hasna Begum
EC-Member



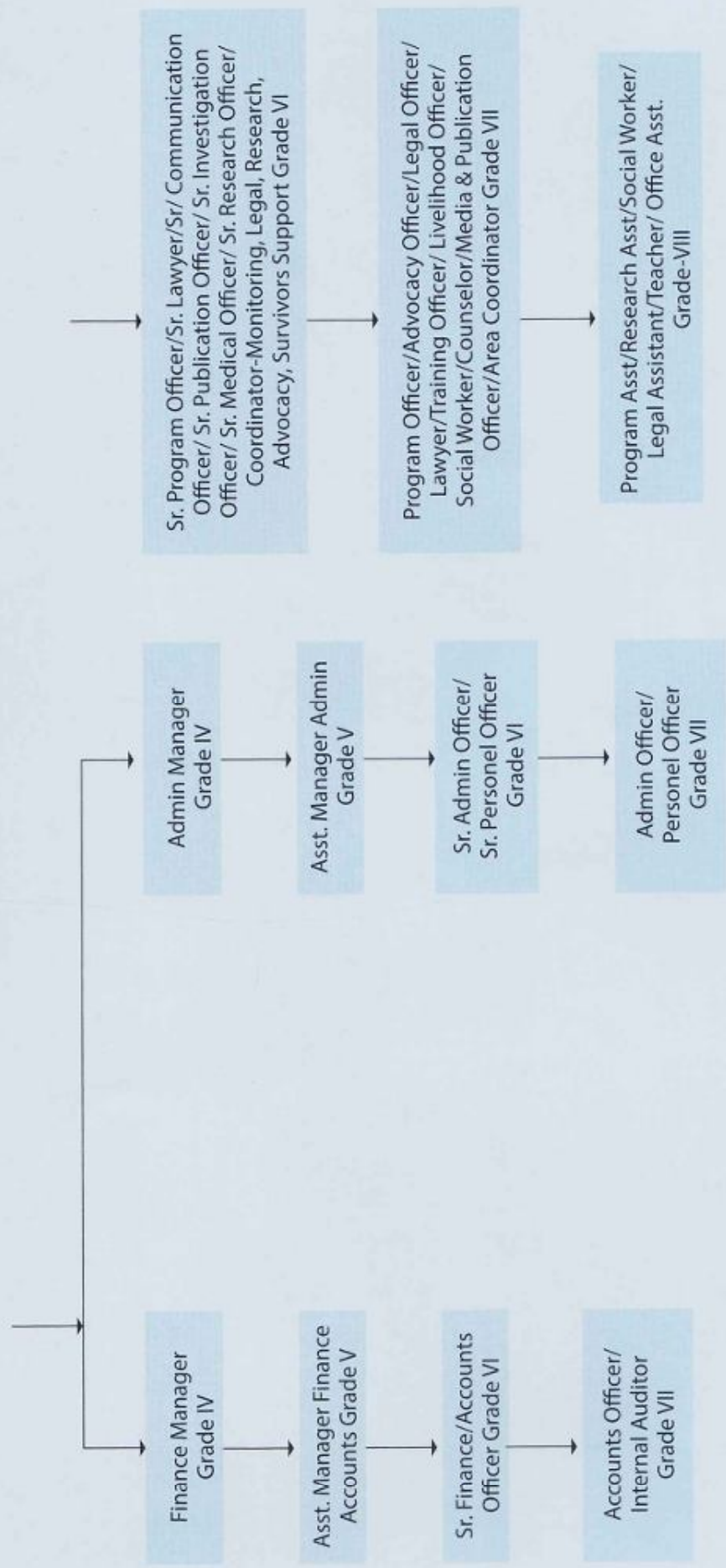
Adv. Shahanara Begum
EC-Member

Organogram of BNWLA

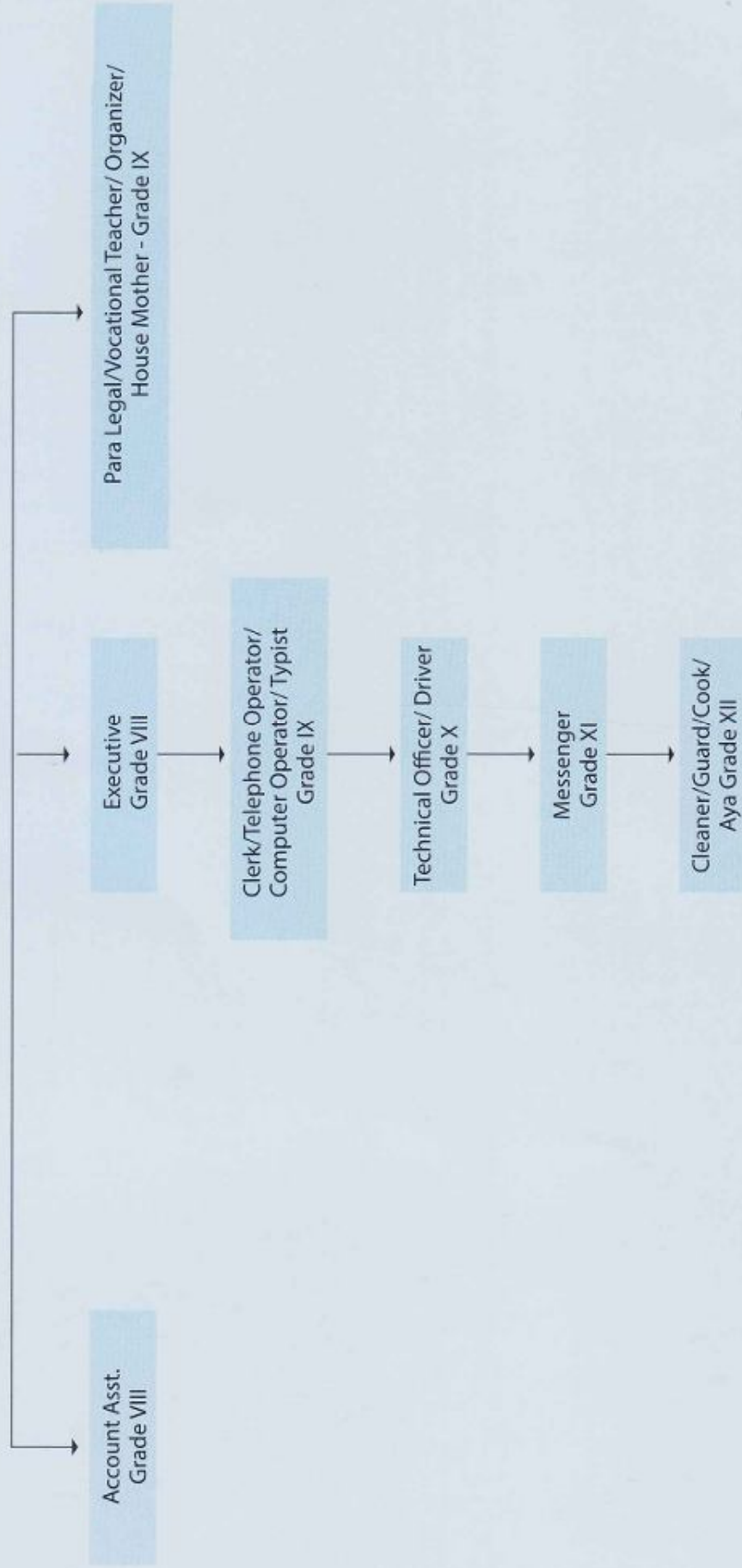
Annexure-3



Organogram of BNWLA



Organogram of BNWLA



BNWLA Management



Salma Ali
Executive Director



Tanzina Aziz
Director-Operation



Abdullah Al Hasan
Director-Program



Adv. Towhida Khondker
Director-Legal Service



Adv. Rehana Sultana
Director-Legal Advocacy



Wahida Idris
Director-Networking



Md. Rezaul Karim
Manager-HR & Admin



Md. Rafiquzzaman
Manager-Finance



Mohammad Ershaduzzaman
Project Coordinator



Adv. Mitali Jahan
Project Coordinator



Mohammad Abu Hanif
Project Coordinator

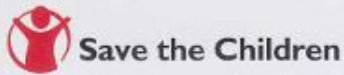


Shoaiba Rahman
Project Coordinator



Md. Arifur Rahman
Project Coordinator

Development Partners (2013-2014)



