

**TOWARDS DEEPENING WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS
MAKING JUSTICE SYSTEM GENDER SENSITIVE**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2013**



Bangladesh Mahila Parishad

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Environment and Social Welfare	
Printing Management	: Runu Das , Executive Officer Abu Hena Mustafa Enam , Associate Editor

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Cover Design : **Abu Sayed Tuhin**
Photograph : **Abdul Majed Photographer and**
BMP Members of Central and District

Branches

Published By : **Bangladesh Mahila Parishad**
Central Committee, Sufia Kamal Bhaban

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Printed From: Tista Printers

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS IN BANGLADESH

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Project Title	:	PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS IN BANGLADESH
Implementing Organisation	:	BANGLADESH MAHILA PARISHAD (BMP)
Project In-charge	:	Dr. Maleka Banu General Secretary, BMP
Reporting Period	:	JANUARY – DECEMBER, 2013
Reporting Date	:	28 April 2014

Forward

BMP is a 43 years old voluntary, member based civil society and national mass women's organization guided by a written Constitution. It is a right-based group working through an all-inclusive approach from a non-Partisan standpoint. BMP is a social movement organization for the protection of women human rights and establishing gender equality in true sense. The hallmark of BMP's engagement in Bangladesh over the last four decades is upholding democratic, secular, humane and egalitarian values in the society under any circumstances and contributing to establish the state based on these values

BMP has both general and particular foci in its interventions through various programmes and activities. The organization believes that women's development, empowerment and emancipation are inseparable with general political environment in the country. Hence, BMP not only expressed its deep concern about political violence and crisis in Bangladesh in 2013, it also organized programmes to improve the political environment. BMP focused on a number of national issues in its organizational interventions. BMP worked against the rise of communal and fundamentalist forces in the society. BMP also highlighted the role of the state in improving human rights situations in the country. BMP has consistently argued that democracy and good governance are closely interconnected.

BMP has singularly focused its activities and programmes in eradicating all barriers to advancement of women in Bangladesh. It has attempted to involve in every incident of violations of women's human rights in different capacities.

BMP has been continuing its sustained attempts towards reforming existing law, particularly discriminatory personal law. As part of its continuous endeavour to empower women politically and increase their participations in the decision making process, BMP focuses on a number of interventions. BMP maintained its strong advocacy and lobbying role in 2013 for introducing gender budgeting in Bangladesh.

BMP's programmes and activities towards establishing women's human rights have contributed to strengthen global and regional human rights movement networks with different organization.

It expresses deep concern over the violation of human rights in home and abroad. BMP condemned all sorts of gross violence in war and conflicts.

BMP successfully held its 12th National Conference to fulfil its Constitutional bindings in this period. In 2013 BMP mobilized its organizational support to establish strong networks among its grassroots, divisional and central units.

In the conclusion, it may be mentioned that BMP implemented its programmes and activities in 2013 in a new political environment in Bangladesh marked by violence, instability and political standoff. BMP engaged its all resources to overcome every hurdle to implement the planed outputs of the project.

We express heartiest gratitude to the Royal Norwegian Embassy for the partnership with valuable support to BMP in order to strengthen Women's Movement in Bangladesh. BMP would like to thank all members and supporting staff who are actively engaged in the struggle for women's emancipation and empowerment in Bangladesh under the BMP platform.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

BIDS	: Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
BPFA	: Beijing Platform for Action
BMP	: Bangladesh Mahila Parishad
BSMMU	: Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University
CEDAW	: Convention on the elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPB	: Communist Party of Bangladesh
CPD	: Centre for Policy Dialogue
CRC	: Convention on the Rights of Children
CSW	: Commission on the Status of Women
ECOSOC	: Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
GO	: Government Organisation
GoB	: Government of Bangladesh
ICT	: International Crimes Tribunal
IGA	: Income Generating Activities
IGP	: Inspector General of Police
IWRAW	: International Women's Rights Action Watch
LFA	: Log Frame Analysis
LGI	: Local Government Initiative
MDG	: Millennium Development Goal
MFA	: Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MoWCA	: Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
NGO	: Non-government Organisation
NPA	: National Plan of Action
NWDP	: National Women Development Plan
RNE	: Royal Norwegian Embassy
SAC	: Social Action Committee
ToT	: Training of Trainers
UFC	: Uniform Family Code
UN	: United Nations
UP	: Union Parishad
UNCEDAW	: UN Convention on the elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
UNDP	: United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	: United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
VAW	: Violence Against Women
VSC	: Victim Support Centre
WHR	: Women's Human Rights

Short Narrative Summary

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) pursued its goals, objectives and vision in 2013 for promoting and protecting women's human rights. The organisation gave its efforts to implement its planned programmes and activities with utmost commitment and sincerity in a challenging context of Bangladesh in the 4th year of its operations under the project on 'Promotion and Protection of Women's Human Rights in Bangladesh (2010-2014)' supported by MFA and the Royal Norway Embassy. The Annual Report 2013 reflects on the activities of BMP and focuses on the impact of the project activities in the larger society.

BMP has consolidated its organisational strength, expanded its horizons of visibility in different corner of the society and achieved sustainability in operating its programmes and activities. The driving forces behind BMP's country-wide operations are its organisers, members and activists. They always play a key role in raising awareness among the women and in mobilising them for protection of their rights. In 2013 BMP achieved a new echelon in strengthening the organisation through sustainable process of institutionalisation of its operations from the grassroots to central levels and thus building BMP as a social movement organization of the 21st century.

The different components of BMP activities and programmes reflect a wide variety of interventions that the organisation is committed to implement. The total number of implemented programmes in 2013 was 2846 compared to 2015 in 2012. Similarly, the number of participants in the programmes has considerably increased from 55,964 in 2011 to 92,940 in 2012 and 91,281 in 2013. It may be noted that in 2013 BMP had special organisational achievements in three areas. First, it has established effective interactions with women of all occupations – women peasants, women workers, young women, professional and indigenous women (12,451 participants in all categories). Second, it has developed leadership capacity at the district level which has been playing an important role in expanding and consolidating organisation. Third, BMP has formed a group of enterprising and dedicated members and activists at the grassroots and district levels who will provide leadership in future.

The impact of programmes and activities related to its organization has been immense on BMP as reflected in its growing strength and visibility in the society. With multidimensional and flexible capacity building process and supporting district and grassroots organizers BMP has developed itself as a strong sustainable organization. BMP has been benefited both internally and externally through its organizational programmes and activities. Internally, BMP is now highly equipped in programme management. The grassroots representation of BMP has sharply increased over the years. The number of organizers with leadership capacities has increased at grassroots, district and divisional levels. Women from different professional and socio-economic backgrounds in the society have been showing more interests about BMP. The active participation of young and grassroots women has remarkably increased during this period. Skills as well as confidence of BMP members and organizers had been substantially enhanced. Externally, BMP has achieved confidence and recognition of government and non-governmental actors both at national and international levels as an organization committed and capable to achieve women's human rights. It has acquired a distinct entity in the society through its, secular and mass orientation. It has added a new dimension in the society for its persistent role in promoting women's human rights. It has also raised awareness among men and then engaged them in different programmes. BMP has emerged as a more consolidated and integrated social movement organization, which is confident of facing challenges to women's empowerment, freedom and development in the 21st century.

Violence against women (VAW) is still considered the biggest impediment to establish women's human rights in Bangladesh. BMP has developed a multi-pronged framework of its interventions to resist VAW. The number, extent and magnitude of VAW are still alarming in the society. According to BMP's database, 4777 incidents of VAW took place in 2013. The largest number of victims of VAW during this period was related to murder (829). Rape related violence (696), stalking and death related to stalking (494), dowry related violence (439), and suicide (386). It shows that the trends and frequency of VAW have remained in a shocking situation.

Under this scenario BMP's multi sectoral interventions through legal aid was critical to alleviate the sufferings of women.

In 2013, the Legal Aid Unit of BMP achieved significant success in implementing programmes and activities exceeding the project target. BMP provided logistic support for legal activism to district branches. In 2013, a total of 422 cases were administered by BMP, 172 at central, 212 at district level and 38 as new cases. In 2013 the court delivered several verdicts in favour of victims of VAW in cases moved by BMP. The organisation has drafted the case history of these successful legal battles. With a target of 300 recipients of counselling, the organization served 1139 clients in 2013 at central, district and grassroots levels. Similarly, BMP achieved enormous success in mediation and handling complaints. In 2013 BMP received 1,648 petitions of complaints against the target of 950. Similarly, BMP provided mediation services to 671 cases against the target of 500. Notably, BMP realised dower and maintenance costs through mediation at the amount of Tk. 31,84,200 at the central level and Tk. 57,98,401 from the district branches in 2013.

The legal aid services ensured gender justice and use of alternate dispute resolution; access to justice for a large number of victims of violence.

BMP focuses on reformation of personal law, discriminatory laws against minority communities, marginalized and physically and mentally challenged people and enactment of new laws upholding their rights. The National Parliament of Bangladesh passed the Vested Property Return (second amendment) Bill-2013 by voice vote on 5 May 2013.

BMP gave it's recommendation to the relevant authority to reform Family Laws, Enact law against Sexual Assault and Stalking Reform Women child repression Act, Citizenship Law, enact Law protection right of migrant work. BMP also recommended to withdrawal reservation on Article- 2,161(c) of UN CEDAW and reincorporation of CEDAW in Domestic and enact of UFC.

In 2013 BMP contributed in amending the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) 1898 in Bangladesh in consultation with legal expert Committee of the organisation and finalizing CEDAW Bench Book initiated by Ministry of Law and Justice and Parliament Affairs. The aim of the initiative is to resist VAW and discrimination against women. The MOWCA incorporated recommendations of BMP in National Planning on resistance of violence against women and children (2013-2015). BMP organised programmes to disseminate Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010 and its Rules 2013 among organisers of BMP. BMP representatives also conducted training programmes among government officials organised by Directorate of Women and Children's Affairs for proper implementation of the law. BMP with other organization contributed in formulating Domestic Violence (Prevention & Protection) Rules 2013.

Rokeya Sadan as an integral part of legal activism playing a crucial role for supporting women and girl child victims of violence and other injustice 24 victims were given shelter in Sadan during this period and multidimensional initiatives taken to rehabilitate them in the mainstreaming social life and ensure justice.

As part of its continuous endeavour to empower women politically and increase their participations in the decision making process, BMP as an advocacy lobby organization focuses on a number of interventions. For strengthening political empowerment of women BMP organised two major advocacy and lobby programmes in the year 2013. It arranged a mass women gathering on *Increase the Number of Reserved Seats for Women in the National Parliament, Introduction of Direct Election and Re-demarcation of Parliamentary Constituency* on 10th February, 2013 in the front of National Parliament Bhaban during the parliament session. BMP organised a Press Conference at the VIP Lounge of National Press Club on 22 September 2013 and placed the same demand through Media. District Branches also organized some program.

Promoting women in the electoral process is an important focus of BMP's activities. Twelve BMP organisers contested the Barisal City Corporation Election. Among them 6 BMP organisers won the election. Four BMP members contested the Rajshahi City Corporation election in 2013 among which three members emerged winners. BMP extended logistic support and conducted campaigns publishing poster & leaflet in face of the Another significant area of impact is growing presence of women in decision making positions in administration, judiciary, law enforcing agencies, peacekeeping missions, banks and corporate sectors during this period in 2013.

BMP played its strong advocacy and lobbying role in 2013 for introducing gender budgeting in Bangladesh. In this connection, two meetings were organised at the central level in 2013. These meetings focused on gender sensitive budget allocation and its implementation, where BMP activists, political party leaders, government representatives, civil society members, media personals and people from several other professional backgrounds participated in the dissemination.

In 2013 BMP remained engaged in pushing the agenda of women's human rights as reflected. BMP promotes women health rights through improvement of women reproductive and sexual health in Bangladesh. BMP and Obstacle and Gynaecological Society of Bangladesh jointly observed Safe Motherhood Day at the Central Shahid Minar on 28th May 2013. A total of 11 districts successfully organised meetings on the occasion of Safe Maternal Health while 22 district branches of BMP organised discussion meetings and rallies in order to promote the issue of women's reproductive and sexual health rights. Besides, meetings were held to motivate female and adolescent reproductive health in different educational institutions and central office. BMP in central and district branches organized programmes to observe CEDAW Day to exchange views on implementation of CEDAW.

It has effectively acted as an agent of lobby and advocacy forum to sensitize the state and non-state agencies and organizations about women issues and concerns. In 2013 BMP, as part of its unremitting endeavour, submitted 2,930 deputation and memoranda on incidents of VAW to the concerned authorities in Bangladesh, including Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of home Affairs, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Inspector General of police and various other government and law enforcement agencies. BMP also issued letters to its district branches in order to take necessary steps at the local levels. Under the leadership of BMP, the Social Action Committee (SAC, the platform of 67 women, human rights and development

organisations) jointly undertook programmes in 2013 in order to establish women rights, to resist VAW, to raise awareness among ordinary people irrespective of gender, and to ensure women empowerment. The SAC spirit has created voices of women at national level with the motto “one and united”.

BMP pursued its advocacy & lobby roles in National, International and Global Forum for Women Human Rights, CEDAW, UFC.

BMP constantly promotes gender sensitivity in policy making at every level in Bangladesh. In its role as advocacy and lobby agent, BMP has been able to address three critical areas. First, the organisation addressed the patriarchy in all of its programmes. It advocated for gender sensitivity in education policy of the country while it took initiatives to change the traditional image of women in media. It has vigorously advocated for inclusion of gender issue in the training programmes of public representatives and Government officials. BMP ensured participation of women as resource persons in training programmes on gender issue among the members. Gender factor was also highlighted in cultural programmes; campaign programmes; publications and such as poster, leaflet, sticker, broadcasting TV spot; and movement against fundamentalism. BMP upheld the cause of human rights in its programmes and activities. The organisation is in the network of Human Rights Forum (UPR) and National Human Rights Commission. It expresses deep concern over the violation of human rights in home and abroad. It condemned all sorts of gross violence in war and conflicts. BMP representatives President, Ayesha Khanam contributed in writing report submitted in Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

BMP worked for promoting good governance and democracy through effective participation of the women members in the parliament and empowering grassroots women and local government women representatives. It advocates for inclusion of at least one-third women in all Constitutional bodies. It focused on proper and independent functioning of Human Rights Commission, Election Commission and Anti-corruption Commission. BMP was engaged in the movement for establishing rule of law and ensuring transparency and accountability of all public representatives and public offices. It also monitored state obligations towards fulfilment of National and Global commitments and highlighted the need for practicing democratic culture in all political institutions. On several occasions (organized either by BMP or others (GO/NGO/CSO), during this period, BMP had dialogue with State Minister, MOWCA; Parliament Standing Committee, Finance Minister, Law, Justice and Parliament Affairs, Home Minister, Education Minister, Attorney General, IGP, PP/APP, Directorate, MOWCA, Chairman, Parliament Standing Committee, LGRD Chairman, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.

BMP frequently monitored the news published on women in the newspapers of Bangladesh, the Legal Aid Subcommittee of BMP regularly collected and preserved the relevant news from 14 renowned newspapers by paper cutting. The trend of violence against school-going female students has drastically increased in the society. BMP organised sharing meetings against it at the local levels with the active participation of journalists, lawyers, teachers, human rights activists, local elite personals and elected representatives. In 2013 BMP published 3 issues of the *Mahila Samacher*, the quarterly journal brought out by the organization. The issues were published on October-December, 2012, January-March, 2013, and April-June, 2013 respectively. Each of the issues consisted of special features and write-ups by BMP leaders and activists on selected subjects. A total of 174,500 copies of *Mahila Samacher* were published and distributed among different individuals and organisations. From central to grass root level *The Mahila Parishad Journal* has entered in its third year of publications in 2013.

Social Action Committee (the platform of 67 women, human rights and development organisations) organised a mass gathering of around 8000 (eight thousand) people at the Central Shahid Minar premises on 8 March, 2013 to celebrate the International Women's day. The objective of the mass gathering was to make the society aware of the equal rights and opportunities for women particularly in the decision making level.

BMP has been part of GO-NGO collaboration and Networking with other organizations. It received media support and pro-active role of media in its activities. More importantly, BMP members were nominated in different committees of ministry and other government offices centrally and locally such as National Women Development Council, Anti Human trafficking act Implementation Committee, Acid Control Committee, Law drafting committee / Complain Committee against Sexual Harassment of UGC/Update NWDC, Informal Sharing Committee to Update NWDC, Informal Sharing on 6th Five Year Plan, BMDC, Local Level Steering Committee, Health Ministry and TIB and anti corruption Commission in different Districts.

The Paralegal training was regularly arranged for the organisers at district and grassroots branch levels. During this period 12 Paralegal training sessions were held. The training has helped improving the capacity of organisers for legal activism. About 436 organisers participated in trainings held in different parts of the country in 2013. It has contributed to improve skills in coordination between district and centre, resistance of VAW activities and report preparation and official record keeping. At divisional level, 50 organisers from 13 districts were trained under training of trainers (ToT) in Dhaka through different sessions held during 13-14 November 2013. On 20th December 2013, one legal literacy training course for young women intending to create motivation and awareness against VAW was conducted at Sufia Kamal Bhaban Auditorium which was attended by 45 trainees including 28 young men and women. BMP organised five sharing meetings with young students in different parts of the country including Dhaka in order to raise their awareness about different forms of violence against women especially on sexual harassment. There were 41 teachers and 671 students who took part in these programmes that contributed to raise their awareness about VAW and its resistance.

BMP organised a two-day long National Council Meeting (Internal Annual Planning Implementation and Monitoring Review Meeting) at the Engineers Institution, Dhaka on 24-25 May 2013. A total of 398 representatives from 55 districts participated in the meeting. The meeting evaluated the performance of the organization in the last one-year. The Council Meeting extensively discussed several aspects of organization and put forward recommendations to strengthen its performance.

BMP successfully held its 12th National Conference in 2013 with a slogan of "*Recognize Contribution of Women in National Economy, Ensure Security for Practicing Rights*". The Conference was held on 31 October-1 November 2013. . Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman inaugurated the conference as the Chief Guest. A total of 1451 participants' attended in the conference. In the 12th national conference BMP brought significant changes in its organogram amending its constitution based on practical necessity and to build collective leadership, promote democratic practices with organization. Two new post of Joint General Secretary have been created ,Three more posts of Secretary have been added ,No. of member of Central Committee extended up to to 83 to include organizers of the Branches.

In 2013 BMP mobilised its organisational support to establish strong networks among its grassroots, divisional and central units. The organisation has undertaken numerous programmes towards strengthening the capacity of both rural and urban people associated with BMP. Another significant aspect of this particular activity is to assess the capacity of the organisers to arrange and run different programmes at different levels of the organisation. As

part of activities of organisational month in 2013, BMP organised sharing meetings with its general members, membership collection and renewal programmes, organisational trainings, and women farmers' gathering and meeting. BMP successfully implemented organisational tours with 100% of achievement rate. Two workshops were arranged in Chittagong and Rajshahi in 2013, which emphasized formulating a proper strategy to face internal and external challenges and BMP in the next five years. It also focused on the question of enhancing skills of organisers in meeting the demands of time. In 2013, the central and district branches arranged motivational programmes as required. The primary focus of these meetings with young women at grassroots level was to motivate them about women movement through making them understanding the present conditions and status of women, achievements, crisis, and prospects.

The continuing programmes and activities of BMP towards women's human rights have contributed to establish and maintain strong networks with various local, national and international organizations. The GO-NGO collaboration has been strengthened and become visible in drafting laws, running VSC, OCC, implementing multi-sectoral programme against VAW, contributing in NWDP and National Action Plan, preparing training module and conducting training on domestic violence act. It has also positive impact networking with the Parliament Secretariat and CSW, UNCEDAW, IRAW, and UN-WOMEN. The activities in this component have strengthened civil society engagement in different programmes of BMP. It engages legal experts in law reforms, panel lawyers in mediation and case filing, academics in training programme for capacity building, artists in cultural activities, medical professionals in health awareness programme, financial experts in financial capacity building and others. To this end, BMP representatives participated in a number of events organised by GOs, NGOs, civil society organisations (CSOs), and think tanks. A remarkable initiative of BMP in 2013 was organising of meeting with female farmers in Bangladesh.

The Memorial Lecture on Poet Begum Sufia Kamal was held on 20 June 2013 at Engineers Institution, Dhaka to celebrate 102th birth anniversary of Poet Sufia Kamal. This memorial lecture was planned to reflect on the contribution of Poet Begum Sufia Kamal, a pioneer in women emancipation movement and founder of BMP.

The sustainability of the organisation and movement depends on capacity of the organisers and building up of new leadership as women rights activists. To this end, BMP conducted training workshops, Trainers' Training (ToT) Programme, Refreshers Course from central to grassroots level in a planned and sustained way. Study circles for young generation were regularly held where participants discussed, debated and raised issue related to gender equality, human rights, history of women's movement, biography of pioneers of women movement and ways of mitigation of emerging challenges. A three-month Certificate Course on *Gender, Women Empowerment and Development* was conducted during 22 August – 26 December 2013. The course was inaugurated on 22 August 2013 at the Poet Sufia Kamal Auditorium. The course is divided into 8 modules and 30 lectures on different themes. Classes, group works and field visits constitute the teaching method of the programme. Resource persons for the course are generally invited from academics and practitioners in the society. A major achievement of the Certificate Course is generating high enthusiasm among the participants about gender issues and concerns. Participants can learn how gender factor is factored in traditional development paradigm, human rights framework and women movement. It may be mentioned that BMP gives special emphasis on organizing young women of different professional groups, women farmers, indigenous women and marginalized groups of women through all its branches.

BMP follows zero tolerance policy regarding the issues of transparency and accountability in running the organisation. It strives to achieve highest level of efficiency, transparency, and

accountability in financial management as well as programme management. In order to strengthen financial management capacity of the organisation, central orientation programmes, divisional training workshops, and financial management trainings in the branches were organised in 2013. BMP took several measures for proper management of the project in a co-coordinated and transparent way. Memoranda of understanding were signed between central committee and district branches to support the branch activities. Branches were identified for giving support to enhance their management capacities. Regular follow ups were done the coordinated way by project management committee, finance committee, organizational committee and also other sub-committees. Internal control mechanism was developed and implemented within the organisation. BMP central and branch committees are very much aware of responsibility regarding proper management of fund from the very beginning. The special effort was being given as programmes and budget were significantly increased. BMP feels that there is a gradual improvement of its project management capacity for which it took initiatives and continued special efforts.

BMP was significantly involved in the unplanned activities in 2013 demonstrating both achievements and impacts on socio-political and cultural spheres in Bangladesh. These include areas such as social welfare, human resource development, collaboration with development partners, and staff development. A remarkable feature of BMP's interventions in 2013 was its focus on anti-communalism and anti-fundamentalism programmes and activities. BMP organised several programmes mostly in the forms of rallies, processions, human chains and seminars to protest against the rise of communal, fundamentalist and anti-state forces in the country. BMP has made huge strides to mainstream women's contribution in national economy, which has largely remained unnoticed and unrecognized. BMP mobilised women in the society for establishing their rights control their own earn. In this regard, BMP organised programmes and activities involving women farmers, women garments workers, indigenous women and women entrepreneurs in small and medium scale industries in Bangladesh.

This report demonstrates BMP's firm commitment towards transparency, accountability and capacity building process in implementing the project goals, programmes and activities. The activities and programmes of BMP have made positive impact on changing conditions faced by women in Bangladesh in their quest for a 'just society' without gender disparity and VAW. BMP's capacity to successfully operate is greatly enhanced when it has been developed through a sustained and committed organisational process, and is consequently both robust and convincing. All achievements of BMP are the results of sincere, sustained and committed efforts of general members and the organisers in their long struggle towards women's human rights. BMP is also aware that the issue of VAW, large scale political empowerment of women remains a daunting challenge in Bangladesh because of patriarchal outlook at individual, family and state levels as well as prevailing political culture. As a social organisation and movement, BMP will continue its relentless, tireless, and consistent efforts towards women's emancipation and deepening of democracy in Bangladesh with spirit of collective leadership and principles of humanity and justice.

Chapter I

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad: A Brief Organisational Overview

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) is engaged in a struggle for women's equality, liberation, and empowerment, situated within a larger political vision demonstrated in its commitment to independence struggle's secular thinking, Bengali nationalism, democracy and a society established on equality between women and men. It also assumes that women movement in Bangladesh has been enriched from ideas and thoughts on women's emancipation in this subcontinent, social reform, social progress, philosophy of peace, equality and humanity, anti-colonialism, anti-war movement, liberation struggle, lives of women organizers and leaders and sense of patriotism. BMP was established in 1970 as a civil society organization under the leadership of late Poet Sufia Kamal in order to advance rights of women in Bangladesh. BMP has emerged as the pioneer of women's struggle to establish a just society in Bangladesh where all forms of gender disparity will cease to exist. Over the last forty years and more, the organization has achieved remarkable success in promoting the causes of women in Bangladesh at public and private levels. In its relentless pursuit of goals and objectives, BMP has engaged in multidimensional and multifarious programmes and activities through maintaining its non-political and non-profit character in all endeavours as envisaged in its constitution. Gradually, BMP has developed as a unique and great platform for social movement and mobilization for promoting and protecting rights of women.

Core Values

BMP maintains ten core principles in its programmes and functions at all levels – local to national. These core values are the essential and enduring tenets of BMP. They set the tone for BMP's actions and they guide BMP's direction. These principles include: (i) Constitution, (ii) Participatory Approach, (iii) Voluntarism, (iv) Non-partisan Approach, (v) Dynamism, (vi) Transparency, (vii) Commitment, (viii) Equality, (ix) networking, and (x) Sustainability.

Vision

Establish non-communal, democratic, equity-based society and state

Goals

Broad Goal: *Women's emancipation through empowerment*

Specific Goals:

- Emancipation of women from discrimination, deprivation, exploitation and backwardness and subjugation
- Establishment of gender equality in family, society and state
- Establishment of secular democratic society based on good governance

Objectives

- Promote equity-based gender sensitised family, society and state
- Promote peace and democracy
- Protect and promote women's human rights
- Resist violence against women
- Promote activism targeted towards eliminating gender discrimination
- Promote judicial activism
- Encourage women's participation in the political process
- Conduct activities for poverty alleviation and economic empowerment of women
- Ensure tangible participation of women in development process
- Flourish women's inherent qualification and latent talents
- Eliminate obstacles to women development and empowerment

Operational Modalities

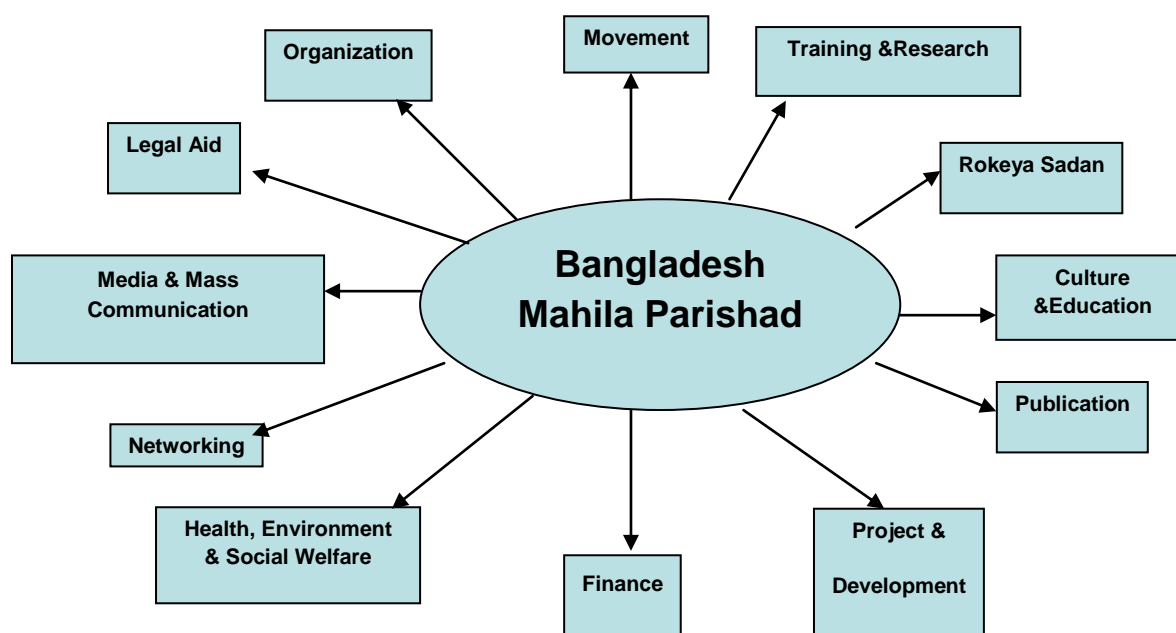
Over the years, BMP has adopted a series of strategies to translate its objectives into operation. These include:

- Establish a strong women movement to fight the challenges of the 21st century by raising awareness and organising womenfolk
- Enable socio-economic and political environment for women's empowerment
- Build up a strong movement against Violence against Women
- Ensure women's human rights in the light of UN Universal, Human rights Declaration and constitution of Bangladesh, 1972
- Build up capacity of the organisation and increasing network
- Strengthen and enhance the organisational capacity of BMP
- Build up movement to raise voice against violence against women and enactment of gender sensitive laws
- Build up network with national, international and regional women's and human rights organisations
- Ensure sustainability of BMP as an institution
- Build up movement for change in the relevant fields such as education, health, information and environment
- Ensure women's citizen rights and equal opportunity
- Build up movement for transparency, accountability, secular and democratic system, and good governance

In a nutshell, BMP's operations over the last four decades have been conducted through 12 units (Figure 1.1). In addition to various strategic and activity oriented meetings organised by these units, BMP also held regular staff meetings in 2011 to take stock of completed activities and discuss future interventions.

Figure 1.1

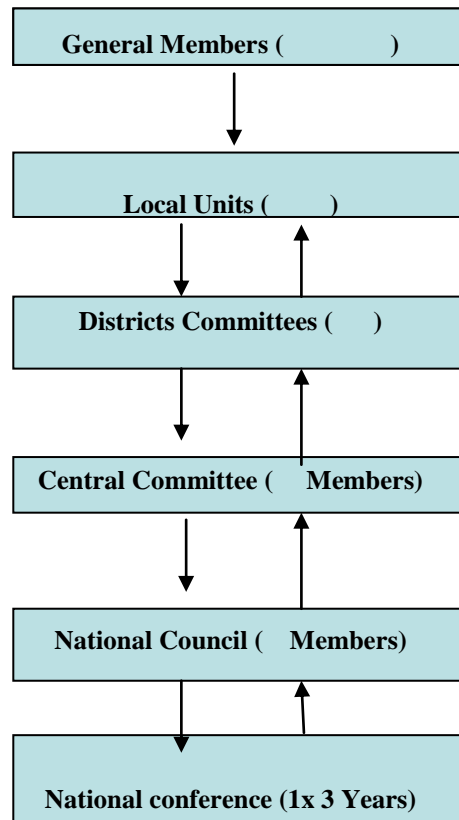
BMP's Operational Modalities



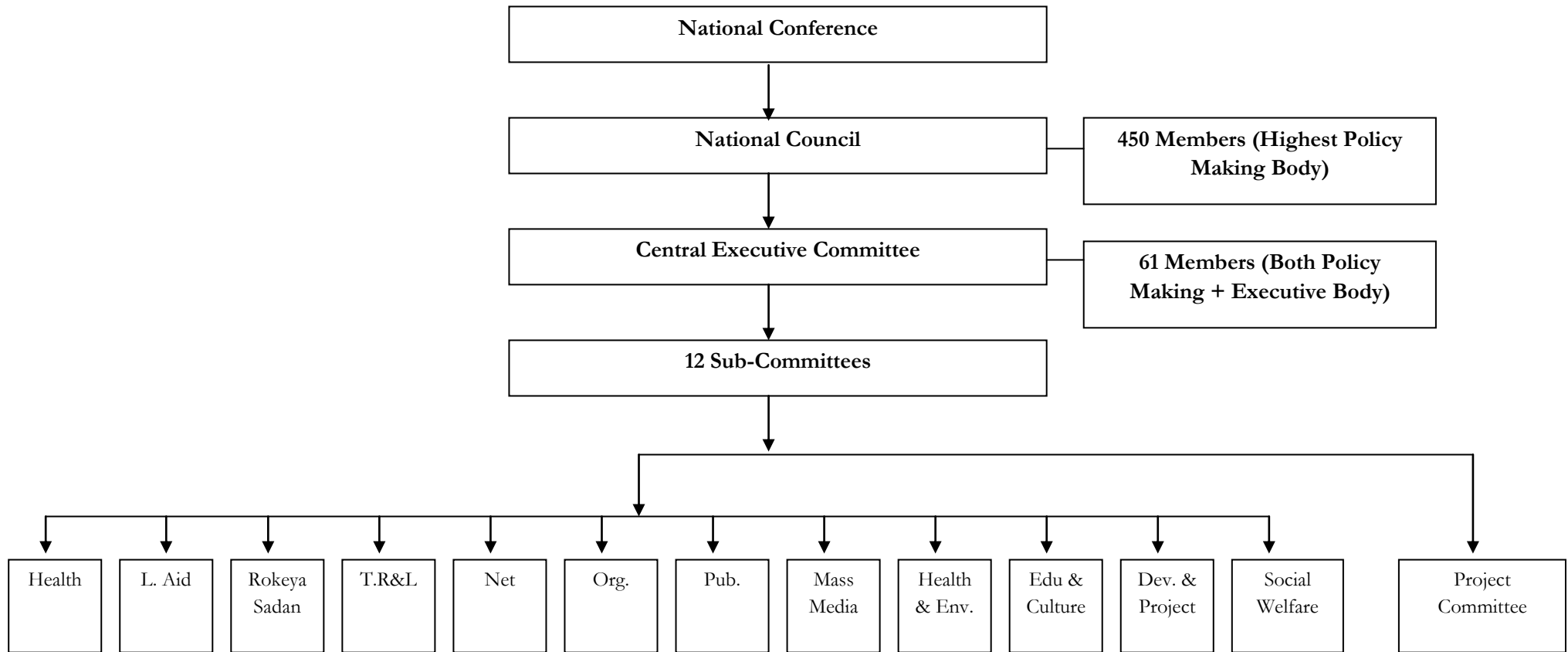
Structure and Management

BMP has developed an administrative structure comprising of seven layers to ensure effective implementation of its programmes and activities (Figure 1.2). It is a combination of efforts made at each level of the structure that facilitates BMP's functioning as a lobbying and advocacy agent. The management of BMP follows an inclusive and flexible system where stakeholders can show their creative and innovative performance towards achieving the goals of our organization.

Figure 1.2
Structure and Management of BMP



Organizational Chart



Abbreviation:

Mov = Movement
 Com = Committee
 L. Aid = Legal Aid
 R. Sadan = Rokeya Sadan
 T.R&L = Training, Research & Library
 Net = Networking
 Org = Organization
 Pub = Publication
 Env = Environment
 Edu = Education
 Dev = Development

10-12 members in each Sub-Committee
 Total: 120 primary members participate in policy making and implementation
 Project Committee monitors project activities and maintain liaison with development partners
 43 + 120 = 163 central office volunteers
 77 professional staff

Chapter II

Promotion and Protection of Women's Human Rights in Bangladesh

II.1 Project Background

The issue of promotion and protection of women's human rights constitutes a critical national agenda in Bangladesh for its prosperity and advancement. The emergence of the country as an independent nation in 1971 provided a renewed opportunity to forge new initiatives for changing women's conditions in Bangladesh. Consequently, the Bangladesh society, being characterized by patriarchal society with concomitant norms and values has been undergoing significant changes in the values systems pertaining to women human rights. While the Constitution of Bangladesh grants equal rights to women in all spheres of the state and of public life, they are discriminated against and ignorant of their rights, resulting in women's low status in dignity, power, employment, income, assets, access to information and justice. Hence, empowering women is essential for reducing systematic discrimination against them in all spheres and strata and for achieving meaningful development of the country.

The core agenda of BMP as focused on "Promotion and Protection of Women's Human Rights" has been extremely effective in addressing issues of deprivation, discrimination and sufferings of women in Bangladesh. Members and activists being the major force of organizational dynamism, BMP pursued the policy of enhancing the membership strength of the organization. Women aged 16 years and above belonging to any status/occupation/religion having commitment to women's emancipation are eligible for membership.

The general members of the BMP constitute its central focus. Meanwhile, BMP could enhance its membership, programmes and the extent of operations. It is a non-political organization working for the cause of women of all strata leading to the development of Bangladesh as a whole. It has a glorious history of association with progressive movements toward emancipation of women from the clutches of gender disparity rooted in the traditional norms and values. The organization has a long experience of movements, lobbying, networking and other kind of activities for the protection and promotion of women's human rights.

BMP could mobilize human, financial, technical and other resources to enhance its organizational capacity for materializing its short-term and long-term plans. In the process of executing the plan, the organization maintains dynamism as demanded by the changing external environmental forces. The cardinal principles guiding the organizational behaviour include transparency, accountability and well-defined authority and responsibility at various echelons of administrative hierarchy. The organization encourages and practices openness in its working strategy and approach. There is no gap between the declared objectives and actual plan of action. The organization believes in creating equal opportunity to use the physical and intellectual potential of all men and women. BMP is trying hard to ensure equal access of men and women to information, income, asset and justice.

In planning and implementing all its activities BMP follows participatory approach. Members at grassroots level to executive committee participate in designing, implementing and monitoring activities. Need-based planning is done with local level participation of women.

Cumulative effects of accumulated rich experience of women organizers, leaders and activists at various levels could bring forth positive impact on women empowerment in local government bodies, governing bodies of educational institutions as well as representation of women nominations in the local bodies and parliament elections. The organization could also create an enabling environment for women to work in various government and non-government services.

The role of BMP has been crucial in the context of promotion of human rights on one end, and fundamentalist backed terrorist activities on a global scale on the other end. The fundamentalist forces, like other parts of Asia and Africa, gained considerable influence in Bangladesh in the recent past. The roots of fundamentalism spread almost all spheres of the society. Toward combating fundamentalist forces opposing women human rights and free movement of women, BMP undertook both proactive and reactive measures.

BMP, through its comprehensive programmes, could achieve significant progress in creating a base of movement for establishing women human rights and empowerment, but there is a long way to move to achieve its goal of gender equality. Sustainability of the efforts made so far would depend on continuation and expansion of the existing plans and programmes.

II.2 Rationale of the Project

BMP has been relentlessly working towards emancipation of women in Bangladesh for about four decades by way of carrying out movements for the establishment of an equity-based humane social structure. However, it feels that the goal is yet to be achieved in a meaningful manner notwithstanding BMP's belief in, and uncompromising efforts to, empowering women and mainstreaming them in the country's development process. The greatest challenge to women's rights comes from the gender-based power structure in the family, society and state; lack of democratic practice in the political arena as well as other spheres; negative impact of globalisation; and fundamental revivalism. BMP, thus, realises that conducting the activities, envisaged under its mandate, in the present era requires substantive professional human resources and adequate funding in addition to motivating voluntary member contributions and commitment.

Demand for continuation of BMP's activities in the area of women empowerment also comes in the backdrop of the commitments made by the political parties prior to the 2008 general elections regarding women's reserved seats in the Parliament, legal rights, security and safety, economic opportunities and social rights. Besides, in the context of growing intolerance, confrontational politics, ethnic clashes, increase in incidences of VAW, women's trafficking, rising trend of fundamentalism, and internationalisation of the movement for establishing women's human rights, women forces need to be more conscious, united and gender sensitive.

In view of the above, the importance of the project titled Promotion and Protection of Women's Human Rights in Bangladesh cannot be overemphasised. As has been noted earlier, the current the project is a continuation of the earlier project titled Promotion and Protection of Women's Human Rights. Nevertheless, realising the new and emerging challenges from both internal and external fronts, BMP has brought in a number of modifications and changes in priorities and included some new components for implementation during the current project.

In setting the objectives of the organization BMP rely on SMART (Specific, measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound) principles. The core values guiding decision making of BMP mainly include constitutional provision of gender equality, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women (CEDAW; 1981), the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC; 1990), Vienna Human Rights Declaration (1993), Recommendations of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA; 1995), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), National Women Development Policy (2008) and mainstreaming of women in the development process. Besides in making decisions BMP also takes into account the Declarations and basic principles of the organizations.

In the context of growing intolerance, confrontational politics, ethnic clashes, increase of VAW inclusive of drug abuse, women's trafficking, rising trend of fundamentalism, militancy and terrorism designed to uproot democratic values inclusive of gender equality and internationalization of the movement for establishing women human rights, women forces need to be more conscious, united and gender sensitive. In view of rich experience and enhanced organizational capability, BMP may contribute substantially toward strengthening progressive movements through its ongoing activities and further expansion. The prevailing scenario is also indicative of the need for continuation of the BMP's project entitled Promotion and Protection of Women's Human Rights for five more years to sustain and promote women human rights and empowerment of women in all spheres of social life.

II.3 Goal, Purpose and Outputs of the Project

Goal: To reduce gender inequality through women's increased participation and uphold women's dignity in the broader political, administrative and social context.

Purpose: Strengthen and intensify Women's Human Rights movement and consolidate the social movement to empower women and initiate programme intervention to resist any form of violence against women.

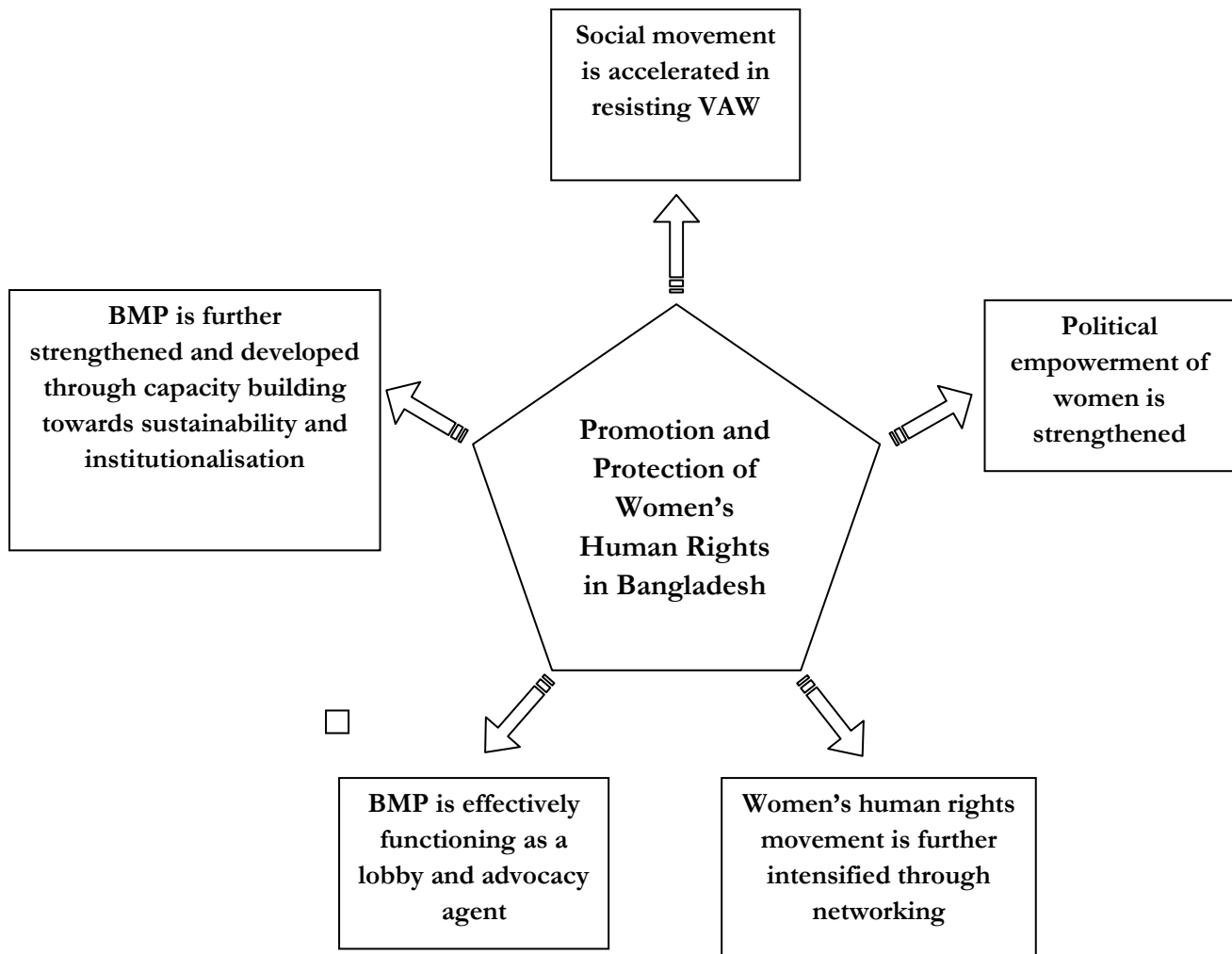
Outputs

1. Social movement is accelerated in resisting VAW
2. Political empowerment of women is strengthened
3. Women's human rights movement is further intensified through networking
4. BMP is effectively functioning as a lobby and advocacy agent
5. BMP is further strengthened/developed through capacity building towards sustainability and institutionalization

Figure 2.1

Figure 2.1

Project Components/Outputs (January-December, 2012)



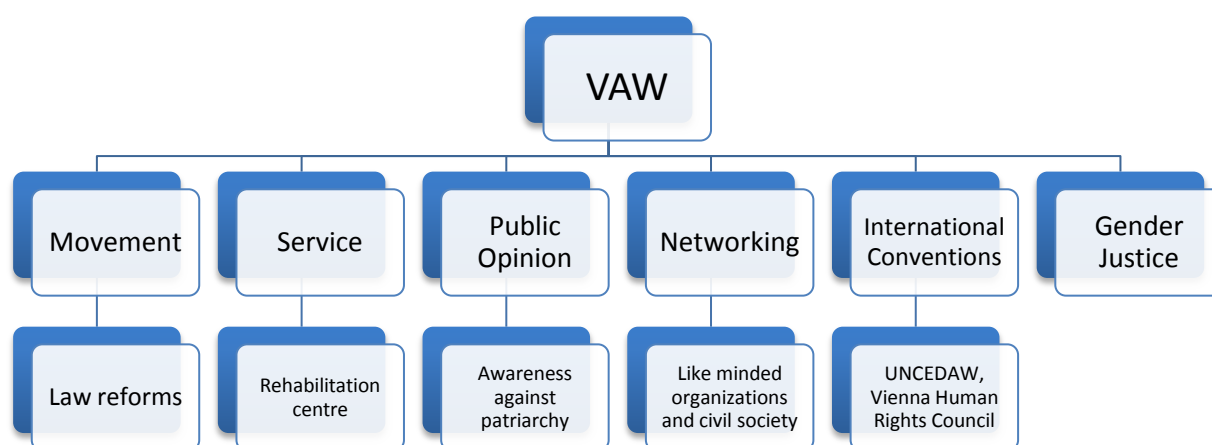
Chapter III: Achievements in 2013 Based on Planned Outputs

BMP pursued its goals, objectives and vision with utmost sincerity as a pioneer and leading organization for promoting and protecting women's human rights in Bangladesh. The actions and strategies applied in this regard demonstrate quite effective and adequate to attain planned outputs. The different components of BMP activities and programmes reflect a wide variety of interventions that the organization is committed to implement. It may be mentioned that implementation of programme and activities in 2013 had been disrupted frequently due to prevailing political situations in Bangladesh. Political violence, frequent hartals, general strikes and different terrorist attacks worsened safety and security situations for citizens in country throughout 2013. This chapter presents the component-wise achievements of BMP during the timeframe of January-December, 2013.