EUROPEAN UNION



ਸਾਕਸ਼ੈਰ ਯੋਜਨਾ
manusher jonno
promoting human rights and good governance

Financials

Budget projection of different projects

SL No.	Name of the projects	Name of the Donor	Duration of the projects	Total Budget of the projects
1	BNWLA-PWR (Protection of Women's Rights in Bangladesh)	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)	August '14 to July '16 (Two years)	7,19,00,000
2	BNWLA-PHR (Protecting Human Rights)	Plan/USAID	April '11 to Dec '15 (Five years)	16,09,76,006
3	BNWLA-GPP (Girls power)	Plan	July '12 to Dec. '15 (4 years)	1,96,25,805
4	BNWLA-MWLR (Making Women Legal Rights a reality in Bangladesh)	Maxwell Stamp (CLS-DFID)	Jan. '13 to March '17 (4'3 years)	14,65,63,550
5	BNWLA-RUCM (Rural Urban Child Migration)	Save the Children	Sept. '11 to Dec. '14 (4 years)	3,32,16,694
6	BNWLA-ECLG (Engaging Children in Local Governance)	Save the Children	Jan. '13 to March '15	55,28,004
7	BNWLA-ICPRC (Improving Child Protection & Rehabilitation of Children from Sexual Abuse & Exploitation in Bangladesh)	Save the Children	April '11 to Dec. '14	4,26,49,671
8	BNWLA-PRVC (Prevent and Respond to Violence)	Save the Children	Jan. '14 to Dec. '14	61,74,700
9	BNWLA-CFLG (Child Friendly Local Governance)	Save the Children	Jan. '14 to Dec. '14	33,00,000
10	BNWLA-EVAWCA (Ending Violence Against Women Through Community)	MJF/DFID	August '13 to Dec. '16 (3'5 years)	4,78,05,436
11	BNWLA-JFA (Justice for All)	NCSC/USAID	August '13 to March '16 (1'6 years)	60,00,000
Total				54,37,39,866

BNWLA Financial Position (2012 to 2014)

Particulars	FY (Jan,2014- June, 2014)	FY (Jan,2013- Dec,2013)	FY (Jan, 2012- Dec, 2012)
PROPERTY & ASSETS:			
Non- Current Assets			
Fixed assets at cost	87,430,807	84,208,386	81,402,145
Accumulated Depreciation	37,063,330	34,349,797	30,369,099
Fixed assets- net of accumulated depreciation	50,367,477	49,858,589	51,033,046
Total Non- Current Assets (A)	50,367,477	49,858,589	51,033,046
Current Assets			
Loan	-	4,892,533	-
Accounts Receivable	1,717,363	3,215,056	4,274,792
Advance, Deposits and Prepayments	1,526,666	1,520,680	683,554
Cash in Hand	65,804	43,070	201,890
Cash at Bank	8,053,017	21,802,046	13,824,408
Total Current Assets (B)	11,362,850	31,473,385	18,984,644
Total Property & Assets (A+B)	61,730,327	81,331,974	70,017,690
LIABILITIES & FUNDS			
Funds			
BJMAS Capital Fund	38,272,409	33,551,545	31,960,465
Net Deferred Income	(28,180,117)	(8,947,032)	(13,641,089)
Donor Fund Investment in Project Fixed Assets	45,731,356	45,419,878	42,657,309
Total Funds ©	55,823,648	70,024,391	60,976,685
INCOME			
Member Annual Subscription	34,250	89,770	341,920
Members Contribution	-	750	666,588
Clients Registration Fees	30,440	83,310	243,163
Faciliation fees	164,495	864,460	-
Donation (for program)	-	67,415	165,687
Donation (For Shelter Home)	3,480,387	11,136,661	5,931,122
Donation for Construction	-	-	45,000
Research & Training	674,392	616,514	63,243
Rent Income	202,229	1,033,105	746,238
Interest Income	79,964	223,779	277,997
Sale of Books & Others	24,800	22,118	24,178
Other Income	1,461,316	85,317	80,205
Overhead from Projects	963,745	1,160,986	151,322
Income from Core	7,116,018	15,384,185	8,736,663
Actual Expenses (Transfer to Income)	64,577,559	122,510,516	124,158,413
Total Income (A)	71,693,577	137,894,701	132,895,076

BNWLA Financial Performance (2012 to 2014)

Particulars	FY (Jan, 2014- June, 2014)	FY (Jan, 2013- Dec, 2013)	FY (Jan, 2012- Dec, 2012)
EXPENDITURE			
Core Expenses			
Admin & operation Cost	1,772,066	4,383,110	2,591,151
Program Cost	506,574	1,534,156	2,830,345
Personnel Cost	3,869,482	9,503,825	4,147,397
Depreciation	536,028	981,212	1,795,580
Total Core Expenses	6,684,150	16,402,303	11,364,473
Project Expenses			
Admin & operation Cost	5,261,469	8,009,854	4,736,059
Program Cost	32,425,886	81,138,700	71,929,424
Personnel Cost	24,712,698	30,362,478	44,004,006
Depreciation	2,177,505	2,999,484	3,488,923
Total Project Expenses	64,577,558	122,510,516	124,158,412
Other Expenses	619,000		
Total Expenditure (B)	71,880,708	138,912,819	135,522,885
Net Surplus/ (Deficit)	(187,131)	(1,018,118)	(2,627,809)