III.1 Output 1: Accelerating Social Movements against VAW

Violence against Women (VAW) is a critical area of intervention of BMP. The organisation considers it a major threat to basic framework of women's human rights in Bangladesh. The trends and frequency of VAW in Bangladesh clearly suggest that more effective initiatives are required to mitigate the sufferings of women. As a key component of strategy, BMP successfully accelerated the social movements against VAW so that the life and livelihoods of women become get better and safer. Several areas of interventions in accelerating social movements against VAW have been conceived and implemented with an aim to generate specific outputs.

Figure 3.1: BMP Framework of Actions against VAW



Trends and frequency of VAW

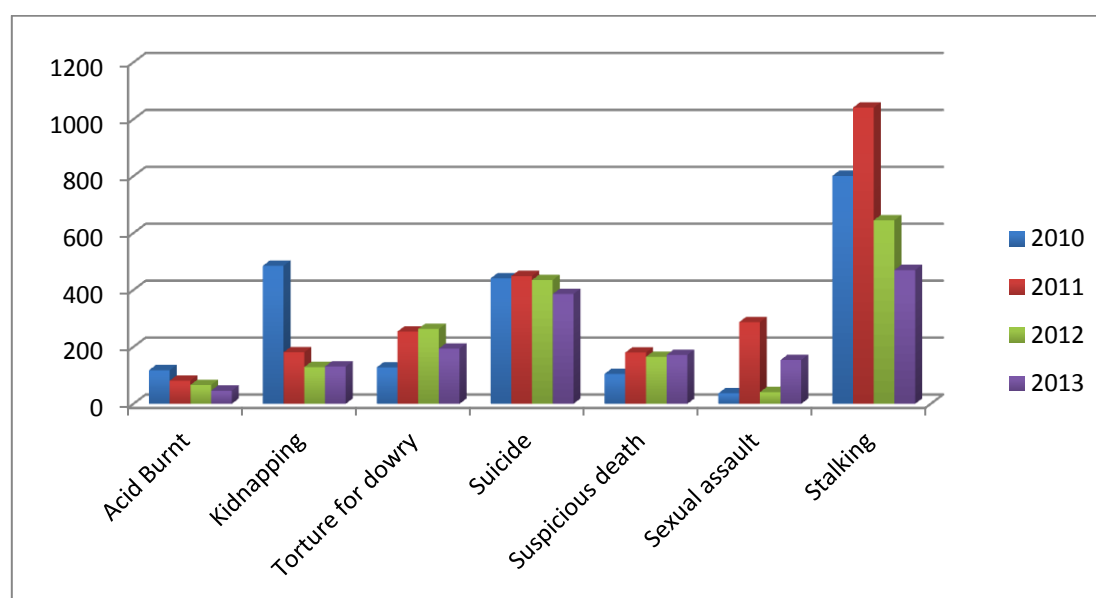
The trends and frequency of VAW clearly suggest that it remains as the biggest obstacle to establish women's human rights at home and outside. According to BMP's database, 4777 incidents of VAW took place during January-December 2013. The largest number of victims of VAW during this period belongs to murder (829), whereas rape related violence (696), stalking and death related to stalking (494), dowry related violence (439), and suicide (386) followed the order.

Table 3.1: VAW by some major categories during 2010-2013

Categories of VAW	Year						
	2010	2011	Change in %	2012	Change in %	2013	Change in %
Acid Burnt	118	81	- 31.36	66	- 18.52	46	-30.3%
Kidnapping	485	181	- 62.68	129	- 28.73	131	1.5%
Torture for dowry	128	254	98.44	263	3.54	194	-26.2%
Suicide	441	449	1.81	435	- 3.12	386	-11.2%
Suspicious death	105	180	71.43	165	- 8.33	172	4.2%
Sexual assault	37	287	675.68	41	- 85.71	40	68.9%
Stalking	801	1014	29.96	645	- 38.04	470	-27.1%

Source: BMP Database

Figure 3.2: VAW by major categories, 2010-2013



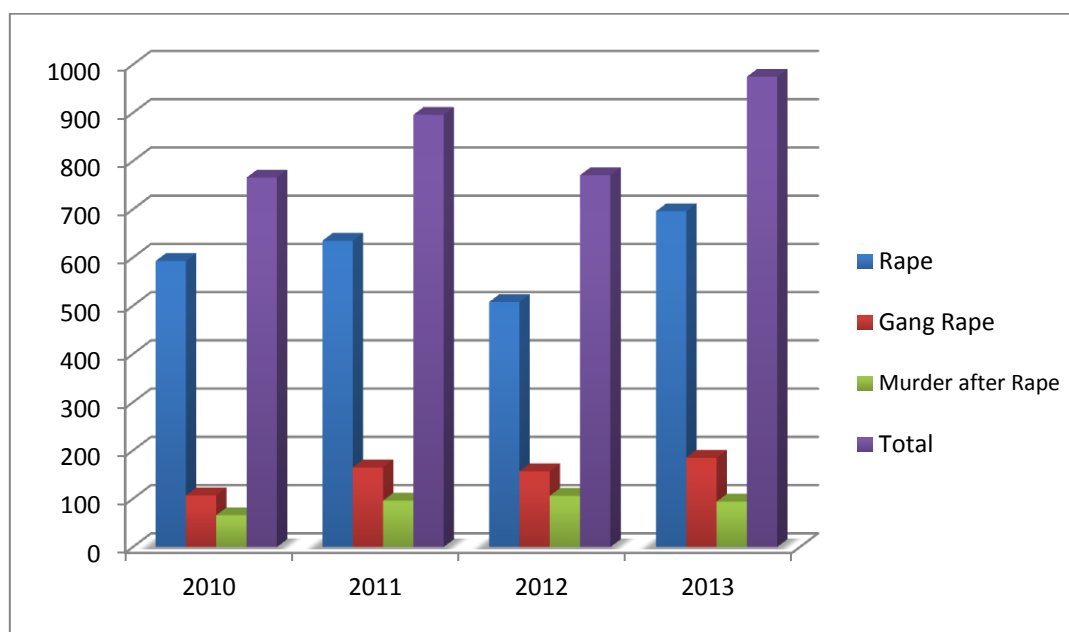
Source: BMP Database

Table 3.2: Frequency of rape incidences during 2010-2013

Categories of Rape	Year						
	2010	2011	Change in %	2012	Change in %	2013	Change in %
Rape	593	635	7.08	508	- 20.00	696	37.0%
Gang Rape	107	165	54.21	157	- 4.85	185	17.8%
Murder after Rape	66	96	45.45	106	10.42	94	-11.3%
Total	766	896	16.97	771	- 13.95	975	26.5%

Source: BMP Database

Figure 3.3: Incidences of rape and rape related violence, 2010-2013



Source: BMP Database

Table 3.3: Status of Achievements in Accelerating Social Movement to Resist VAW

SL.	Areas of Intervention	Activities		Status (%)
		Planned	Actual	
1.1.1	Providing support to <i>branches</i> for legal activism (Counselling, Mediation, Investigation for the fact-finding, Conducting cases, i.e. Lawyers fees, Court fees etc.)	Logistic support to all branches by the Legal Aid Sub-committee	Implemented	Achieved
1.1.2	Provide Legal support to victims of violence	Central: 80 District: 100	Central: 172 (Old:147, New: 25) District: 212 Grassroots: 38	Achieved
1.1.3	Public Interest Litigation (PIL)	As Per Necessity	1	Achieved
1.1.4	Provide counselling	Central: 50 District: 200 Grassroots: 50	Central: 75 District: 878 Grassroots: 186	Achieved
1.1.5	Application/Petition Received & responses	Central: 150 District: 550 Grassroots: 250	Central: 279 District: 871 Grassroots: 498	Achieved
1.1.6	Mediation	Central: 50		Achieved

SL.	Areas of Intervention	Activities		Status (%)
		Planned	Actual	
		District: 250 Grassroots: 200	Central: 78 District: 275 Grassroots: 318	
1.1.7	Provide Medicare for victims of violence	Central: at least 10 persons	17 persons	240%
1.1.8	Support to Victim (Complain received, conveyance and others)	As per necessity	30 persons	Done
1.1.9	Client workshop	2	2 Date: 27/06/'13 Venue: Sufia Kamal auditorium. Attendees 102 among these client 68	100%
1.1.10	Conduct Investigation and spot visits	Minimum 25	25	100%
1.1.11	Sharing experience with district leaders about legal activism	1	1 Date: 7/6/'13 to 8/6/'13 Venue: Sufia Kamal auditorium	100%
1.1.12	Round Table/ Lobby with concern authorities	1	1	100%
1.1.13	Press Conference	2	2 1. 8/06/2013 Press Club Auditorium, Gaibandha 2. 23/11/2013 Sufia Kamal Bhaban, Dhaka	100%
1.1.14	Policy Intervention Programme, Advocacy Lobby and Partnership with GO, and NGOs	1	6	600%
1.1.15	Solidarity Activity with international VAW resistance Programme	Fortnight Program: 1	Observed on 25 th November 2013- 10 th December 2013	100%
1.2.1	Foods for residents of shelter home (Rokeya Sadan)	As required upto 30 person	17 persons	Achieved
1.2.2	Clothing (yearly)-School uniform, dress for home use and festivals	3 times in a year	Purchases from own fund and also collection from well wishers	Achieved
1.2.3	Toiletries (yearly)-Soap, hair oil,	As per necessity	Provided as per	Achieved

SL.	Areas of Intervention	Activities		Status (%)
		Planned	Actual	
	cleansing materials, etc.	(monthly supply)	requirement	
1.2.4	Training Program leading to rehabilitation (Block, Batik, Swing etc.)	As per necessity	6 person took training from Rokeya Sadan	Achieved
1.2.5	Routine and emergency Medicare for residents (General check up and others)	Appoint physician part-time basis	3 times in a week as planned	Achieved
1.2.6	Counselling for residents by medical psychiatrist	As per required	Regular meetings	Achieved
1.2.7	Rokeya Sadan Office Management	1 meeting in each month	7 meeting held in this year	83%
1.2.10	Bimonthly	03	02 (2 general meetings held with inmates of Rokeya Sadan)	66%
1.2.12	Recreational Activities at Rokeya Sadan (Television, Newspaper, Books, Indoor Games, Study Tour)	As per necessity	* Television, newspaper, books and indoor games facilities are available * A study tour to the Sonargaon was organized	Done
1.2.14	Cultural Program	01	* Cultural program was organized to celebrate Rokeya Sadan's 26 th anniversary * Participation in cultural program of inaugural ceremony of National Council Meeting of BMP	Achieved
1.2.15	Rokeya Sadan related publication	Not planned for 2013	Not applicable	Not applicable

** Target surpassed due to continuation of old cases under trial and increased confidence in BMP.*

III.1.i. Details of area specific interventions under output 1

1.1.1 Providing support to branches for legal activism

BMP Legal Aid Subcommittee provided logistic support to all district branches in 2013.

1.1.2 Providing legal support to victims of violence

The role of legal aid has always been critical to mitigate the situations faced by women, given the increasing number of cases of VAW. BMP consistently provides legal support to victims of violence throughout the country. In fact, the major strength of BMP is that women confronting violence at both public and private sphere can depend on legal aid services. In it's 2013, a total of 422 cases were dealt by BMP against the targets of 80 at central and 100 at district levels. In 2013 out of the 422 cases 172 were at central, 212 at district and 38 at grassroots levels.

Case 1

Verdict of Court with a Case History

Most. Runa Akter Laila (Domestic Violence)

Most. Runa Akter Laila was married to Md. Anwar Hossain through a registered Kabin-Nama on 1 August 1999. They had three children in their family. They passed a happy conjugal life for one year. Since then Anwar Hossain started physical and mental torture on his wife for dowry. As torture increased in subsequent period Laila came to Jessore District branch of BMP for legal aid to solve her family problem. BMP contacted with Anwar Hossain through sending letters for peacefully resolving their family dispute. But there was no response from Anwar Hossain. Finally, a case was filed against Anwar Hossain with Judicial Magistrate Court of Jessore under Domestic Violence Act 2010. BMP Jessore district branch provided legal support on behalf of Runa Akter Laila. On 8 October 2013 the Honorable Court delivered a verdict in favour of the plaintiff. The court ordered that:

- The defendant cannot torture the plaintiff physically or mentally.
- The defendant will not leave the plaintiff in her paternal house.
- The defendant will take the plaintiff to his house and will pay maintenance costs and will live together in his own house as before with minor children.

Accordingly the order of the Court Anwar Hossain took his wife to his house on 8 October 2013. Currently they are living peacefully with their children.

It may be mentioned that the number of cases sought legal support from BMP is higher than the targets set by the organization due to continuation of old cases under trial. BMP succeeded in ensuring justice for victims of VAW in many cases. The court delivered several verdicts/orders in favour of the victims in 2013. Two cases have been briefly introduced in this section.

Case 2

Verdict of with a Case History

Most. Fokra Akter Sumi (a case of rape victim and pregnancy)

The BMP Barguna Branch provided legal support, medicare service, appointed a lawyer and provided other assistances to Most. Fokra Akter Sumi, a victim of rape and pregnant woman. The central committee provided overall support including financial to Fokra Akter Sumi's child daughter for DNA test. The perpetrator Shahidul Islam Swapan s/o Yusuf Kabiraj of the district of Barguna went to paternal house of Most. Fokra Akter Sumi at the village of Kortbaria under Baguna on 11 December 2009, where he brutally raped her at 9:30 pm with a false promise of marriage. Subsequently, Shahidul Islam Swapan went to his uncle's house with Sumi introducing her as his wife and established sexual relationship with the victim. Later on Sumi became pregnant, but Shahidul Islam Swapan denied marrying her as he promised earlier. Therefore, Sumi filed a case against Swapan in the *Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman Tribunal Barguna*. It covers section 9 (1) of *Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman Act 2000* (amended 2003).

After a long hearing the honourable judge of *Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman Tribunal* delivered verdict in favour of the victim on 26 June 2013. The Court found convicted Shahidul Islam Swapan guilty of the offence according to clause 9 (1) of *Nari O Shishu Nirjatan Daman Tribunal Act 2000* (amended 2003) and handed life imprisonment with hard labour as punishment and fined 100,000 (one lac taka) in default another two more years imprisonment with hard labour in jail.

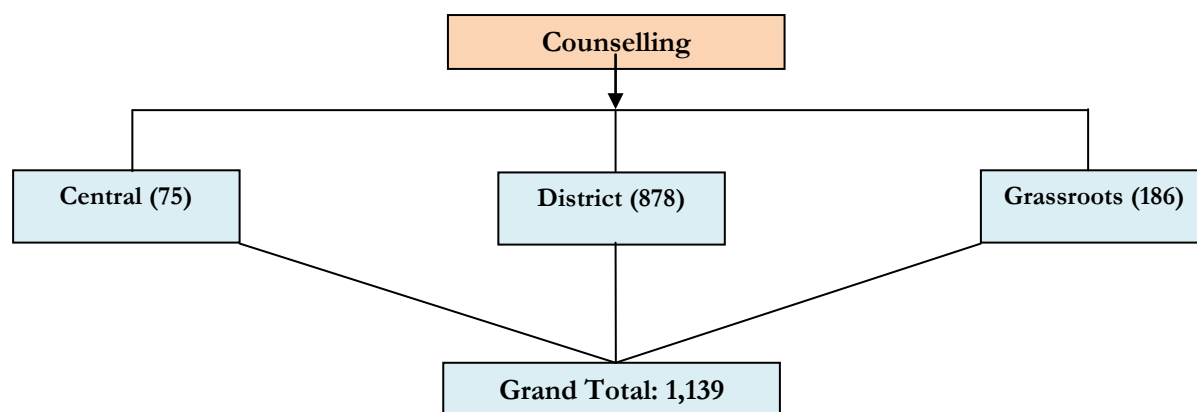
1.1.3 Undertaking activities concerning Public Interest Litigation (PIL)

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad has set its aim to operate Public Interest Litigation as per necessity.

1.1.4 Providing counselling

Counselling is a major activity of BMP to face the scourge of VAW. Victims of violence often seek the support of the organization to conduct counselling. With a target of 300 recipients of counselling, the organization was able to serve 1,139 clients in 2013 at central, district, and grassroots levels. Male clients have also been seeking legal advice side by side women. As a result, efficiency and credibility of legal aid were enhanced.

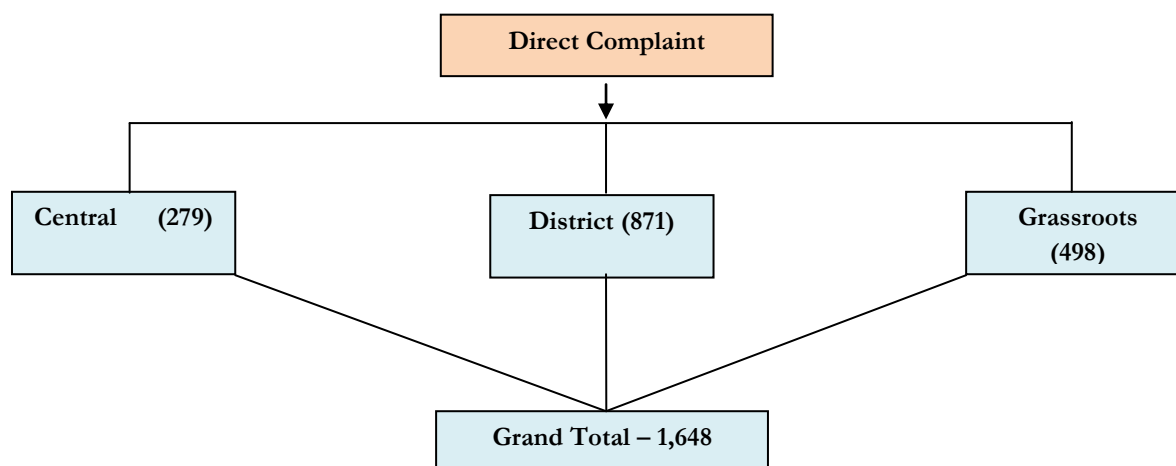
Figure 3.4: Counselling Services Provided by BMP in 2013



1.1.5 Receiving application/petition

The Legal Unit of BMP received a large number of applications/petitions in 2013. The number of complaints received was 1,648 at the central, district and grassroots levels which surpassed the planned targets in a big margin. Women are becoming active in seeking legal remedies for their sufferings in the society.

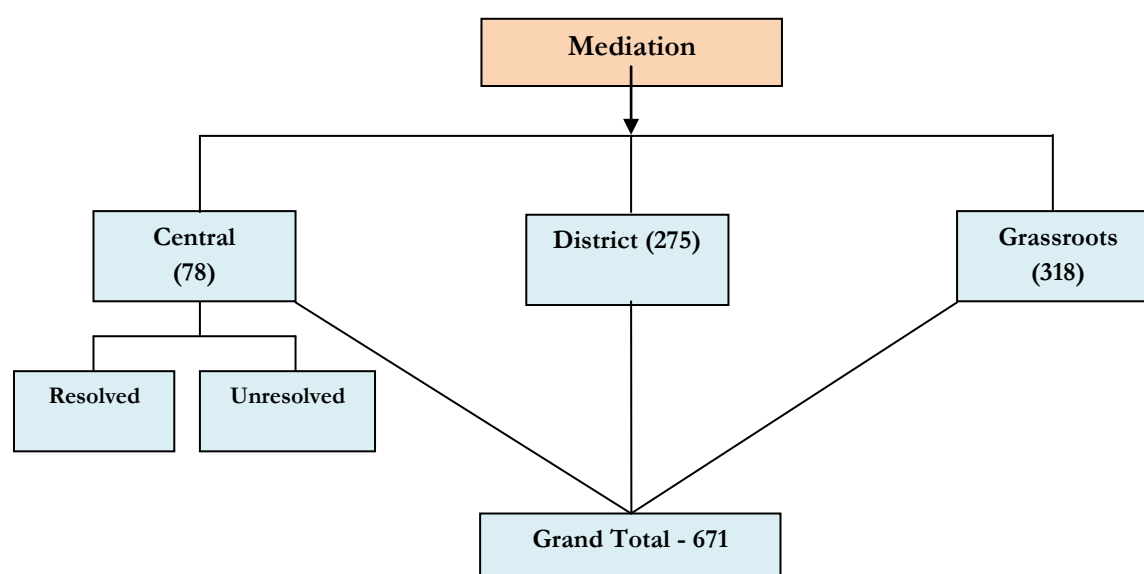
Figure 3.5: Complaints Received by BMP in 2012



1.1.6 Providing mediation services

Mediation services have been very useful to the victims of violence. There have been a total of 671 cases received mediation services at central, district and grassroots levels from the Legal Unit of BMP. It may be mentioned that BMP pulled in a total of Tk. 31,84,200 as dower and maintenance through mediation at the central level, which is higher than the previous year. The public representatives have also witnessed the impartial mediation process and praised this activity.

Figure 3.6: Mediation Services Provided by BMP in 2013



As part of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), Bangladesh Mahila Parishad is operating mediation (Salish) activities in family matters at Central, District and Grassroots levels. In 2013, BMP has settled a good number of Family Disputes and recovered a total of Tk.89,82,601.00 as dower money and maintenance and handed over these to the victim women.

1.1.7 Providing Medicare for victims of violence

BMP provided Medicare facilities to 17 victims of violence in 2013. Medicare facilities were given to women and children suffered from different kinds of violence such as rape, acid burnt torture and domestic violence.

Table 3.4: Recipients of Medicare Facilities in 2013

Sl.no.	Name & address of victims	Type of violence	Remarks
1.	An unknown victim, Mohangang, Netrakona	Murder after Rape	Being provided legal support by district

			branches.
2.	Sharmin Akhter Akhi, Dhaka.	Attempt to Murder by acid burnt due to refusal in love	Being legal provided support.
3.	Sathi Akhi Moina, Tangail.	Gang Rape	Being provided legal support through district branch.
4.	Fokra Akhter Sumi, Borguna.	Paternal Demand	Being provided legal support by district branch
5.	Fatema Begum, Pirojpur.	Death by fire Burnt	Being provided support by district branch
6.	Sremti Rani, Dhaka.	Torture for Dowry	Being provided legal support by district branch
7.	Doly Khatun, Chuyadanga.	Gang Rape by police	Being provided legal support by district branch
8.	Retu, Dhaka.	Murder after Gang Rape	Being provided legal support.
9.	Mohona (Child), Jhinidhah.	Rape	-
10.	Sabina, Jhinidhah.	Physical abuse to grandmother of victim's.	-
11.	Tapati Howlader, Satkhira.	Rape and burnt by fire	
12.	Mushfika Moon Moon, Dinajpur.	Burnt by fire	-
13.	Shishu Mohona, Jhinaidah	Rape	Returned to home district and did not contact
14.	Hosnara Begum, Dhaka	Family dispute	Solved through mediation
15.	Shirina, Faridpur	Murder after rape	Legal assistance to file a case
16.	Farida Begum, Munshiganj	Illegal mediation and physical and mental torture	Legal aid through the district branch
17.	Alo alias Alis, Dhaka	Family dispute	Sent letter for peaceful settlement
18.	Abdullah, Father of Afroza Begum, Gaibandha	Burnt alive for dowry	Legal aid through the district branch

1.1.8 Providing support to victims

Since it's launching in 2009 the Victim Support has been playing a significant role in mitigating sufferings of women from different backdrops – physical torture, domestic violence, child marriage, demands for dowry etc. In 2013, a total of thirty women/girls received financial support as transport conveyance and other related costs. The number of beneficiaries has increased in 2013. With this support it was possible to contact with the court and lawyers' chambers as needed. It was also possible to ensure timely presence of witnesses in the court during case hearings. Table provides details about the victims.

Table 3.5: Recipients of Victim Support, 2013

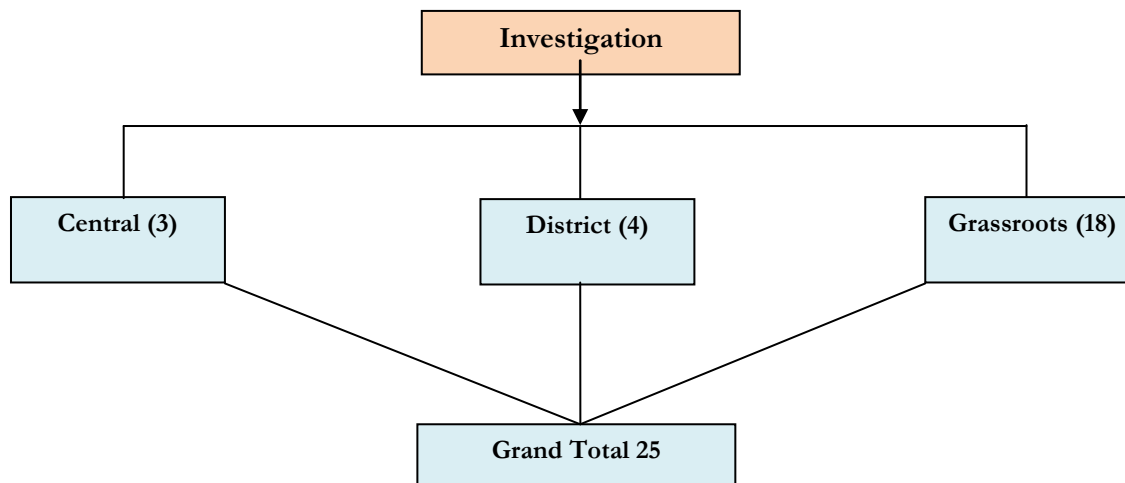
1.1.9 Organising client workshop

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organized one client workshop on 27 June 2013 at Sufia Kamal Bhaban located at the central office during this period. In this workshop a total number of 68 clients and family members participated and shared their views with BMP. In addition and 29 leaders and staff to two panel lawyers, 3 lawyers and 16 staff lawyers at the central office were present in the workshop where client 43 and total 74. The Victims of VAW who received support from BMP shared their experiences and opinion regarding BMP's legal help. BMP members and lawyers gave patient hearing and stated the status of their cases. BMP reiterated their commitment towards victims. The key achievement of client workshop is reducing frustration of victims through exchange of views and finding ways to remove problems.

1.1.10 Conducting investigation and spot visits

BMP successfully conducted investigations and spot visits in the year 2013. BMP completed 920 investigations and spot visits either by its own initiative or in response to the complaints relating to incidences of women repression throughout the country during this period. It has contributed to make all the people aware of legal remedies.

Figure 3.7: Number of Investigations Conducted by BMP in 2013



1.1.11 Sharing Experience with district leaders about legal activism

BMP organized a meeting to share experiences and challenges with district leaders about legal activism during this period. There were 147 participants in the meeting. The main thrust of this meeting was to develop skill and strategy in resisting violence against women in light of experiences all over the country.

Victim Support Centre:

BMP is working with Bangladesh Police in partnership to run victim support centre at Dhaka and Rangamati District. BMP is also committed to work as an active partner organization to

run victim support centre of other divisions which is now under process. This is a positive experience of GO/NGO partnership towards ensuring women's Human Rights. One nominated Lawyer from BMP renders services to victim support centre weekly. BMP also gave temporary shelter in Rokeya Sadan and provide legal and all other support to the victim if necessary.

Victim Support Centre

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad is supporting to run Victim Support Centre, Tejgaon, Dhaka of Bangladesh Police under Ministry of Home Affairs as one of the partner organizations since 2009. It was a demand from BMP to increase the number of VSC throughout the country. At Present, there are four Victim Support Centres where BMP is working as an active partner organization.

1.1.12 Round Table/Lobby with concerned authorities

On 4th September 2013, BMP organized a Roundtable/lobby with concerned government authorities about the menace of drug use in the society. BMP representatives and law enforcing agencies exchanged their views and expressed their intention to develop joint cooperation through Victim Support Centre. The program was attended by 155 persons including 55 journalists.

1.1.13 Press conference

The Legal Aid Unit of BMP organized two press conferences in 2013. The first press conference was held on 8th October 2013 at the National Press Club Auditorium. The Press Conference was organized with presence of central leaders of Gaibandha district branch to protest against the incident of violence against women in Gaibandha. It was alleged that an adolescent girl was raped by Police in Govindhaganj Thana. Seventy-five persons including 28 journalists and two central leaders were present in the press conference. The second press conference was held on 23rd November 2013 at the Sufia Kamal Bhaban Auditorium. The Press Conference was organized to observe the International Fortnight to Resist of VAW and Universal Human Rights Day 2013. On this occasion, 55 persons including 21 journalists were present.

Table 3.6: Press Conferences on Legal Aid in 2013

SL.	Date	Venue	Theme	Outcome
1.	8.10.2013	National Press Club, Gaibandha.	Incident of VAW in Govindaganj, Gaibandha	BMP leaders, employees, district leaders and journalist from different print and electronic media were present at the conference who declared their claims and recommendations at the press conference, which received extensive media coverage
2.	23.11.2013	Sufia Kamal Bhaban Auditorium, Dhaka	Universal Human Rights Day, Resist VAW 2013 & Fortnight	BMP & journalist leaders emphasized equal rights and women empowerment.

1.1.14 Policy Intervention Programme, Advocacy Lobby and Partnership with GO, NGOs

BMP organized meeting for policy intervention and partnership with GO and NGOs. The meeting was held on 9th July 2013 and recommendations submitted to the government on behalf of BMP. In addition major recommendations include CEDAW Bench Book, The Domestic Violence (Prevention & Protection) Rules 2013, The Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, The National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and Children (2013-2015) The National Human Rights Commission Act 2009, Vested Property (Amendment) Act 2013, etc.

Table 3.7: Lobbying with private and public bodies

Date	Venue	Theme	Lobby With
9.07.2013	Begum Sufia Kamal Auditorium	Law Reform	GO, NGO, Civil Society Discussion Meeting with Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs; Expert Committee on Law Reform, Members of Civil Society and District branches leaders of BMP.

Law Reform Initiatives of BMP

The law reform initiatives of BMP are the signature interventions in the society where legal system suffers from myriad of limitations and discriminations in terms of gender and marginalized communities. It is a fact that BMP has a significant contribution to all laws enacted after the Independence of Bangladesh. Between 1980 and 2013 BMP was either proposer of new laws or author of draft laws or a leading advocate to all women related laws in Bangladesh. Particularly, since 2008 BMP has remained vocal through its active and proactive roles in the movement for human rights and law reforms. In 2013 the organization successfully continued its vital engagement with law reforms in Bangladesh. Government, administration and different women human rights and development organizations have considered BMP as an organization and a force of law reforming, new law drafting, and a strong voice in the sphere of women rights. This is a foremost aspect of the achievements of BMP in Bangladesh.

Law Reform Movement

BMP has been continuing its sustained attempts towards reforming existing law, particularly discriminatory personal law. BMP focuses on reformation of discriminatory laws against minority communities, marginalized and physically and mentally disable people and enactment of new law upholding their rights. BMP also took initiatives in 2013 to disseminate Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010 and its Rules 2013 through training programs among organizers of BMP. BMP representatives also conducted training programs among Government officials organized by Directorate of Women and Children's Affairs for proper implementation of the law. Adv. Muksuda Akter, Director Advocacy and Lobby represented the organization regarding development of the training module and conducting training.

The Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs consulted with BMP and other organizations to finalize CEDAW Bench Book. The aim of the initiative is to resist VAW and discrimination against women. Shima Moslem, Secretary Training, Research and Library and Adv. Muksuda Akter Laily, Director Advocacy and Lobby participated in the sharing meeting held on 4th May 2013, organized by the Ministry. BMP representatives share their views and

gave recommendations to include some case studies. Those cases would reveal the policy guiding judgments by the Supreme Court upholding women human rights and can be used as future reference. BMP has also shown how the Article of CEDAW is relevant to different section of Bangladesh Constitution. BMP has sent four case studies to the Ministry from its own. In 2013 BMP played an important role in UPR related activity.

Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

BMP as an active member of Human Rights Forum HR Forum, a civil society platform of different women's human rights and development organization contributed in preparing UPR Report 2013 for submission to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. The process for preparing report started since 2012. On behalf of BMP, President Ayesha Khanam and Adv. Ram Lal Raha participated series of meeting of the forum and also participated in the Steering Committee meeting. BMP prepared Women Humans Rights Chapter of the report and gave recommendations. BMP always remains careful about authenticity and credibility of report and intervened on the draft report when felt necessary. Ayesha Khanam, President of BMP participated in the National Consultation on 2nd January 2013 with the then Foreign Minister, Dr. Dipu Moni organized by Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Bangladesh UPR report. BMP representatives also shared UPR Report of HR Forum Bangladesh with local diplomats on 12th February 2013. President of BMP, Ayesha Khanam responded to some issues raised during the meeting. BMP central and district representatives also participated in the National Workshop organized by National Human Rights Commission, Bangladesh on draft UPR report for finalization. BMP president, Ayesha Khanam was the resource person of the session "Women's Empowerment and Implementation of UN CEDAW".

Vested Property Law

The National Parliament of Bangladesh passed the Vested Property Return (second amendment) Act-2013 by voice vote on 5 May 2013. The amended the Vested Property Return Act, 2001, has repealed the provision of categorising the vested and enemy properties. Since the beginning of the passage of original Act in 2001 BMP has been protesting against it due to problems with the Act. The organization has been demanding to the government for repealing some provisions of the new amended Act which are against the fundamental spirit of the original Act.

The Code of Criminal Procedure 1898

The Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs has undertaken initiative for amending the Code of Law Reform Criminal Procedure (CrPC) 1898. BMP organized a meeting with the members of the Expert Committee of the organization on this issue on 9th July 2013. The Committee accepted the draft of recommendations during the meeting. Later on BMP sent the draft of recommendations to the Ministry on 18th July 2013, to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on 31.07.2013 and to the law Commission on 01.08.2013

BMP's Contribution to Legal Development

The National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women and Children (2013-2025)

The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs has formulated the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women and Children (2013-2025). A sharing meeting was organized by the Ministry

on 27th August 2013 and recommendations on the draft National Action Plan were given by BMP. Later written recommendations were sent to the Ministry on the draft National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women and Children (2013-2025). The recommendations of BMP has been included in the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women and Children (2013-2025). BMP has been mentioned as a multi-sectoral service provider.

The National Human Rights Commission Act, 2009

The National Human Rights Commission has taken initiative to review the National Human Rights Commission Act, 2009. BMP has submitted recommendations to the Chairman, National Human Rights Commission, Bangladesh for amendment of the National Human Rights Commission Act, 2009. It is pending before the Parliamentary Standing Committee; Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.

1.1.15 Solidarity activities with international VAW resistance

As a voluntary mass women organization BMP has been working relentlessly towards upholding women's human rights by engaging itself into multidimensional activities. BMP expresses full solidarity with both national and international enterprises in resisting VAW. As a continuation of its endeavour, BMP carried out a number of activities during 25 November – 10 December 2013 in observance of the International Fortnight Prevention of Violence against Women. Different activities were carried out from the central to grassroots level. BMP published and distributed posters, leaflets, and stickers throughout the country to the Social Action Committee (SAC), other women and human rights organizations, academic institutions, government agencies including relevant Ministries, various Parliamentary Committees, and Members of the Parliament. It should be noted that Bangladesh Mahila Parishad is the Secretariat of Social Action Committee. Besides, TV Spots, to create awareness on violence against women, was telecasted on four TV channels during the fortnight. The main theme of this fortnight was 'to build strong social resistance and awareness raising against sexual harassment, domestic violence and illegal Fatwa'.

Table 3.8: International Fortnight to Resist VAW

SL.	Date	Venue	Event
1.	23.11.2013	Sufia Kamal Bhaban Auditorium, Dhaka	Press Conference
2.	10.11.2013	National Press Club, Dhaka	Human chain

1.2.1-1.2.15 Rokeya Sadan

As an integral part of legal activism, women and girl child victims of violence are being given temporary shelter in Rokeya Sadan. During the reporting period 24 victims were given shelter in Sadan of which five are new comers. They were referred from police custody, branches of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad and individuals members of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad. All of them have been provided with proper food and nutrition, clothing and other stuff, Medicare facilities, counselling services, education, skill development training, and recreation facilities. Residents have to follow rules and regulations of Rokeya Sadan, approved by central committee. House Tutors (3) have been provided for the students getting formal (8) and non-formal (6) education. One music teacher has also remained engaged for children who are

interested in music. One Medical Officer visits Rokeya Sadan thrice a week; one clinical psychologist comes for individual and group counselling once a week and on an emergency basis. One is getting Income generating training. For recreation and entertainment there are provision of reading books, magazines and, playing indoor games and watch television and yearly study tour, picnic.

Rokeya Sadan is supervised by Rokeya Sadan sub Committee that meets once formally every month. One full time superintendent and one Administrative officer assist them for management of Rokeya Sadan. Two formal sharing meeting arranged with the residents of Rokeya Sadan and sub-committee where both the parties shared experiences, expectation, and problems. Follow up steps taken accordingly. Besides, informal sharing with the residents and responsible members met routinely on an emergency basis to solve the emerging and crucial problems. Legal Aid unit also shares with individual resident about the status of their legal cases. Resident of Rokeya Sadan also attends in different public programs.

The 27th Founding Anniversary of Rokeya Sadan was observed on 2nd January 2013 at Sufia Kamal Auditorium. Mr. Ashraf Hossain, Director General, Directorate Women and Child Affairs was present as special guest. Civil society members, well wishers, and philanthropists of the country were also present in the program. Certificates were distributed among the trainees and books presented to the students for their annual performance. The major achievement of Rokeya Sadan in the year include the following:

- Three student appeared S.S.C examination, among them two have passed successfully.
- One has been admitted in Government Music College, Agargaon Dhaka.
- Four have been rehabilitated to their family.
- Five girls participated in the cultural program organized on the 27th Founding Anniversary of Rokeya Sadan.
- Two girls participated in painting competition organized by Bangladesh Shishu Kollayan Parishad.

Rokeya Sadan has become well known as a symble of shelter home amongst the human rights activist. A number of victim of violence has been rehabilitate with courage in the society received training and motivation from Rokeya Sadan . To build up as an ideal shelter home many steps to be taken in future . It is to be remembered that Rokeya Sadan is not only humanlarian Service centre,it is protest against VAW.

Output 2: Strengthening Political Empowerment of Women

As part of its continuous endeavour to empower women politically and increase their participations in the decision making process, BMP focuses on a number of interventions. It believes that ppolitical empowerment of women is a critical requirement for advancement of women in the society. In this connection, the contribution of BMP has been a major boost to strengthen political empowerment of women. It is assumed that without equal and effective participation of women in political arena, there cannot be a meaningful change in rights and status of women in our society. BMP has identified it as the second most important component of its actions and programmes. Like previous years, BMP undertook multidimensional programmes and activities in the year 2013 towards achieving political, economic and social empowerment of women in Bangladesh.

Table 3.9

Output 2: Status of Achievements in Strengthening Political Empowerment of Women, 2013

Sl	Areas of intervention	Activities		Achievement Status
		Planned	Actual	
2.1.1	Carry out advocacy and lobby for political empowerment of women and increase women's participation at the decision making levels (Political Party leaders/women leaders/MPs/ Civil Society members / HR organizations) Sharing Meeting/ Roundtable Discussion/ press conference / Human Chain/ Street Movement/ Lobby	2	2	Achieved
2.1.2	Sharing Meeting/ Roundtable Discussion/ Press conference / Human Chain/ Street Movement/ Lobby Grass root Level:	10 Districts	10	Achieved
2.1.4	Carryout lobby and advocacy for Gender Budgeting	Meeting/ discussion Central level: 1	2	Achieved
2.1.5	Carryout lobby and Advocacy for gender budgeting at grassroots level	10 District	13 District	Achieved
2.1.7	Promotion of Political empowerment of women and increase women's participation at the decision making levels through alliance networking (Social action committee). Submission of memorandum / Sharing Meeting/ Round table Discussion / Press Conference/ Human chain/ Street movement / lobby/ National convention – Submission of Memorandum/ Sharing Meeting/ Round table Discussion / Press Conference/ Human Chain/ Street Movement / Lobby/ National Convention)	a) Central Level: 2 b) Grass root level: 10	Central: 1 Grassroots: 10	Achieved
2.1.8	Promote Women in Electoral Process – Poster, leaflet, campaign and logistic support (at all levels).	As per necessity	16 members of BMP participated in City Corporation election, Barisal and Rajshahi division held in June 2013.	Achieved

III.2.i. Details of area specific interventions under output 2

2.1.1: Advocacy and lobby for political empowerment of women and increase women's participation at the decision-making levels

As part of its continuous endeavour to empower women politically and increase their participations in the decision making process, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad has organised two major advocacy and lobby programmes in the year 2013. Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) organized a mass women gathering on Increase the Number of Reserved Seats for Women in the National Parliament, Introduction of Direct Election And re-demarcation of Parliamentary Constituency on 10th February, 2013 in the front of National Parliament Bhaban during the parliament session. This program was chaired by Ayesha Khanam, President, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad. In this gathering General Secretary Maleka Banu, Central Committee Member Parvin Islam, General Secretary of Dhaka Mahanagar, Rehana Yunus delivered the speeches by demanding the direct election of reserved seats and increase of reserved seats for women in National Parliament by the one-third. The recommendations were placed by Shahida Parvin Shikha, Member, Movement Sub- Committee. About 1550 women were present in this gathering. Movement Secretary Rekha Chowdhury conducted the gathering. As many as seven print media covered this news in the following day.

BMP organized a Press Conference at the VIP Lounge of National Press Club on 22 September 2013 and pressed the same demand. Ayesha Khanam, President, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad moderated the meeting while BMP Central Movement Secretary, Rekha Chowdhury presented the key note paper. Ayesha Khanam responded to questions from journalists. There were 41 journalists coming from both print and electronic media in Bangladesh. BMP argued that women still remain disproportionately unrepresented in the National Parliament of Bangladesh as compared with total number of men in the country. BMP has put forward specific demands and recommendations for resolving the problem. The organization believes that the government should increase the number of reserved seats for women in the National Parliament to the one-third, introduce direct elections and re-demarcate the Parliamentary constituencies. More than 40 members of BMP including office staff were present during the conference. The event was widely covered in 8 national newspapers on 23 September 2013. BMP submitted deputation on increase the number of reserved seats for women in the National Parliament to the one-third, introduce direct elections and re-demarcate the Parliamentary constituencies. on 23rd September 2013 concerned authorities to Prime Minister to response .