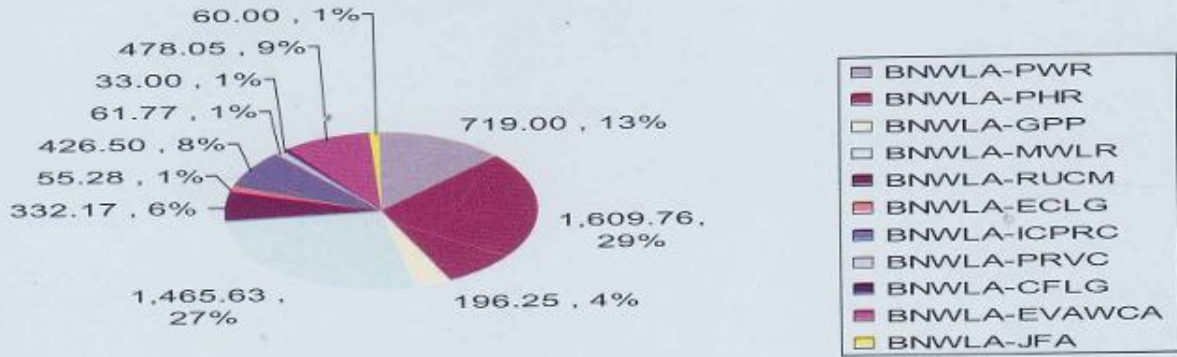
Source of Fund (BDT in Lac) as of June 2014.
(Reporting Period from January'14 to June'14)

◆ Capital Fund	BDT 580.66
◆ Unutilized Donor Fund.	BDT 116.44
◆ Others Current Liabilities.	BDT 59.07

Application of Fund (BDT in Lac) as of June 2014.
(Reporting Period from January'14 to June'14)

◆ Property, Plant and Equipment	BDT 503.67
◆ Deferred Expenditure.	BDT 116.44
◆ Investment in FDR.	BDT 12.22
◆ Advance, deposits and prepayment.	BDT 15.27
◆ Accounts Receivable.	BDT 17.17
◆ Current Assets	BDT 91.40

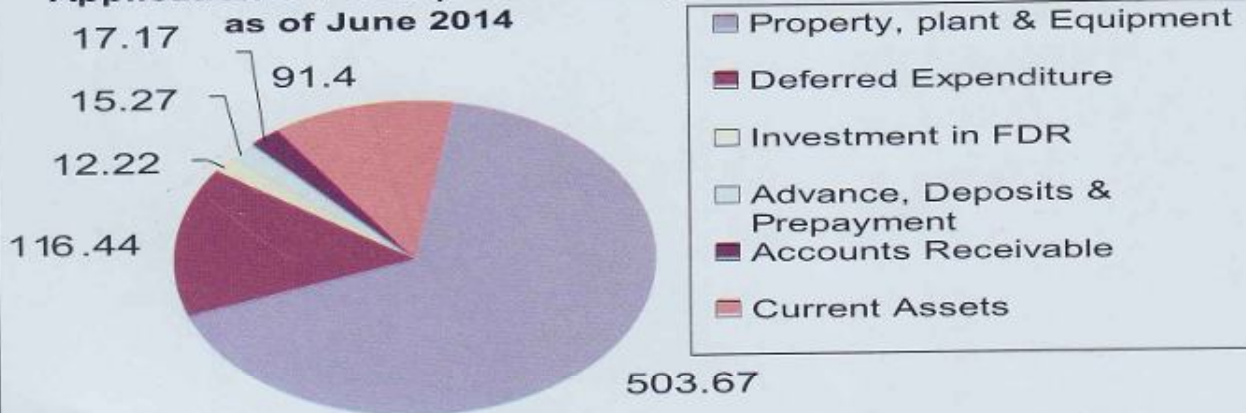
Comprehensive Ongoing Project



Source of Fund



Application of Fund (BDT. in Lac) as of June 2014





বাংলাদেশ জাতীয় মহিলা আইনজীবী সমিতি
Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association

Monico Mina Tower, 48/3, West Agargaon, Dhaka-1207.)

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E-mail : bnwla@hrcmail.net