2.1.2 Activities at Grassroots Level

As per plan of the project BMP organized sharing meeting/roundtable discussions/press conference/human chain/street movement/lobby in the districts of Chittagong, Brahmanbaria, Netrokona, Swarapkathi, Bagerhat, Rangpur, Munshiganj, Faridpur and Kalmakanda in 2013. The key objective of these activities was to enhance political empowerment and to increase women's participation in decision-making process.

2.1.4 Carry out advocacy and lobby for gender budgeting

Gender budgeting is considered a major tool for achieving the goal of women empowerment of women. BMP maintained its strong advocacy and lobbying role in 2013 for introducing gender budgeting in Bangladesh. In this connection, two meetings were organised in 2013 at the central level, which were successful in achieving the goals. A Discussion Meeting was organized on the theme “Proper and Maximum Utilization of Budget for Reducing Gender Disparity” on 13th April 2013 at CIRDAP Auditorium. Dr. Fauzia Moslem, Acting President, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad chaired the meeting. Dr. Debopriyo Battacharjee, Distinguished Fellow, CPD, and Ranjit Kumar Chakrabarti, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Finance were present in the meeting as the Special Guests. Sharmin Nilormi, Associate Professor, Dept. of

Economics, Jahangirnagar University presented the keynote paper. Dr. Selim Raihan, Professor, Dept. of Economics, Dhaka University, Tapati Saha, Gender expert were the Panel discussants. The keynote paper highlighted the implementation and observation challenges of gender sensitive budget and the necessity of government intervention in the process along with civil society, media and the economists. General Secretary, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad delivered her welcome speech. The meeting was conducted by Movement Secretary Rekha Chowdhury. The news was covered by 4 print media (*Prothom Alo, Daily Star, Jugantar, and Samakal*) and 3 electronic media. A total of 82 participants were present at the meeting including BMP central committee members, different sub-committee members, social activists and media staffs. The discussants emphasized on equitable budget allocation and implementation based on gender and urged for elimination of gender biases in order to attain comprehensive development. The recommendations of this meeting were sent to the Ministry of Finance, Bangladesh.

A post-budget Discussion Meeting on “The Forthcoming National Budget, 2013-2014: Proper and Maximum Utilization of Budget for Reducing Gender Disparity” was held on 23rd June, 2013 at the CIRDAP auditorium. The meeting was chaired by President of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Ayesha Khanam. Dr. Mostofa Kamal Mujeri, Director General, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, Prof. M.M. Akash, Dept. of Economics, Dhaka University, Md. Helal Uddin Associate Professor, Dept. of Economics, Dhaka University were present in the meeting as the Special Discussants. Dr. Sarmind Nilormy, Associate Professor, Jahangir Nagar University presented the keynote paper. Maleka Banu, General Secretary delivered the Welcome Speech while the meeting was conducted by Rekha Chowdhury, Movement Secretary, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad. The event was covered by 6 print media on 24th June, 2013 (*Daily Star, Kaler Kantha, Janakantha, New Age, Sangbad, and Jugantar*). The recommendations of this meeting were sent to the Honourable Minister, Ministry of Finance.

2.1.5 Carry out lobby and advocacy for gender budgeting at the grassroots level

A total of 13 district branches organised pre-budget discussion meetings, where BMP activists, political party leaders, government representatives, civil society members, media personals and people from several other professional backgrounds were present. All the programme reports were later sent to BMP central office.

Table 3.10: Grassroots level meeting on budgeting for the year 2013-14

SL.	Date	Venue	Session Chair
1.	26 April	Dinajpur District Branch Office	Razia Sarker
2.	4 May	Kustia District Branch Office	Fatema Begum
3.	9 May	Sunamganj District Branch Office	District President
4.	10 May	Kumarkhali District Branch Office, Rangpur	District Organization Secretary
5.	11 May	Pirojpur, District Branch Office	Alhaz Md. Habibur Rahman
6.	11 May	Jessore District Branch Office	Professor Mustafizur Rahman
7.	12 May	Rajbari District Branch Office	Laili Nahar
8.	15 May	Mymensingh, Branch Office	Ferdous Ara Mahmuda
9.	15 May	Brahmanbari, District Office	Nandita Guha
10.	18 May	Kaokhali District Branch	Kamal Krishna Mukharjee

11.	19 May	Natore District Office	Md. Habibur Rahman Malek
12.	21 May	Swarup Kathi District Office	Laili Jahan
13.	22 May	Rangpur District Branch Office	Shamim Rahman

2.1.7 Promotion of Political empowerment of women and increase women's participation at the decision-making levels through alliance networking (Social action committee)

Social Action Committee (the platform of 67 women, human rights and development organisations) organised a mass gathering of around 8000 (eight thousand) people at the Central Shahid Minar premise on 9 March 2013 to celebrate the International Women's day.

The objective of the rally was to make aware the society about the equal rights and opportunities. The theme of this gathering was selected as "Increase women reserved seats by one-third of the National Parliament and hold direct election". The gathering was chaired by Shaheen Anam, Executive Director, Manusher Jonno Foundation. Rekha Chowdhury, Movement Secretary Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, conducted the sessions of the meeting. At the beginning of the program prominent singers sang songs. The Declaration of the gathering was announced by Chiroranjana Sarkar from BRAC. Representatives from 33 organizations of SAC attended the event. Besides, representatives from Print and Electronic Media participated in the program. After the Declaration a rally moved from Shahid Miner to TSC, Dhaka University. After the rally, the acting president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad delivered a speech and concluded the program. Nine print media namely Prothom Alo, Kaler Kantha, Sangbad, Destiny, Inqilab, Ittefaq, Daily Star, Independent, and New Age covered the news on 10th March 2013.

2.1.8 Promote Women in Electoral Process

BMP circulated posters and leaflets, extended logistic support and conducted campaigns to promote women's role in the electoral process. Twelve BMP organizers contested the Barisal City Corporation Election. BMP provided them with logistic and moral support. Among the contestants 6 BMP organizers won the election. Four BMP members contested the Rajshahi City Corporation election in 2013 among which three members emerged winners.

Table 3.11: BMP Members as Candidates in the City Corporation Elections, 2013

Sl.	Name	Positions in BMP	Positions won	Place
1	Bilkis Banu	Activist and General Member	Reserved Seat-4, Ward: 9, 11, 12	Rajshahi City Corporation
2	Firoja Begum	Activist and General Member	Reserved Seat-5, Ward: 13, 14, 15	Rajshahi City Corporation
3	Nazma Khatun	Activist and General Member	Reserved Seat-7, Ward: 19, 20, 21	Rajshahi City Corporation
4	Shahnaj Begum	Activist and General Member	Reserved Seat-8, Ward: 22, 23, 24	Rajshahi City Corporation
5	Taslima Kalam Koli	District Executive Committee Member	Reserved Seat 1-2-3	Barisal City Corporation
6	Jahanara Begum	Vice President, Para Committee	Reserved Seat 4-5-6	Barisal City Corporation
7	Kohinoor Begum	Activist and General Member	Reserved Seat 7-8-9	Barisal City Corporation

8	Kamrun Nahar Rosy	Activist and General Member	Reserved Seat 13-14-15	Barisal City Corporation
9	Isran Jahan Rupa	Activist and General Member	Reserved Seat 16-17-18	Barisal City Corporation
10	Salma Akter Shila	Activist and General Member	Reserved Seat 19-20-21	Barisal City Corporation

Output 3: Intensifying Women's Human Rights Movements through Networking

Networking has emerged as another area of major success of BMP. Over the years, the organization has been able to consolidate and expand its networks with local, national and international organizations and groups dedicated to interventions in human rights, women rights and development actions. It has spurred women's human rights movements, which play a crucial role in establishing their rights and status in a society. Without a strong movement, particularly in a society of developing country, it is almost impossible to change the rules and regulations for recognising and establishing women's human rights. BMP has intervened in different ways towards mobilizing and forging various forces to wage an effective movement. Throughout the year of 2013 BMP remained engaged in pushing the agenda of women's human rights as reflected in the planned outputs under this component.

Table 3.12: Status of Achievements in Intensifying Women's Human Rights Movements, 2013

Sl.	Areas of Intervention	Activities		Achievement Status and Comments
		Planned	Actual	
3.1.1	a. Promote and improve women reproductive and sexual health right b. Influencing policy (National health policy, PRSP national budget, national educational policy) c. Campaign (Poster, leaflet, TV spot) d. Advocacy and Lobby Sharing/ discussion meeting with GO/ NGO/ Civil Society/ Policy maker	01 Program	01	Achieved
3.1.2	Empowerment and encouragement of young girl in sexual and reproductive health right Discussion / Sharing/ Workshop (Educational Institution / Workplace/ Community) Central	Central: 9	Not done	Not achieved Not achieved

Sl.	Areas of Intervention	Activities		Achievement Status and Comments
		Planned	Actual	
3.1.3	a. To review status of maternal health (Early child birth complication) b. To review of impact on sexual and gender based violence on health c. Impact on violence on psychological health of child	01 Program	Not Done	Not achieved
3.1.4	Discussion Meeting / Sharing meeting / Survey/ Research/ Study:1	01 Program	Not Done	Not achieved
3.1.5	Programme aiming for prevention of sexual diseases specially HIV/AIDS. round table discussion/ Human Chain / Rally/ Seminar/ Confesence-1	01 Program	Not Done	Not achieved
3.1.6	Establishing women's health right through networking : (Introduction of sex education in curriculum, access to sex education, ensure supply of rational use of drugs, contraceptive as essential drug, Resist drug/ drug addiction causing health hazards. Human health friendly (Campaign) Advocate six month maternal leave for promoting exclusive breast feeding Intervening: Sharing Meeting -1	01 Sharing Meeting	Not done	Not achieved
3.2.1	Observance of international women's day: Conduct meeting /Seminar / Sharing Meeting / Human Chain /Rally/ Press conference/ for establishing constitutional rights of women- 1 (venue cost, entertainment, communications, greeting cards, poster, materials etc.)	1 Program	1 Program	100%
3.2.2	Observance of CEDAW day: Conduct exchange of views for situation analysis of CEDAW implementation -1 (venue cost, entertainment, communications, poster, stickers, materials etc.)	1 Program	Done	Achieved
3.2.3	Linkage and Networking with global/ international Platform: Sharing meeting, postal cost, communication greetings card 100,000	2 issues	2 issues (8 th March, Card 4000, Poster- 15,000; New Year 2013	100%

Sl.	Areas of Intervention	Activities		Achievement Status and Comments
		Planned	Actual	
			Greetings, Card- 5000)	

III.3.i. Details of area specific interventions under output 3

3.1.1 Promoting and improving women reproductive and sexual health rights through influencing policy, campaign, advocacy and lobby

BMP promotes women health rights through improvement of women reproductive and sexual health in Bangladesh. In this regard, the organization considers that there is a need for influencing policy, running campaign, advocacy and lobby. Bangladesh Mahila Parishad and Obstacle and Gynaecological Society of Bangladesh jointly observed Safe Motherhood Day at Central Shahid Minar on 28th May 2013. This year theme of the day is “Take Care of Expecting Mother, Prevent Mother’s Mortality.” Representatives from BMP, members of Obstacle and Gynaecological Society, doctors, medical students participated in the Gathering. To mark the day district branches of BMP also took initiative to highlight the significance of the day and make people aware of maternal and child health care. A total of 11 districts successfully organized meetings on the occasion of Safe Maternal Health. The Health, Environment and Social Welfare Sub-Committee undertook some programmes for raising adolescent and reproductive health rights awareness among young girls during this period through central and district branches.

In 2013 BMP responded urgently to different national disaster and crisis moments of nation on humanitarian ground. For instance, a deadly Tornado took place in the Brahmanbaria district in March 2013. BMP wholeheartedly took initiative for help and stand beside the people severely affected by the Tornado at Brahmanbaria. Representatives of central committee members, Narayangonj district committee, Brahmonbaria district committee members visited the affected area and expressed their solidarity and sympathy. They distributed cash money among the 60 families in 3 different spots. General Secretary of BMP, Maleka Banu, Mass Media Secretary Kazi Sufia Akhter, President of Narayangonj District branch, Rakhhi Chokroborty, and Organizational Secretary Rina Ahmed visited other area and BMP central committee took the initiative of collecting warm cloths and distributed to the distressed families in different parts of the country through its branches.

Table 3.13: Observance of Safe Motherhood Day at the District Level

Sl	District	Event	Date and Place	Participants	President
1	Rajshahi	Discussion Meeting	28-05-2013 Branch Office	28	Abida Raishan Tuli
2	Faridpur	Discussion Meeting	28-05-2013 Branch Office	BMP Members	Shipra Roy
3	Pabna	Discussion Meeting	28-05-2013 Branch Office	BMP Members	Gaziul Alam
4	Rajbari	Discussion Meeting	28-05-2013 Branch Office	47	Laily Nahar
5	Dinajpur	Discussion Meeting	28-05-2013 Branch Office	BMP Members	Mahbuba Khatun
6	Shawrapkathi	Discussion	28-05-2013	26	Laily Jahan

		Meeting	Branch Office		
7	Magura	Discussion Meeting	28-05-2013 Branch Office	BMP Members	Laboni Zaman
8	Kurigram	Discussion Meeting	28-05-2013 Branch Office	80	Rowshan Ara Chowdhury
9	Madhukhali	Discussion Meeting	28-05-2013 Branch Office	30	Rijia Hossain
10	Kawkhali	Discussion Meeting	28-05-2013 Branch Office	40	Jahanur Begum
11	Jessore	Discussion Meeting	28-05-2013 Branch Office	50	Suriya Sharif

Table 3.14: Support for disaster related victims, 2013

	Date	District	Places	Item	Number
1	7 th January 2013	Jessore	Hajrakathi, Monirampur, Jikorgacha, Bahadarpur, Ralegate, Bejpara, Rajgonj, Ghop	Blanket	45
2	25 January	Faridpur	Faridpur	Blanket	-
3	7-27 January	Rajshahi University	Katakali, Shampur, Sundorpur, kakonhat, Godabari, Kajla, Ponchobati	Warm Cloths	100
4	17 th January	Kustia	Rail station	Warm Cloths	-
5	3 rd February	Habigonj	Lalchand	Blanket	150
6	8 th February	Sunamgonj	Jamalganj, Mohanpur,	Blanket	205
7	24 th January	Rajbari	Dhunji area	Blanket	-
8	29 th March	Brahmanbaria	Sultanpur Union, Akhaura Upazialla	Cash, cloth, household materials	74 family

3.2.1 Observance of International Women's Day

BMP observed International Women's Day on 8 March 2013 with great enthusiasm and active participation of people with a slogan on "Let's Stop Violence against Women, Let's Build a Peaceful Family and State". On this occasion BMP in its own initiative and jointly with Social Action Committee organized various programmes. The Central Movement and International Sub-Committee of BMP jointly invited the district branches to observe the day. All 33 women organizations of SAC, human rights organizations and development organizations organized a huge procession and rally with the slogan "Increase reserved seats for women by one third in the National Parliament and direct election." The procession was held at the premise of the Central Shahid Minar and was chaired by the Executive Director, Manusher Jonno Foundation, Shahin Anam. The procession was completed by Acting President of BMP Dr. Fauzia Moslem delivered her speech in TSC Mor. Total 1000 were participated the program. The International Sub committee also Published 15000 copies of posters and 4000 copies of card were distributed on this occasion. These posters and card were distributed to different embassies, Development partners, Ministries, Directorate, Media,

International Organization , Social Action Committee, Civil society organizations, District branched of BMP. 17 District branches of BMP organized different programs on the occasion of International Women's day. Moreover, 21 branches of BMP successfully organized different program like rally, seminar, and discussion meeting on the occasion of Women's Day.

Table 3.15: Observance of International Women's Day 2013 at the District Level

Sl	District	Event	Date and Place	Participants	President
1	Shawrapkathi	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	60	
2	Rajshahi University Branch	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	42	
3	Kumarkhali	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	102	Hosne Ara Ruby
4	Chittagong	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	56	Latifa Kabir
5	Kustia	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	33	Asma Ferdous
6	Tangail	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	30	Shamsun Nahar
7	Magura	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	43	Momtaz Begum
8	Dinajpur	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	BMP Members	
9	Rajbari	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	BMP Members	Laily Nahar
10	Natore	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	300	Firoja Sultana
11	Sunamganj	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	68	Jahanara Begum
12	Rajshahi	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	39	Shahin Akhter
13	Modhukhali	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	BMP Members	Jesmin Akhter
14	Tongi	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	200	Nurjahan
15	Kawkhali	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	110	Jahanur Begum
16	Rangamati	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	30	Konika Barua
17	Narayanganj	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	BMP Members	Lakhi Chakrabarty
18	Bagerhat	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	200	
19	Kolomkanda	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	109	Rowshan Ara Parvin
20	Netrokona	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	70	Raisa Mannan Lily

21	Narshingdi	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	BMP Members	Joyoshree Saha
22	Pirojpur	Discussion Meeting	8-03-2013 Branch Office	BMP Members	

3.2.2 Observance of CEDAW day

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organized a human chain in observance of the International CEDAW Day on 3 September, 2013 Tuesday at 3 p.m in front of the national Press club, Dhaka. Representative of Central Committee member of BM P, Dhaka Mohanagar Committee member and all staff of BMP took part in the human chain. In this year BMP observed International CEDAW day in the theme of “*State should condemn violence against women and should not invoke any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligation with respect to its elimination*” and “*We demand ratification of Article 2 and 16.(c) of CEDAW and its full implementation*”.

Ayesha Khanam, President of BMP, General Secretary, Maleka Banu, Movement Secretary, Rekha Chowdhury and International Secretary, Rekha Saha gave speech in the human chain. Speaker urged the government for full ratification of Article 2 and 16.(c) of CEDAW and its full implementation and inclusion of CEDAW article into the national law. Speaker also said, unless the full implementation of the human rights bill, BMP will persist the movement for demand of full implementation and withdrawal of reservation of article 2 and article 16 (c) of CEDAW.

The International Sub-Committee of BMP also published 50,000 posters as a part of its CEDAW Day observance. These posters were distributed to different embassies, Development partners, Ministries, Directors, Media, International Organization, Social Action Committee, Civil society organizations, District branches of BMP. 17 District branches of BMP organized different programs on the occasion of CEDAW day.

Table 3.16: Observance of CEDAW Day at the District Level

Sl.	District	Event	Date & Venue	Participants	President
1	Mymensingh Branch	Discussion Meeting	3 rd September, BMP office	Participant:35	Ferdous ara Mahmuda
2	Kushtia Branch	Discussion Meeting	3 rd September, BMP office	44	Fatema Begum
3	Shorupkathi Branch	Discussion Meeting	3 rd September, BMP office	30	Najnin Murshida
4	Rangamati	Discussion Meeting	3 rd September, BMP office	44	Konika Barua
5	Rajshahi Branch	Discussion Meeting	3 rd September, BMP office	22	Rehana Begum
6.	Jessore Branch	Discussion Meeting	5 th September, BMP office	18	Habiba Shefa
7	Chittagong Branch	Discussion Meeting	6 th September, BMP office	25	Roma Mohori
8	Pirojpur Branch	Discussion Meeting	3 rd September, BMP office	62	Manika Mondol

9	Netrokona	Discussion Meeting	3 rd September, BMP office	30	Raisa Mannan
10	Kolmakanda	Discussion Meeting	3 rd September, BMP office	BMP members	Nila Biswas
11	Kishoreganj	Rally & Discussion Meeting	3 rd September, BMP office	45	Sultana Rajia
12	Tongi Branch	Discussion Meeting	3 rd September, BMP office	BMP members	Anwar Begum
13	Barguna	Discussion Meeting	3 rd September, BMP office	40	Baby De
14	Khulna	Rally & Discussion Meeting	3 rd September, BMP office	BMP members	Delwar Begum
15	Natore	Discussion Meeting	8 th September, BMP office	30	Dilara Begum
16	Modhukhali	Discussion Meeting	10 th September, BMP office	60	Shahida Akram
17	Barisal	Discussion Meeting	10 th September, BMP office	BMP Members and Students	Jahanara Begum

3.2.2 Motivation meeting on female and adolescent reproductive health in District level

Three meetings were held to motivate female and adolescent reproductive health in different educational institutions and central office. The first meeting was held at the St. Scholastica School, Chittagong on 15 January 2013. The meeting was participated by 185 students and teachers. The second meeting was organized on 31 December 2013 at Anandamayi High School, Brahmanbaria. The third motivational meeting was held at Pangsha, Rajbari where 76 students attended in two campaigns.

3.2.3 Linkage and Networking with global/ international Platform

BMP is regionally and globally renowned women and human rights organization. It closely works with international and regional bodies such as ECOSOC, International Centre for Women, Global Fund for Women, International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific, Japan 2050, and UN Women Bangladesh Chapter etc. BMP regularly maintains linkages and networks with global and regional movements and institutions, which contributes to effective implementation of its programs and activities towards women empowerment. BMP works jointly, bilaterally and in groups on different issue like CEDAW advocacy and report writing, drafting law, resist VAW etc. In 2013 UN Women Bangladesh Chapter has started working independently and the president of BMP participated in international workshop for Work Plan 2014-2016 held on 24 September 2013. BMP also attended the 57th Session of CSW held on 3 March 2013. For the first time, an NGO parallel event was organized by BMP as ECOSOC affiliated civil society organization.

Major Networking Partners of BMP at the International Level

International Women Rights Action Watch- Asia Pacific (IWRAP), Kenya; Agro-forestry, Basic health and Co-operatives (ABC), Nepal; SAMHATI, USA; Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), Japanese Women's Committee 2050, Japan; Centre for Women's Global Leadership, USA; Aurat Foundation, Pakistan; North East Network (NEN), India; Confederation of Voluntary Associations (COVA), India; Federation of Business & Professional Women- Nepal (FBPWN); National Federation of Indian Women (NFIW), India; International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES), Sri Lanka; Durbar, India; Sakhi Resource Centre for Women, India; Nirantar, India; Shirkat Gah, Pakistan; JAGORI, India; SANGAT, India; Global Fund for Women, UN WOMEN; UNESCAP; UNDP; and ECOSOC.

Output Four: Effective Functioning as a Lobby and Advocacy Agent

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) demonstrated enormous capacity to function as a lobby and advocacy agent of women in Bangladesh in order to establish their rights and to protect their interests. The organisation has been visible at many important local, national and international meetings, workshops, seminars and so on. It has effectively acted as an agent of lobby and advocacy forum to sensitise the state and non-state agencies and organizations about women rights and issues. Besides, in many cases, it has been continuously drawing attention of these agencies and organisations to the plight of women.

Table 3.17: Status of Achievements in Functioning as a Lobby & Advocacy Agent

SL.	Areas of Interventions	Activities		Achievement Status
		Planned	Actual	
4.1.1	Submit deputation and memorandum to concerned law enforcement authorities – As per necessarily	As per necessity	Total 2508 Correspondence sent to various Ministries of Govt. and law enforcement agencies	Done
4.2.1	Carryout Women Human Right Movement and resist VAW through alliance Networking (SAC) – Sharing Meeting/ Round table discussion/Press Conference /Human Chain / Street Movement / Lobby/ National	Central Level: 2 Grass root level: 10	02	100%

SL.	Areas of Interventions	Activities		Achievement Status
		Planned	Actual	
4.2.2	Carry out lobby and advocacy for good governance and strengthening local government – Submission of memorandum Workshops at divisional level Sharing Meeting: 1 Participants: 120	1	1	Achieved
4.2.4	a. Awareness campaign on responsibility, accountability, transparency of elected representatives at national and local govt. tiers, administration and relevant areas b. Monitoring to assess the status	Grass root level: 10	-	-
4.2.5	Documentation – Grass root level	Grass root level: 10		-
4.2.6	Survey	1	-	
4.2.7	Workshop	01	-	-
4.2.8	Documentation	01	-	-
4.2.9	Advocacy lobby for democracy and good Governance through intensive networking e.g. Social Action Committee (Parliamentary Committees/ Women Caucus/ Political Parties/ Civil Society organization) Sharing meeting / discussion / press conference	2	2	100%
4.3.1	Publishing Mahila Samachar	4 Issues	4 Issues	100%
4.3.2	Distribution of Mahila Samachar,	4,500/4,800 Copy	10,000 published	Achieved
4.3.3	Publication of English bulletin: brusher/other information Materials	Publication of an English Bulletin		Under process
4.3.4	Publication of Annual Report (English) & project completion report	Annual Report (English)	Annual Report published in March, 2014	Done
4.3.5	Publication of Annual Report(Bengali)	Annual Report (Bengali)	Annual Report	Published

SL.	Areas of Interventions	Activities		Achievement Status
		Planned	Actual	
4.3.6	Publication of journal	Publication of Mahila Parishad Journal, 2 Issues	3 rd Issue 2013	Achieved
4.3.7	Poster and leaflets	4 Posters And 3 Leaflets	1. 4 posters, 8 March National Conference, CEDAW, VAW 2. Leaflet issues of poster and 1 issue of leaflet	100%
4.4.1	Conduct Advocacy/ lobby with Media Professionals on Women's human rights issue with Media Professionals/ Politician/ women activities/ Professors/resource person: Discussion/Sharing meeting / Roundtable/ Seminar/ Training workshop/meet the press etc.	03	03	Achieved 100%
4.4.2	Documentation of above Code	01	01	Achieved
4.4.3	a. Publish special supplements in national dailies on political / economical/ social empowerment of women-1 b. Produce TV spot:1	a. 01 b. 01		Not done due to political violence
4.4.4	Screening on BTV 4 times within 2 month: 1	Four times within 2 months in 2012:1	Not done	Not done
4.4.5	Networking with Media	4	4	100%

III.4.i. Details of area specific interventions under output 4

4.1.1 Submission of deputation and memorandum

BMP submitted deputation and memoranda to concerned law enforcement authorities in Bangladesh. In this regard, the organization made a total of 2508 correspondences to various ministries and law enforcement agencies in 2013.

Table 3.18: Correspondence with concerned authorities to resist VAW

Sl. No.	Authorities	No. of Correspondence	Response
1	Prime Minister	65	In response concerned authorities took necessary steps.
2	Minister of Home Affairs	115	
4	MOWCA	07	
7	Inspector General of Police (IGP)	133	
8	District Commissioner (DC) & Deputy Police Commissioner	718	
10	Superintend of Police (SP)	718	
11	Officer of In charge (OC)	718	
12	Other Ministry	13	
13	Others	21	

Social Action Committee (SAC)

Under the leadership of BMP, the Social Action Committee (the platform of 67 women, human rights and development organisations) jointly undertook some notable programmes in 2013 in order to establish women rights, to resist VAW, to raise awareness among ordinary people irrespective of gender, and to ensure women empowerment. BMP through its centre and district branches implemented the following programmes in association with the Social Action Committee.

- Celebration of International Women's Day on 9th March, 2013
- Human Chain was organised on 09 January 2013 demanding social resistance and awareness about rape, gangrape and murders.
- Sharing meeting was held at the CIRDAP Auditoriumn 24 January 2013 on "Let's Conscience of the Society Awake".

4.2.1 Movement through Alliance Networking (SAC)

Social Action Committee, an alliance of 64 women, human rights and development organizations organized a human chain in front of National Press Club for protesting against rape, gang rape and all kinds of violence against women on 9th January 2013. In this human chain 150 members from 14 organizations namely Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Step Towards Development, Ain o Salish Kendra, Bangladesh Nari Progotu Sangha, Karmajibi Nari, Nari Sangbadik Kendra, BAWSE, Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra, Care Bangladesh, Pali Daridra Bimochon Foundation, Brac, NFOWD, Bills, Nari Sromik Jote took part in the event. In this human chain the speakers asserted that women could no longer be treated as property by men. It is important to call for a strong countrywide social protest movement to end violence against women and abuse of them. Those involved in the abuse, rape or murder of women, should be punished strictly without-delay, the speakers demanded in the human chain.

Human Chain against rape and gang rape and all kinds of Violence against women with Social Action Committee

Social Action committee an alliance of 64 Women, Human rights and development organizations organized a human chain in front of National Parliament (Near Rajdhani School) for protesting against rape, gang rape and all kinds of violence against women on 4th February 2013. The Human Chain was participated by more than 30 representatives from 25 organizations. The speakers urged the lawmakers to raise and discuss the issue of violence

against women in Parliament to solve the problem. At the protest rally, they argued that duty of MPs is not only to make laws, but also they need to ensure effective implementation of laws. After rally 9-member group submitted a memorandum to the Honourable Speaker of the National Parliament demanding for bringing a bill in the National Parliament to end violence against women.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organized a sharing meeting for resisting violence against women at CIRDAP Auditorium, on 24th January, 2013 at 3.00 p.m. **Ayesha Khanam**, President, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad chaired this program. Among others General Secretary, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, Maleka Banu, activist Rokeya Parchi, Media Personality Mithila Farzana, Psychiatric Sahida Chowdhury, Journalist from Prothom Alo Faruq Wasif raised their voice against violence against women. Jana Goswami Advocacy Director presented a keynote paper on behalf of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad. Legal Advocacy Director Adv. Maksuda Akhter Lailee conducted the meeting.

Procession against Assaults of Female Journalist during Hefajat- e Islam Demonstration

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organized a procession against assault of a female journalist during Hefajat-e-Islam demonstration on 6th April 2013 from the National Press Club to Zero Point. BMP condemned and criticised Hefazat's demands that are conflicting with the Constitution. BMP leaders demanded a proper trial of the perpetrators. The leaders of BMP told that when the country was moving towards becoming a middle-income nation with contribution from works of both women and men, the Hefazat wanted to keep women inside the house. The acting President, Dr Fawzia Moslem led the procession. More than 100 women leaders and organizers took part in this procession. The event was widely covered by the print media (Jugantar, Janakantha, Bhorer Kagoj, Kaler Kantha, Shangbad, Samakal, Independent, Protham Alo, Ittefaq, and New Age).

4.2.2 Carry out lobby and advocacy for good governance and strengthening local government

BMP organized a divisional Workshop on The Role of Local Government in Establishing Democracy and Good Governance and Empowerment of People's Representatives at Master Chief Conference Room, Rajshahi on 13 September 2013. The Workshop was presided over by the president of Rajsjahi District BMP, Abida Raihan Buli. Organizers and women representatives from Rajshahi, Rajshahi University and Naogaon District took part in the workshop. A total number of 49 women representatives participated in the workshop while the acting Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation, Shafiqul Islam Babu was present as the chief guest. The workshop played a key in understanding the problems of women representatives in their local constituencies.

There are 31 memorandums and 16 Deputations on different issues were published in the Daily National Paper.

4.2.9 Programmes at central and grass-root levels

A Protibadi Nari Gono Samabesh(protest rally) was organized by the women of all strata of different social, cultural and non- government organization including Social Action Committee in front of the national Press club on 11th May at 3 p.m. More than 104 organizations participated in the program. The Protibadi Nari Gono Samabesh was organized vowed to resist every ill-attempt of fundamentalists and communal forces to impede women empowerment and contain their progress and rights.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad acted as the co-ordinator of this program . For preparation of this gathering 6 sub-committees were formed and more than 15 meetings were held of these sub-committees in Bangladesh Mahila Parishad's office. President of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad Ayesha Khanam chaired the gathering. More than 40 thousand women and men attended in the gathering. The speakers of gathering said Hefajat-e- Islam through 13 point demand wanted to keep women confined and curb their rights to push the country back to the medieval age. Several women rights activists, political leaders, social movement activists, women leaders, garments worker, students spoke in this gathering. the speaker urged all women to build strong resistance from their own grounds against communalism and fundamentalism. They also called for forming a unity of all democratic and progressive forces for building up a non- communal and democratic Bangladesh free from gender disparity. Chair of the gathering Ayesha Khanam asked all political parties especially the main opposition BNP, not to passionate anti- liberation forces and fanatics to secure political gain. She urged politicians not to use those who traded in religion in the name of voting equation. Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Dr. A.A. Arefin Siddique, Gonojagoron Mancha spoke person Dr. Imran H. Sarker spoke in the gathering by expressing solidarity. BTV, Channel-I, Desh TV broadcasted the live program. Different leaders of political parties, Members of Parliament, authors participated in this rally and expressed their solidarity. BMP condemns all sorts of gross violence in war and conflicts.

BMP continues its movement for trial of War Criminals' 71 by whom millions of women were tortured, raped, sexually assaulted and murdered along with performing other war crimes. The process of trial already started. BMP and the people of the country are seriously monitoring the process for completion of the speedy trial and punishment of the culprits. It will advance the country one step advance towards ensuring women's human rights and establishing rule of law. BMP has strongly stood up against discrimination and oppression on the women of marginalized people, indigenous people, minority community, physically disabled people. BMP is giving effort to include all in mainstreaming women's movement.

A Press Conference was organized on 27 May 2013 at the Conference Room of the National Press Club demanding the establishment of secular, democratic and gender equal society and state. The president of the central committee of BMP, Ayesha Khanam moderated and responded to the questions. Journalists from 32 media houses were present in the Press Conference. A total of 103 persons including members of central committee, Advisory council and national council participated in the program. The speakers of the conference focused on equal rights of all citizens regardless of gender, nation, religion and race. It condemned religion-based politics or use of religion for political purpose and attempts for communal disharmony. It called for the re-establishment of the 1972 Constitution, trial of war criminals and protection of women rights. The event was subsequently covered as a news item in nine national newspapers on 28 June 2013.

A Protibadi Samabesh was organized by Social Action Committee on 25th July 2013 at Engineering Institution Auditorium at 10.30a.m-2.00p.m . More than 500 hundred representatives of 27 organizations participated in the program. The Protibadi Samabesh was organized vowed to resist every ill-attempt of religious fundamentalism, patriarchy chain and communalism forces to impede women empowerment and contain their progress and rights.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad acted as the co-ordinator of this program

4.3.1-4.3.7 Publication and Dissemination

During the year 2013, the period covered in the report, BMP published 3 issues of the *Mahila Samacher*, the quarterly journal brought out by the organization. The issues were published on October-December, 2012, January-March, 2013, and April-June, 2013 respectively. Each of the issues consisted of special features and write-ups by BMP leaders and activists on selected subjects. A total of 174,500 copies of *Mahila Samacher* were published and distributed

among different individuals and organisations. Key issues highlighted in the *Mahila Samacher* are mentioned in the following boxes.

January-March 2013

- ✓ Liberation of Bangladesh and Current Context
- ✓ Political Empowerment of Women: Direct Election for Reserved Seats for Women
- ✓ Resistance of VAW: Constitutional and Political Obligations
- ✓ Publication and Literature on Women Movement based on Ekushe
- ✓ Let Conscience of the Society Awake

April-June 2013

- ✓ Anti-Fundamentalism and Anti Communalism Movement and Sufia Kamal
- ✓ Jagoter Anandajogge Amar Nimantran
- ✓ Allocation for Women in National Budget
- ✓ 43rd Anniversary of BMP
- ✓ Resistance of Communalism and Fundamentalism

July-September 2013

- ✓ CEDAW as the Achievement of Women Movement and State Compulsions
- ✓ The Role Media in Communal Harmony and Protection of Women Rights in Bangladesh
- ✓ The Extended Meeting of the Central Committee
- ✓ Demand for the Better Working Environment for Women Workers in the Garments Factories

Mahila Parishad Journal 2013

The Mahila Parishad Journal has entered in its third year of publications in 2013. The first issue of the *Mahila Parishad Journal* in 2013 was published in the month of June. It covers a wide range of issues concerning communalism, fundamentalism, allocation of budget for women, food security, and women in the society. Eminent scholars and writers have contributed to the Journal.

Other Publications

- Sufia Kamal Sharok Boktrita 2013
- Annual Report 2012 [in English]
- Report on Internal Annual Planning Implementation and Monitoring Review Meeting 2013
- The 12th Annual Conference Report 2013
- A Souvenir on the occasion of the 12th Annual Conference, 2013
- Report on Roundtable Meeting with Women journalists, 2013
- Reports on Divisional Workshop 2013

4.4.1 Advocacy/Lobby on Women's Human Rights

BMP organized seminar on “**the Role of Media in Protecting Women Rights and Communal Harmony in Bangladesh**” at both central and district levels. On 22 July, 2013, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad organised a seminar at the CIRDAP Auditorium while the same event was organized in Narayanganj and Dinajpur on 7 September and 13 September, 2013 respectively. Ayesha Khanam, president of BMP presided over the seminar held in Dhaka.

The Media Secretary of BMP, Kazi Sufia presented a keynote paper while Maleka Banu, the General Secretary of BMP delivered a welcome address. A total of 105 participants attended the seminar. The speakers expressed the concern about the rising communal divide as a threat to peaceful and liberal society in Bangladesh. They emphasized upholding of secular and Liberation War values to build the society and state. The speakers condemned politics with religion in Bangladesh. During open discussion, participants highlighted the need for establishing a secular society where justice and women rights will be ensured. There is a need for re-introduction of the 1972 Constitution, review of Madrasa Curriculum and revisit the Liberation War values. The news of the seminar was widely published and circulated in different electronic and print media.

A Discussion Meeting on ***“Communal Harmony in Bangladesh”*** and ***“The Role of Media in Protecting Women Rights Communal Harmony in Bangladesh”*** was held on 7 September 2013 at Narayanganj Press Club, Narayanganj organized by the BMP Central Media and Mass Communication sub committee. The meeting was participated by national and local journalists. Laksmi Chakrabarty, president of BMP Narayanganj presided over the meeting. Kazi Sufia Akhter presented the keynote paper. The speakers discussed the problems of communalism and the role of media in addressing this problem. Media can play a very positive role to portray objective news about social progress and development. It can expose major political parties for their contradictions and double standard about communal politics in Bangladesh. The new Islamic outfit Hefazat-e-Islam and its 13-point demand is a threat to secularism in the country.

A sharing meeting on ***“the Role of Media in Protecting Women Rights and Communal Harmony in Bangladesh”*** was held on 13 September 2013 at the Dinajpur Press Club Auditorium, Dinajpur. The BMP district president presided over the meeting where national and local journalists actively took part in discussion. In her keynote address Kazi Sufia Akhter mentioned that the region was famous for movement against deprivation. Women rights and movement are not only for women, but also for all members in the society. Communal harmony is of utmost necessity for democratic and peaceful society in Bangladesh. .

4.4.5 Networking with Media

Under the intervention area of Networking with Media, BMP Media and Mass Communication Sub-Committee organized seminars and sharing meeting in 2013 with media professionals. The first seminar was on 22 July 2013 at the CIRDAP Auditorium. The Executive Editor of the Daily Star, Mr. Syed Badrul Ahsan, Joint Editor, Abdul Kaiyum of the Prothom Alo and Samia Zaman chief executive officer of Channel 71 were present as the Special Guests. Ayesha Khanam, President of BMP presided over the meeting while Kazi Sufia Akhter coordinated the session. A total of 105 participants including a large number of national media professionals attended this meeting and expressed their gratitude to BMP for working on establishing women's rights in Bangladesh. They also made commitment to continue their wholehearted support for activities of BMP. The seminar focused on the role of media in communal harmony and protection of women rights.

A seminar was organized on 13 September 2013 at the Dinajpur Press Club Auditorium. Fifty three participants from district level members, organizers and journalists attended the seminar. The seminar also focused on the role of media in communal harmony and protection of women rights in the society. The event was presided over by the BMP district branch president Kaniz Rahman. BMP Mass Media Secretary Kazi Sufia Akhter presented a keynote paper. On the same theme, the BMP Media and Mass Communication Sub-Committee organized a

sharing meeting in Narayanganj on 7 September 2013. BMP district branch president Laksmi Chakrabarty chaired the meeting which focused on the rising threat from fundamentalism and communalism for women's progress. Mass media subcommittee also maintained contacts with media regularly to publish special supplement and organize TV Talk show on women issues to observe different important. It's a big achievement of mass media subcommittee that the most popular newspapers of Bangladesh – regularly published the programme news of BMP.

Output Five: BMP is Further Strengthened and Developed through Capacity Building towards Sustainability and Institutionalization

Organisational strength of BMP is the driving force behind its success since the days of its establishment. General members, activists and organisers are the key forces in this regard. As an organisation BMP has further improved its capacity through better skills and knowledge of its human resources as well as institutional development. The work plan of BMP in 2013 particularly focused on consolidating present strength for long term sustainability of the organisation, reinforcement of the leadership and taking steps for strengthening young generation as a force of the organisation.

Table 3.19: Programmes and participants at central and district levels

2012						2013					
Implemented Programs			Participants			Implemented Programs			Participants		
Centre	Dist.	Total	Centre	Dist.	Total	Centre	Dist.	Total	Centre	Dist.	Total
117	1898	2015	29541	63399	92940	108	2738	2846	38330	52951	91281

In 2013, BMP undertook 2,846 programmes in which 2,738 and 108 were implemented at district and central levels respectively. Notably, there had been 91,281 participants in different programs of BMP in 2013 out of which 52,951 were from the district branches and the rest from the centre. The continuing improvement of organisational capacity of BMP is the outcome of sustained programmes and activities like training and workshops, support for legal activism, networking at all levels and precision in actions.

Table 3.20: Summary of Achievements in Improving Organisational Capacity

SL.	Areas of Interventions	Activities		Achievement Status
		Planned	Actual	
5.1.1	Paralegal Training for the organizer at district & branch level	16 Trainings	12 Trainings	Achieved 75%
5.1.2	Divisional Training for the leaders (TOT)	1	1 Training	Achieved
5.1.3	Conduct Legal literacy Training for young women	1	01	Achieved
5.1.4	Village Watch Training	5	Village Watch Trainings: 3	Achieved
5.1.5	Motivational Programme in Grass root level & Central	Central: 4 Grassroots: 2	04	Achieved
5.1.6	Awareness Raising/Legal Literacy Training for Young/Students	7	05	Achieved
	Seminar/Workshop		01	Achieved

5.1.7	(University/College/School)	2		
5.1.8	Consultation and dialogue for Advocacy for Implementation of UFC & other laws (Concert/Docudrama & others)	1	01 Program	Achieved/Target Surpassed
5.1.9	Advocacy for Domestication of CEDAW	As per necessity	01 program	Achieved
5.1.10	Publication (Legal Aid) – Training Module & Report	VAW activities report-1	Training Module published. 3 rd Part of the Report was newly printed, while 1 st & 2 nd Parts have been reprinted.	Achieved
5.1.11	UFC Publication	Under process	Will be published in 2014	Not Done
5.1.12	External Consultation for Organizational Development	5 Staffs		On going
5.1.13	Training Need Assessment	5 Staffs		On going
5.1.14	Sustainability and Fund Raising Consultant	5 Staffs		On going
5.1.15	Advanced English and report writing skill training for staffs (Research & Monitoring)	5	1 staff	Partially Achieved
5.1.16	Research Methodology Training	5	Under Process	Not Achieved
5.1.17	Office Management, Financial Management & Computer Application Training	5	Under Process	Not Achieved
5.1.18	Project Monitoring & Evaluation	5 Staffs	Under Process	Not Achieved
5.1.19	Project Management Course for Staffs	5 Staffs	Under Process	Not Achieved
5.1.20	Financial Analysis for Decision Making Training	5 Staffs	Under Process	Not Achieved
5.1.21	Workshop/Seminar for Central Committee members on Project Design, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation, Report Writing, Advocacy, Research and Consultancy, Advanced Management System and Practices	1 Program	Under Process	Not Achieved
5.1.22	Internal Audit Training for Internal Auditor and Roving Accountant	-	--	--
5.3.1	Increase membership – Conduct Organisational meeting for build up branch committee	12	11	91%
5.3.2	Conduct Training on Organizational Capacity Building (Regular and refreshers)	26	25	96%
5.3.3	Organisational Tour	16	2	12%
5.3.4	District Conference	27	15	64%

5.3.5	Conduct Sharing Meeting for Organiser regarding district Conference	27 27	15	64%
5.3.6	Conduct Motivational Programme for women, men and young women at grass root level for raising awareness on women human rights issue	15	17	113%
5.3.7	Awareness raising and Motivational Programme with young women in grassroots level	11	11	100%
5.3.8	Conduct Sharing meeting with women in profession	1	01	Achieved
5.3.9	Conduct Sharing Meeting with Indigenous women	1	0	Not done
5.3.10	Workshop with the organisers to build up leader (at Central level)	1	01	Achieved
5.3.11	Workshop with the organisers to build up divisional leader	2	02	Achieved
5.3.12	Activities to focus the strength of district and grass root level branches and consolidation	1	01	Achieved
5.3.13	Organise internal annual planning implementation and monitoring review/workshop	1	01	Achieved
5.3.14	Publication: 1. Monitoring and documentation on organizers activities 2. Update and publish organizational training module 3. Action research and publication on male involvement with BMP			Achieved
5.3.15	Sharing with Civil Society	01	01	Achieved
5.3.16	Memorial lecture on Founder President Poet Sufia Kamal	01	01	Achieved
5.3.17	Provide logistic support to implement organisational activities and to strengthen district branch (Office rent + utility bills)	60	51	85%
5.3.18	National Conference	1	1	Achieved
5.4.1	Conduct capacity building and skill development training (Training for Trainers)	1	1 Participants: 200	Achieved
5.4.3	Conduct training for midlevel organisers at divisional level	1	1	Achieved

5.4.5	Conduct training for grassroots organiser	30	30	Achieved
5.4.6	Conduct Study Circle, Debate	12	12	Achieved
5.4.7	Research Analysis on incidents of VAW	01	01	Achieved
5.4.8	Conduct Subjective Research Study	01	1	Achieved
5.4.10	Certificate/diploma course on Gender Development & Women Empowerment	01	01	Achieved
5.4.11	Collect books and journals, equipment of library	As Per Necessity	As Per Necessity	Achieved
5.4.12	Publication Research on History of Women's Movement in Bangladesh			-
5.5.1	Audit Fees & Others	01	01	Achieved
5.5.2	Internal Audit: To ensure accounts keeping	As Per Necessary	Branch Visit: 20 Central Office: 10	Achieved
5.5.3	Financial Training/ Office Management Training for staff:	05	05	Achieved
5.6.1	Sharing with cultural activities	01	01	Achieved
5.6.2	Cultural Programme	01	01	Achieved

III.5.i. Details of area specific interventions under output 5

5.1.1 Paralegal Training for the organiser at district & branch level

The Paralegal training held for the organizers at district and grassroots branch levels. During this period 16 Paralegal training sessions were held. The training has helped improving the capacity of organizers for legal activism. About 436 organizers have participated in these trainings held in different parts of the country.

Paralegal Trainings (Jan.-Dec.2013)

SL.	Branch	Date	Participants	Trainer
1.	Gazipur	11.03.2013	37	Adv. Maksuda Akhter Adv. Dipti Rani Sikder
2.	Tongi	11.03.2013	36	Adv. Maksuda Akhter Adv. Dipti Rani Sikder Adv. Md. Taufiqul Islam
4.	Khulna	21.03.2013	38	Adv. Maksuda Akhter Adv. Ram Lal Raha
3.	Gopalganj	22.03.2013	23	Adv. Maksuda Akhter Adv. Ram Lal Raha
5.	Kishorgonj	22.04.2013	42	Adv. Maksuda Akhter Adv. Dipti Rani Sikder
6.	Ishorgonj, Mymensing	04.07.2013	51	Adv. Maksuda Akhter

				Adv. Afia Akhter
7.	Dinajpur	24.07.2013	32	Adv. Dipti Rani Sikder Adv. Md. Taufiqul Islam
8.	Kurigram	24.07.2013	35	Adv. Ram Lal Raha Adv. George Chowdhury
9.	Munsigonj	27.12.2013	30	Adv. Dipti Rani Sikder Riazuddin Ahamed
10.	Narsingdi	27.12.2013	34	Adv. Ram Lal Raha Adv. Fatema Khatun
11.	Tangail	27.12.2013	28	Adv. Maksuda Akhter Adv. George Chowdhury
12.	Dhaka City	28.12.2013	50	Adv. Masuda Rehana Begum Adv. Maksuda Akhter Adv. Dipti Rani Sikder Adv. Ram Lal Raha Adv. Fatema Khatun Adv. George Chowdhury
13.	Savar	05.02.2014	49	Adv. Maksuda Akhter Adv. Fatema Khatun Adv. George Chowdhury
14.	Rangpur	17.02.2014	34	Adv. Dipti Rani Sikder Riazuddin Ahamed
15.	Nawgaon	17.02.2014	34	Adv. Ram Lal Raha
16.	Gaibandha	17.02.2014	39	Adv. Maksuda Akhter Adv. George Chowdhury

5.1.2 Divisional training for the leaders (TOT)

BMP organized one divisional training for the leaders (TOT) on 13-14 November 2013. A total of 50 organisers from the districts of Dinajpur, Rangpur, Kurigram, Nilphamari, Gaibandha and Thakurgaon joined the TOT. It created a considerable degree of interests and enthusiasm among the participants about training and thus improving the skills of district and grassroots leaders.

5.1.3 Conduct legal literacy training for young women

The BMP Legal Aid Sub-Committee organized training for young women to improve legal literacy for their involvement in activity related resistance of VAW. In 2013 BMP organized one training program as planned on 20th December 2013 at the Anwara Begum-Munira Khan Auditorium at the Sufia Kamal Bhaban. A total of 45 participants including 28 young women attend the program. The program has been able to involve young women with resistance movement of BMP against VAW.

5.1.4 Village Watch training

Although the target was to hold five training programs to resist VAW for the Village Watch Team, BMP was able to organize five such meetings in 2013 mainly due to political turmoil in the country. The first meeting was held on 21st March 2013 with Khulna district branch. The second meeting was held on 3rd April with Netrokona district branch while the third

training program was organized on 14th September 2013 with Dinajpur district branch. These training programs contributed to motivate and engage 76 members with resistance of VAW movement. They have received better understanding and skill for performing their works.

5.1.5 Motivational programme at grass-roots and central levels

The organisation has been able to arrange 4 such programmes at central level in 2013 that played an important role to motivate the people both at central and grass-roots levels. The training made 271 mass people aware of resistance of VAW movement and also keeping continuation of awareness building activity through discussion meetings.

Table 3.21: Motivational Programme at grass roots and central levels

Sl	Date	Place
1	03.04.2013	Pokuria Village, Netrokona
2	08.07.2013	Bhabnath Para, Sonargaon, Narayanganj
3	29.08.2013	Fulbaria, Mymensingh
4	27.12.2013	Islampur Para, Munshiganj

5.1.6-Awareness raising/legal literacy training for young/ students

BMP organized seven sharing meetings with young students in different parts of the country including Dhaka in order to raise their awareness about different forms of violence against women especially on sexual harassment. There were 41 teachers and 671 students who took part in these programs that contributed to raise their awareness about VAW and its resistance.

Table 3.22: Awareness raising trainings

Sl	Date	Place
1	07.05.2013	Institute of Leather Technology, Dhaka University
2	04.07.2013	Samurta Jahan Mahila Degree College, Nandail, Mymensingh
3	08.07.2013	Godnail High School, Siddirganj, Narayanganj
4	22.08.2013	Agrani Girls School and College, Dhaka
5	27.10.2013	Dhaka Nursing College, Dhaka

5.1.7 Seminar/Workshop (University/College/School)

BMP organized two seminars with teachers and students of the Department of Law, University of Dhaka on 6th October 2013. The theme of the seminar was the proposed Uniform Family Code. Two teachers and 85 students were present.

5.1.8 Consultation and dialogue for advocacy for implementation of UFC & other laws (Concert/Docudrama & others)

As planned, BMP organized one consultation and dialogue for advocacy for implementation of UFC and other laws. In this regard, BMP produced one TV spot on rape. Four TV spots were broadcast in ATN News and Channel 71 on several occasions.

5.1.9 Advocacy for domestication of CEDAW

The organization arranged one sharing meeting about advocacy for domestication of CEDAW on 26th August 2013 at, Narayanganj. There were 96 participants along with bar Association 77 lawyers who attended the program.

5.3.1- Organisational meeting for building up branch committee

A major organizational meeting was held on 28th June 2013 at Sufia Kamal Bhaba. President of BMP, Ayesha Khanam chaired the meeting. It may be noted that BMP became more strengthened with the formation of one new branch committee and thus increasing membership. In 2013 twelve programs were planned and eleven of them were implemented in order to involve and strengthen women's participation in organizational activities. A total number of 1006 persons were present during these programs. During this period one meeting was held at grass root level with the district level participation as well as central organizational sub- committee and district branch committee. The new branch committee expanded the activism of BMP that creates motivation and opportunity to assemble the grassroots women.

5.3.2- Awareness and skill development training for the district organisers

The central organization sub committee and district branches organized 25 awareness and skill development trainings in 2013. More than 917 members and organizers attended the programs. These trainings provided with understanding of charter and activity of BMP, background of women movement in Bangladesh, and approaches of BMP activity and programs. Group works, open discussion and exchange of views at various levels contributed to improve organizational strength and performance.

5.3.3 Organisational tour

Organization tour plays a significant role in strengthening and consolidating district and grass roots level organizations. It also increases communication between the centre and local leadership in the executive committee. These tours enable the central leaders to observe directly the positions of district branches, trust of local people on the district leadership, capacity, skills and accountability of local activists. The objectives of such tours were to strengthen the activities of the district branches through discussion on the problems and challenges faced and strategies to be pursued. In 2013, BMP was able to organize 2 such visits where 44 members and organizers were present.

5.3.4 District conference

According to the constitution of the organization it is necessary to organize district branch conference in every three year. All programs and activities of district branches of BMP in the last three years were presented in the Conference. Work-plan and its implementation procedure were also reviewed in the session. The organization maintains order and continuity by forming a new Executive Committee through this conference. In 2013 BMP Organization sub-committee and district branches organized 15 district conferences against the target of 27. Political situation and field circumstances did not allow holding conferences according to the planned target. However, the district conferences included all programmes and activities of district branches of BMP pursued in the last three years.

5.3.5 Sharing meeting for organizers regarding district conference

Generally, the central leaders get opportunities for exchange of views with district level organizers during the district conferences. In 2013 BMP organized 15 sharing meetings where 157 people were present. The main goal of this program is to find out limitations/barriers of district branches and ways of overcoming them in a participatory framework of discussion. Eventually, it contributes to strengthen the organization.

5.3.6 Motivational programme for women, men and young women at grass root level for raising awareness on women human rights issue

A total of 17 motivational programs for women, men and young women at grassroots level were held in 2013 to raise awareness on women and rights issues. The target for 2013 was 15. These programs contribute to get support towards women human rights movement and also enhance their active participation in the movements.

5.3.7 Awareness raising and motivational programme with young women at grass root level

Young women are major force behind movement in Bangladesh. They need to be aware and motivated about women human rights and justice. In 2013 BMP organized 11 awareness raising and motivational programs at the grassroots level.

5.3.8 Sharing meeting with professional women

As planned, BMP organised one sharing meeting with professional women to exchange views about their working experiences and challenges. The meeting was held on 4 July 2013 at the Kabi Sufia Kamal Auditorium. Ayesha Khanam, president of BMP presided over the meeting while Saraban Tahura, Executive Committee member conducted the discussion. Central leaders of BMP, representatives from different professional groups were present in the meeting. The meeting identified problems, challenges and recommendations for better working environment of professional women in Bangladesh. Speakers emphasized the need for associating more professional women with BMP, safety of professional women, removing all hindrances from families, and improving skills.

5.3.9 Conduct sharing meeting with indigenous women

BMP could not organize any sharing meeting in 2013 with indigenous women due to political situations in Bangladesh.

5.3.10 Workshop with the organizers to build up leadership

As planned, BMP was able to organize one workshop with the organizers for building leadership in 2013.

5.3.11 Workshop with the organizers to build up divisional leader

In 2013 BMP organized two divisional workshops with organizers for building their leadership. Both the workshops were held on 13-14 September 2013 at CIRDAP Auditorium with organizers from two divisions – Sylhet and Khulna. Organizers from district branches of 12 districts participated in the workshops. BMP President Ayesha Khanam chaired the first session on 13 and 14 September while Dr. Fauzia Moslem presided over the second session on 13th September. A total number of 134 participants including BMP General Secretary Maleka Banu and other central leaders were present in the daylong workshop. The workshops identified challenges through discussion and group works. Besides, they also devised strategies to overcome these challenges to further strengthen the leadership capacity.

5.3.12 Activities to focus the strength of district and grass root branches and consolidation

As planned, BMP observed *Organizational Month* in 2013 to consolidate and strengthen district and grassroots branches. A Rally with women workers was organized on 20 September 2013 at Engineers' Institute Auditorium, Dhaka with a slogan on "*Resist Communalism and Religious Fundamentalism, Strengthen Struggle for Democracy and Good Governance through Strengthening the Grassroots Organizations*". BMP President Ayesha Khanam chaired the rally while the BMP Movement Sub-Committee Secretary Rakhi Das Purokaistha delivered the welcome address. BMP General Secretary Maleka Banu delivered the address for the organization. The rally was attended by 1550 women workers from Dhaka City, Tongi, Narayanganj, Savar, Narshingdi and Munshiganj. The program was able to connect grassroots members with the vision and mission of BMP.

5.3.13 Organise internal annual planning implementation and monitoring review/workshop

BMP organized the two-day long National Council Meeting (Internal Annual Planning Implementation and Monitoring Review Meeting) at the Engineers Institution, Dhaka on 24-25 May 2013. A total of 398 representatives from 55 districts participated in the meeting. Ayesha Khanam, the President of BMP, chaired the meeting. General Secretary Dr. Maleka Banu delivered the welcome speech. The themes of discussion in the meeting included: *Resistance of VAW movement: Bangladesh Context; Experience and Achievements of Resistance of VAW movement; Prospects and challenges of BMP as a voluntary organization; Enhancing skills of organization and organizers; Problems and Solutions in Implementation of Disabled Women Rights*; etc. The meeting evaluated the performance of the organization in the last one-year and decided the future of BMP against the socio-economic and political conditions of the country. The Council Meeting extensively discussed several aspects of organization and put forward recommendations to strengthen its performance. After the end of the meeting the Council came up with 37 recommendations.

5.3.14 Publication

BMP completed the publications of the following documents in 2013 as planned:

1. Monitoring and documentation on organizers activities
2. Update and publish organizational training module
3. Action research and publication on male involvement with BMP

5.3.15 Sharing meeting with civil society

With the slogan of "Build Democratic and Human Society Free from Communalism" BMP central committee and Dhaka City branch observed the 43rd Anniversary of the organization on 4th April 2013. The president of Dhaka City branch of BMP chaired the program, which was attended by 170 participants. The speakers remembered the contribution of leading feminist leaders in advancing the women movement for establishing rights and justice for women in the society.

5.3.16. Memorial Lecture on Poet Sufia Kamal

The Memorial Lecture on Poet Begum Sufia Kamal was held on 20 June 2013 at Engineers Institution, Dhaka to celebrate 102th birth anniversary of Poet Sufia Kamal. This memorial lecture was planned to reflect on the contribution of Poet Begum Sufia Kamal, a pioneer in women emancipation movement and founder of BMP. Since its inception in 1970, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP) has been working to protect women's rights through establishing a democratic, secular, discrimination-free family, society and state. With the slogan, *Women's Rights are Human Rights*, BMP has been working on voluntary basis for

more than four decades and pioneering the women's movement in the country. Sufia Kamal, the icon of women's rights, was the founder president of BMP. Through her penning and social work, Sufia Kamal protested against communalism and religious fundamentalism to build a class-free society. This program was chaired by Ayesha Khanam, President, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad. Professor Abul Ahasan Chowdury, the memorial speaker of the discussion, delivered a remembrance lecture titled "Movement for Enlightened Society and Poet Sufia Kamal". On behalf of BMP a Crest was given to the honourable Professor Dr. Anisuzzaman. The program was attended by 550 participants including 340 members, organizers and central leaders of BMP.

5.3.17 Provide logistic support to implement organisational activities and to strengthen district branch

BMP provided logistic support to 51 district branches in against the target of 60. The organization feels that logistic support to district branches significantly helps to strengthen their organizational capacity.

5.3.18 National Conference

The **12th National Conference** of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad was held on 31 October-1 November 2013, at Engineer Institution, Dhaka, Bangladesh. The theme of the conference was **"Acknowledge Women's Contribution in National economy create Enabling Environment for Implementation of Women's Rights."** The Inaugural ceremony of the Conference was held at 10.00 a.m with National Anthem and Flag hoisting (National and Organizational). National Flag was hoisted by the chief guest Professor Emeritus Dr. Anisuzzaman, and Organizational (Bangladesh Mahila Parishad) Flag was hoisted by President Ayesha Khanam. The chief guest Professor Emeritus Dr. Anisuzzaman hoisted National Flag and Organizational Flag hoisting by Ayesha Khanam President of BMP with National Anthem "Amar Sonar Bangla Ami tomay Valobasi" sung by the artist as well as the participants.

In the inaugural session of the 12th National conference 2013, participants pay tribute to the renowned personality, (organization, National/International, different sectors), expired since the last conference held in 2008. Professor Emeritus Dr. Anisuzzaman Chief Guest, Ms. Christine Susan Hunter, Country Representative, UN Women Bangladesh Special Guest and Women Famer Khadija Begum, Women Famer Mazeda Begum and Women Worker Kohinur Begum were also present as the Special Guest. Representative from Human Rights Organization, Socio- Cultural Organization, NGOs, Networking organization, Eminent Civil Society Personality, Professional and mass women were invited in the inaugural session.

More than two thousand women and men attended in the inaugural session. 1600 counselors from 57 districts branches all over the country participated in the conference. The Program presided over by Ayesha Khanam, President of BMP. In the inaugural session, Professor Emeritus Dr. Anisuzzaman said "Violence against women and sexual abuse is pulling back the growth of women." Special guest, Country Representative, UN Women Bangladesh Ms. Christine Susan Hunter said "Violence against women was one of the main challenges. Other special guest Women Famer Khadija Begum described how recognition of her work as a farmer, and her contributions to the economy, has led to her greater empowerment within the community. She said "from now she can take a strong stand in making sure there are no

underage marriages in the community.” And other special guest, Women Worker Kohinoor Begum said “Women empowerment through RMG sector was being hampered by inadequate working conditions and sexual abuse at the workplace.”

In the first working session, on 31st October, 2013 General Secretary, Finance Secretary, Organizing Secretary, Legal Aid Secretary, Training, Research and Library Secretary, Movement Secretary, Publicity and Mass-Media Secretary, Publication Secretary, International Secretary, Education and Culture Secretary, Health, Environment and Social Welfare Secretary, Project and Development and Rokeya Sadan subcommittee Secretary presented their 5 years working report to the counselor.

On 1st November, 2013 of the conference counselor participated in the thematic discussion divided into seven commissions. 14 hundred counselors actively participated in the different group and shared and gave their views, opinion and recommendation on those issues. Sharmin Nilormi Dalia, Assistant professor, Department of Economics, Dr, Ainun Nahar, Head of the Department of Anthropology, Jahangir Nagar University, Dr, Atun Rabbani, Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, University of Dhaka, Mofidul Haque, Eminent Writer, Mr, Shariar Kabir, Acting President, Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee, Mr, Mangal Kumar Chakma, Leader of Adibasi, Parboto CTG Jonoshanghati Somiti Rakhi Das Purkayastha, Secretary of Organizational Sub committee and Shima Moslem, Secretary of Training, Research and Library Sub committee, of BMP and Cultural Activist discussed on the commissions on different issues in five different venues.

The discussed thematic issues were : Women as a agent of National Development: Reorganization of their Rights and Contribution in Economy, Agriculture and Women’s Entrepreneur. Women as a agent of National Development: Acknowledgement and Rights of Women in Economy, Garments Women and Migrants Women. Communalism, Religious Fundamental and Women’s Human Rights. Women’s movement in Mainstreams and Indigenous Women’s Rights. Struggle to establish Women’s Human Rights and Resist Violence Against women. Of the 21st Century of a organizational Challenge and leadership building .Of the 21st Century Women’s Movement: participation of young generation.

The plenary session presided over by Ayesha Khanam, President of BMP. In this session- Recommendations of the seven commissions placed in the plenary session. Recommendations of the conference have been approved by the counselors. Some amendments of the constitution have been placed and approved by the counselors. Significant Amendments in the Constitution’s are: Structural change: Two New Posts of Joint General Secretary have been created. Numbers of Central Committee members have been increased from 61 to 83 members to include more from district branches and women from different sectors in the Policy Making Body. Number of Vice-President and Secretaries increased up to 15, who will be in charge of different sub-committee. Previous Health, Environment and Social Welfare sub-committees have been splitted into three different sub-committees. Provision for Information and Technology sub committee has been made. Numbers of National Council members have been increased up to 550. The main objective of this change is to meet the necessity due to expansion of the organization Policy Making Body. To develop team leadership. To develop more coordination between Central and Branch organizers in decision making and implementing of program .To facilitate Bottom up and top down approach within the organization. For building capacity of the organizers both in quantity and qualitative aspect.

The concluding session presided over by Dr. Fouzia Moslem, vice-president of BMP. In concluding session New Central Committee, Advisory body and National Council have been approved. New Executive members took oath in the conference. **Ayesha Khanam** as President, **Maleka Banu** as General Secretary, **Rakhi Das Purkayastha** and **Shima Moslem** as Joint General Secretary and **Adv. Masuda Rehana Begum** as Asst. General Secretary were elected.

5.4.1 Conduct capacity building and skill development training

A Training of Trainers (TOT) program based on capacity building and skill development training was held in 2013. This ToT programme conducted at divisional level participated by 200 members.

5.4.3 Conduct training for midlevel organizers at divisional level

On 13-15 June 2013, Training, Research and Library Sub-committee of BMP organized a Divisional Training titled 'Training on Awareness Raising & Capacity Building for the Empowerment of Women' in Chittagong. A total of 58 organizers from 6 district branches of Chittagong and Shylet divisions participated in the training program. Five Central committee members were present in the event.

5.4.5 Conduct training for grass root organisers

BMP conducted trainings for grassroots level organizers through the district level branches with the aim of raising awareness and efficiency. In most of the cases the trainers are district level leaders. But the eminent persons from different professional groups such as lawyers, professors, researchers of that area became interested regarding BMP and provided training on their relevant area. In 2013 BMP arranged 30 training events in 18 districts and the numbers of the participants were 2639. Curricula for all the training programmes were based on the training modules developed by the centre. Under project 80 training events is in 30 districts and the number of the participants were 2639 and out of project 29 training events in 14 districts and the number of the participants were 1076. So total training 109, districts 44 and the number of the participants 3715.

Impacts

- Increases Gender Awareness of Organisers.
- Participants understood concept regarding gender issues, which increased their efficiency and make them more active, and devoted for the organization as well as for women empowerment. ToT increases their capacity and confidence to provide training at grass root level.
- Through ToT exposure training by the Specialist in national level.
- At Divisional level training, grassroots level organizers became involved with central level training through direct feedback and communication from central level organizers.
- Eminent professional groups like lawyers, teachers, and activists in district level became interested regarding Bangladesh Mahila Parishad and remain as trainer in grass root training which increases networking between grass root organizers and resource persons.

5.4.6 Conduct Study Circle, Debate

In 2013, BMP Training, Research and Library Sub-Committee organized 12 study circles in different districts where 491 persons took part. Issues that featured in the study circle included Importance of Language Movement, International Women's day, Stop Sexual Harassment & Stalking, Biography of Revolutionary Women, CEDAW, women's movement etc. Bangladesh Mahila Parishad took initiatives to conducted study circle in various colleges and university to increase the participants and get involved more young people with the organization.

On 23th January 2013, a study circle was held at Notre Dam College in which 09 teachers and 59 students attended. Shima Moslem, Secretary, Training, Research & Library Sub-committee presided over the study circle. The theme of the study circle was free from as violence as rape, acid burnt etc. On behalf of BMP Training, Research & Library Sub-committee members attended the program. On the 22th April 2013 the sub committee organized study circles at central office regarding present political situation and 13 demands of Hefajat Islam. Rina Ahmed, Member, Training, Research & Library Sub-committee presided over the study circle. On the 2nd July 2013 BMP arranged study circle with National Home Economics College regarding severe dowry system. There are 11 members who participated in that study circle. On the 11th June 2013 BMP organized another study circle with the students of Architecture department of BUET regarding academic problems and residential crisis. There are 4 teachers and 35 students who participated in that study circle. On the 27th February 2013, 7 students of women and gender studies Department of Dhaka University came to BMP to visit and know about BMP as part of their academic syllabus. In this Sharing meeting, Shima Moslem, Secretary, Training, Research & Library Sub-committee participated with other members on behalf of BMP. On 11th June 2013 the sub committee organized a brief sharing meeting at Sufia Kamal Bhaban. Dipti Sikder, Member, Training, Research & Library Sub-committee presided the sharing meeting. In this meeting she informed about Certificate Course. Thirty-five students and one teacher participated in the meeting. Bangladesh Mahila Parishad took initiatives to conduct study circle in various colleges to increase the participants and get more young people involved with the organization.

Table 3.23: Study Circle and Participants, 2013

Conducted Area	No. of Study Circle	No. of Participants
Central level	04	170
District level	24	459
Total	28	629

Impacts

- Young generation got interested regarding study circle and worked on gender issues.
- They became involved with the organizational activities.
- Through the study circle BMP got exposure to the wider section of the society and dreams of the young mind.

5.4.7 Research Analysis on incidents of VAW

Research analysis on incidents of VAW is continuous process. Data is collected from daily newspapers (14) and then all data are coded in Coding Framework. After the completion of

coding, all data were accumulated to analyse in 2013. Accordingly BMP published a report on “State of Violence Against Women in Bangladesh: A Study in 2012” in November 2013.

5.4.8 Conduct Subjective Research Study

BMP started a research project on “Women in Readymade Garments Industry: Understanding Capabilities and Vulnerabilities of Female Workers in Bangladesh” in September 2013. Currently, data are being collected for the study.

5.4.10 Certificate/diploma course on Gender, Women Empowerment and Development

A three-month Certificate Course on *Gender, Women Empowerment and Development* was conducted during 22 August– 26 December 2013. The course was inaugurated on 22 August 2012 at the Poet Sufia Kamal Auditorium. The course is divided into 8 modules and 30 lectures on different themes. Classes, group works and field visits constitute the teaching method of the program. Resource persons for the course are generally invited from academics and practitioners in the society. A major achievement of the course is generating high enthusiasm among the participants about gender issues and concerns. Participants can learn how gender factor is factored in traditional development paradigm, human rights framework and women movement.

5.4.11 Collect books and journals, equipment of library

People from different backgrounds use library services of BMP. Particularly, advanced level students get mostly benefited by the books from the library. The number of the books collected in the year 2013 was 60 out of which 15 were collected as courtesy. The BMP library collected 70 reference materials including CEDAW, gender and development related bulletin, reproductive health related publications, annual reports, etc. It may be mentioned that a PhD researcher and an M.Phil student have worked on “Women Movement and Bangladesh Mahila Parishad” and “Role of Sufia Kamal in Women Movement” respectively who have immensely benefited from the BMP library services.

5.5.3 Financial Training/Office Management Training for Staff

Accounting Practices:

BMP has always emphasized upon accomplishing accounting practices in a timely manner so as to facilitate the management in taking necessary decisions. In view of any laps identified by the external auditor in BMP’s accounting system, BMP has been working acutely to implement the recommendations put forward by External Auditors. BMP has adopted the Accountings Software (Tally).

Financial Governance :

Financial Governance, being sensitive area, was viewed to be of more importance by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad. BMP central Executive Committee constituted a Finance Committee comprising of President, General Secretary, Joint Secretary, Assistant General Secretary, Finance Secretary and staff from Finance and Accounting Department to prepare financial planning and to monitor all financial activities in a timely manner. Finance committee sits regularly at least once in a month to discuss and monitor the monthly progress of accounting and financial activities. **BMP** maintains budgetary control over all sorts of expenditures. Variances are also analyze in a timely manner giving further efforts to Financial Management Process.

Internal Audit :

The internal audit system of BMP is not only tracking the activities against targets / desired performance, but also working relentlessly in keeping the centre and the branches tie together in harmony. A total of 30 Branches were Audited by Internal Auditor during 2013.

Financial Capacity Building of the Branch Office :

At branch offices no professional or designated accountant is employed. Branch Executive in addition to his / her administrative responsibilities performs accounting functions. Branch Executives as well as volunteer organizers are continuously given financial training from head office. Despite limited technical knowledge and experience branch Executives are doing well in general book-keeping and financial reporting. A total of 5 divisional training of Financial Management were conducted during 2013. One hundred thirty five participants from 51 Branches took part in the trainings. Participants are comprised of secretaries and Branch Executives. The training highlighted the necessity as well as technique for preparing program Budget / Monthly Budget, handling Cash, approval of expenditure and preparation of financial statement at Branch level.

A training module is prepared and distributed to all participants to provide knowledge, skills and tools in financial management activities in a systematic manner.

Procurement :

BMP Central Executive Committee constituted a procurement committee comprising of one of Vice-Presidents, General Secretary, Assistant General Secretary, number of secretaries and other administrative staff to maintain a system for purchasing goods and services required by the office. Quality and competitive requirement is being met for each of the procurement. Quotations are invited as per level fixed in the practice.

Procurement efforts to ensure that items procured conform to the requirements of the Project and that the guidelines and the procedures of BMP and development partner.

Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management is the dynamic process of competency through knowledge, skills, talents, creative abilities and capacities of the people in the organization over a period of time. It also needs continuous improvement to keep pace with the changes in context and forces external to the organization. Approved recruitment rules, promotion procedures, leave rules, service rules and other related rules and regulations are followed, implemented, monitored and updated in developing Bangladesh Mahila Parishad as a transparent, democratic and sustainable institution.

Recruitment

In recruiting capable, talented and sincere people with high potential to become dedicated and disciplined worked force, BMP constituted a high powered recruitment board comprising of President, Vice President, General Secretary, Assistant General Secretary, Secretaries and technical experts. The process of recruitment includes advertisement in the national dailies for

attracting competent people, scrutinizing, and short listing. Prior to selection different aptitude tests and in-depth interviews are done and people are recommended to be employed. Based on Recruitment Board's recommendation Central Committee approves all recruitments. During the reporting period the vacant position mentioned below were filled up as per BMP recruitment rule:

Central Office

1. Director Admin
2. Sr. Accountant
3. Project Coordinator
4. Junior Lawyer
5. Assistant Programme Officer
6. Jr. Officer (Legal Aid)
7. Receptionist
8. Driver
9. Liftman
10. Assistant IG In Charge
11. Messenger
12. Guard

District Branch Offices

1. Program Executive for Branch- Dhaka City
2. Program Executive for Branch- Belabo

Administrative Capacity Building

1. Monthly Meeting on Administrative issues before monthly staff meeting: Seven meetings have been held during the reporting period.
2. Monthly Staff Meeting: Eight meetings have been held during the reporting period.
3. Half Yearly Staff Meeting: Two meeting has been held during the reporting period.
4. Regular Morning Meeting
5. Staff Supervision
6. Annual and periodical Evaluation

Staff Capacity Building

Training:

1. Three months Certificate Course on Gender, Women Empowerment and Development had been arranged and six officials participated in this with outside participants.
2. Five trainings on Financial Management have been arranged in Central Office and another was arranged at divisional level in Rajshahi District.
3. Director-Finance and Admin participated in a seven weeks course on Accounting Software Tally ERP 9.
4. Chief Accountant participated in a 12-day long training on Accounting Software Tally.

To establish effective coordination between concerned members and officials towards implementing a well managed administration Central Committee has assigned a team of seven members comprising organizational members and officials.

Table

SL	Areas of Intervention	Activities			Extent of Achievement
		Planned	Actual		
5.5.1	Audit Fees & Others	1	1		Achievement
5.5.2	Internal Audit: To ensure accounts Keeping	As Per Necessary	Branch Visit	20	Achievement
			Central Office	10	
5.5.3	Financial Training / Office Management Training for Staff	5	5 Training		Achievement

Note: 5.5.3 (Financial Training / Office Management Training for Staff)

S.N.	Name of Training	Date of Training	Place	Number of Branch	Number of Participants	Branch Name
01.	Barisal Divisional Financial Management Training	28/06/13	Barisal	8	23	Barishal, Jalokhati, Bhola, Patuakhali, Barguna, Pirojpur, Kawkhali, Swarupkati.
02.	Dhaka Divisional Financial Management Training	05/07/13	Dhaka	11	34	Dhaka Mohanagar, Savar, Belabo, Narayanganj, Faridpur, Rajbari, Madhukhali, Raypura, Norsindi, Kishorgonj, Munshigonj.
03.	Khulna Divisional Financial Management Training	23/08/13	Khulna	8	21	Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira, Kushtia, Kumarkhali, Jessore, Magura, Jhenidha.
04.	Dhaka, Chitagonj & Sylhet Divisional Financial Management Training	13/09/13	Dhaka	15	33	Dhaka Mohanagar, Tongi, Gazipur, Belabo, Tangil, Sharpur, Mymensingh, Netrokona, Kalmakandha, Chitagonj, Rangamati, Chadpur, Brahmanbaria, Sunamgonj, Moulovibazar.
05.	Rajshahi & Ranpur Divisional	04/10/13	Ranpur	9	24	Rajshahi, Rajshahi University, Natore, Pabna, Naogoan, Rangpur,

	Financial Management Training					Dinajpur, Kurigram, Gaibanda.
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Chapter IV: Interventions beyond Planned Outputs

BMP interventions have always been largely based on planned outputs as far as the project is concerned. Every year the organization achieves the targets planned under different components. Nevertheless, as the largest and oldest women rights organization in Bangladesh, BMP has to take initiatives often beyond the planned outputs depending on ground realities in the society and administrative necessity. At the same time, BMP has to respond to emerging challenging as well. Thus one can see some variations in achieving the targets of the project. In this context, some critical factors may be briefly introduced to understand the scenarios against which women development and empowerment issues are pursued in Bangladesh.

First, generally, women continue to suffer from unequal power relations between men and women in public and private life. Empirical studies on violence against women clearly demonstrate that it occurs within the broad context of unequal power relations. Second, patriarchy and men's control over women play a crucial role in sustaining an environment of discrimination and exploitation. It is observed that male dominance has ideological and material bases while there is a pervasive presence of women's subordination. Third, culture and social practices exacerbate the conditions of violence against women. The politicization of culture in religious "fundamentalisms" poses serious challenges to women's rights. Fourth, economic inequalities play a critical role behind gender discrimination in Bangladesh. Women cannot enjoy equal rights and opportunities in real life although the Constitution of Bangladesh recognizes the same. Women are generally discriminated in employment, work places and asset ownership. Restrictions on women's control over economic resources constitute a form of family violence. Finally, causal and risk factors for subordination of women include use of violence in conflict resolution, legal doctrines of privacy of the home and family, state inaction, social and economic status, individual histories of exposure to violence and individual types of behaviour.

Bangladesh continues to witness various forms of VAW in the recent times. The BMP study based on 64 districts and 15 national newspapers shows that violence against women and murders of women remained a major challenge in 2013. During January-August 2013, a total of 4777 incidents of VAW took place in Bangladesh. A total of 386 women committed suicide while 829 women were murdered. Victims of Fatwa, trafficking of women, acid attacks, torture in police custody, and torture on maid servants also took place. The failure to ensure direct election to women members of the National Parliament and to increase reserve seats of women to one-third of total number of MPs have also deprived women from taking part actively in the national policy making process. Above all, grassroots realities reveal that women are being faced with different obstacles from legal to cultural to establish their rights and dignity in the society. It must be mentioned Bangladesh has also achieved positive changes in some social indicators such as enrolment rate at elementary level, infant mortality, and maternal health, the overall context remains challenging for women in Bangladesh.

Gaps in implementing the planned outputs

BMP has implemented the planned programmes of its project for women's empowerment and development in Bangladesh under the above mentioned conditions. A component-wise analysis of gaps between planned and actual outputs has been given below.

Component-1: Accelerating social movements against VAW

The organization has achieved almost all planned outputs in component one. It has also surpassed targets of several planned outputs. All activities in the areas of legal aid and Rokeya Sadan were completed in 2013.

Component-2: Strengthening political empowerment of women

BMP fully implemented all programmes and activities under component 2 it planned throughout the year 2013. It has been observed that the organization has even achieved more than those of planned. In some cases it achieved more than 200% of its targets.

Component-3: Intensifying Women's Human Rights Movement through Networking

In 2013 BMP faced difficulties in achieving targets in all areas of intervention under this component. It has not been able to implement all activities planned in few areas of intervention such as empowerment and encouragement of young girl in sexual and reproductive health, reviewing status of maternal health, sharing meetings, and programme aiming for prevention of sexual diseases specially HIV/AIDS. As usual BMP had been particularly successful in strengthening linkage and networking with global and international actors in 2013.

Component-4: Effective Functioning as Lobby and Advocacy Agent

BMP achieved almost all planned outputs planned in 2013 under this component. It has undertaken several programmes and activities to play an effective role as lobby and advocacy agent. However, it fell short of achieving the targets in interventions such as awareness campaign, publishing supplements in national dailies on political / economical/ social empowerment of women, and producing TV spot.

Component-5: Improving Organisational Capacity

BMP implements a large number of planned programmes and activities in each year of the project in order to improve its organizational capacity. In 2013 BMP achieved the targets in wide-ranging areas of interventions. However, BMP could not achieve targets in few minor sub-sectors of interventions. It has not been able to publish Legal Aid Update Module regularly. It lags behind UFC publication, and update volume. It has achieved 50% targets in organizing sharing meetings for district conferences and awareness and motivational programme with young women at grass-roots level. It could not finish financial and office management trainings for the staff.

Unplanned activities

In view of emerging situations and needs, BMP engaged in programmes and activities beyond its plan. The media and mass communication subcommittee actively organised different programmes by the central committee of BMP such as International Women's Day celebration, birth and death anniversaries of poet Sufia Kamal, International Human Rights

Day, Safe Motherhood Day etc. To celebrate these memorable days, mass media subcommittee collected write ups from district branches of BMP which were subsequently published in local and national newspapers. BMP responded to the national issues and incidents of violation of human rights. BMP strongly opposed to attacks by the fundamentalist forces in the Society. Mass media subcommittee regularly communicated with both print and electronic journalists as well as prepared and sent press releases to cover all the programme news by Bangladesh Mahila Parishad.

Response to Human Tragedy: Protest against Savar Rana Plaza Tragedy

BMP immediately responded to the shocking Rana Plaza Tragedy in 2013, a case of human-made disaster. Thousands of garment workers mostly women were the victims of the incident of Rana plaza collapse at Savar on 24th April 2013. BMP central and Savar district committee rushed to the spot with its all out support. Savar district committee actively involved themselves in the rescue operation for more than 3 weeks from the very beginning to last day. They extended their support to assist the Army rescue team, health care providers, general public rescue team supplying food, water, torchlight, medicines, manpower, disseminating information to relatives of victim etc. Civil Society positively and spontaneously responded to BMP's call for donation for victims of the tragedy. BMP central committee, Dhaka metropolitan City committee and Savar branch committee distributed money among 58 victims and family members in a programme organized by Savar Branch on 14 the June 2013 place at Mashrum Unnayan Kendro. Central and district committee members a five-member committee led by Ayesha Khanam, President BMP were present on the occasion.

BMP strongly condemned and accused inhuman, irresponsible, cruel, unjustified, and irrational behaviour of the owner of Rana Plaza and owners of Garments factories located in the building and local administrative authority for this tragic incident. Around twelve hundred workers mostly women died due to collapse of the building. BMP also demanded for proper medicare, rehabilitation, and compensation for the survivors and family members. BMP also demanded for exemplary punishment of the responsible persons.

Realisation of Dower, Maintenance and Other expenses

BMP has been able to realise Tk. 57,98,401 as dower, maintenance and other expenses for divorced women through mediation services of different district branches of Bangladesh and grassroots branches of BMP Tk. 31,84,200 through the central office. Grand total 89,82601 Tk it is a huge success for BMP,

Social Welfare

The Health, Environment and Social Welfare Sub-Committee undertook several programmes and activities in 2012 for raising awareness and supporting people in crisis. BMP involved in social welfare activities in 2012 in providing winter cloths to the poor, helpless and marginalized women in different parts of Bangladesh. It covered 6 district branches to distribute winter cloths, which are – Barisal, Jessore, Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Pirojpur and Narshindi.

Table 4.1: Social Welfare Activities of BMP

Date	Places	Items
7.01.2013	Jessore	Distribution of cloths, blankets
25.01.2013	Faridpur	Distribution of blankets among women

07.01.2013	Rajshahi University Branch	Distribution of blankets
17.01.2013	Kustia	Distribution of blankets
03.02.2013	Habiganj	Distribution of winter cloths
8.02.2013	Sunamganj	Distribution of blankets
24.01.2013	Rajbari	Distribution of winter cloths
29.03.2013	Brahmanbaria	Distribution of food, cash money and goods

Field Visit by Development Partner

BMP organized a Field Visit programme for development partner on 16th January 2013 at Savar. Honourable Delegates from Norwegian Government and The Royal Norwegian Embassy led by Her Excellency Ambassador Ragne Birte Lund visited Nayapara Primary Committee of Savar district branch, BMP. The Delegates were Ms. Merethe Foss Liverud, the Government Director of Personnel, Ministry of Government Administration, Reform and Church Affairs, Oslo, Mr. Trond Rakkestad, Ministry of Government Administration, Reform and Church Affairs, Oslo, Mr. Espen Larsen Director of Personnel, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo, Ms. Kari Aspaas, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Oslo, Mr. Arne Haug, Deputy Head of Mission Royal Norwegian Embassy, Dhaka, Mr. Morshed Ahmed, Senior Adviser, Royal Norwegian Embassy. A 7 member-team of Central Committee led by President Ayesha Khanam accompanied the visitors. The visitors shared and exchanged their views with local grass root women, beneficiaries of BMP, women representatives of local Government and BMP members and organizers on VAW, political participation and W/H/R. Later the team appreciated the activism of BMP and its positive impact in this remote area as well as the programme organized by BMP for them. It can be mentioned that organizing the programme was a bit difficult and risky as hartal was declared by some political parties on that day.

Visit of UN Rapporteur on VAW Rasheda Monjur in Bangladesh

President of BMP, Ayesha Khanam attended a meeting with UN rapporteur on VAW Rasheda Monjur at 20th May 2013 at Dhaka University Senate Bhaban and attended a meeting on 21st May 2013 at UN Women Bangladesh during her visit in Bangladesh Office. Several members of Khulna, Rangamati and Jessore district branch committee also attended meeting with Rasheda Monjur during her visit in District and informed about the status of VAW and role of BMP to resist VAW.

Different grass root organizers (Joyita) of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad has been awarded by Govt. Ministry of Women and Children Affairs for their outstanding contribution and also for struggle to bring positive change in their own life.

Chapter V:

Evaluating the Impact of BMP Programmes and Activities

BMP's capacity to successfully operate is greatly enhanced when it has been developed through a sustained and committed organisational process, and is consequently both robust and convincing. BMP has emerged as a strong social force against the societal challenges of patriarchy and masculinity, on the one hand, antagonism of communal and fundamentalist groups on the other. The impact of BMP programmes and activities has been clearly felt in larger socio-cultural and political milieu in Bangladesh more than ever before. As far as the project is concerned, BMP has been influencing the society through its multifarious programmes and activities. On the civil society front, the organization has extensively contributed to women's empowerment and justice in Bangladesh, which has transformed BMP into a pioneer and frontline women organisation and movement in the country. The history of women's movement in Bangladesh is the history of BMP. Over the years, BMP has created a solid profile of social activism for millions of women in Bangladesh. The implications of programmes and activities are clearly visible in different spheres primarily in socio-political, economic and cultural contexts. The activities and programmes of BMP have positive impact on changing conditions faced by women in Bangladesh in their quest for a 'just society' without gender discrimination and violence. A key impact of the project is mainstreaming of gender issues, especially VAW, to the national level. It is argued that as a result of constant campaigning of BMP, the issue of violence against women and the need to protect women from violence have come to the fore. Concomitantly, it plays a critical role in changing their mind-sets regarding gender issues and women's situation. The specific implications of BMP activities have been explained in the following section.

V.1 Mainstreaming women's contribution in society

BMP has made huge strides to mainstream women's contribution in national economy, which largely remains unnoticed and unrecognized. The 12th National Conference 2013 of BMP was held on 31 October – 1 November 2013 with a theme on *"Acknowledge Women's Contribution in National Economy Create Enabling Environment for Implementation of Women's Rights."* With consistent growth rate of GDP over the last fifteen years Bangladesh has achieved tremendous economic and social development that shows the country becoming a middle-income nation in coming years. Bangladesh has the 59th largest GDP in the world, which clearly demonstrates the size of national economy. One of the fundamental factors behind this success has been the immersion of millions of women workers in the mainstream of economy that is widely known to the society. BMP strongly advocates that financial value of women's labour at home and outside remains unaccounted for. There is no recognition of women labour in the country. In order to recognize women's labour in the economy there is a need for establishing their rights of ownership to their income and hundred percent rights to expenditure of their own earnings. BMP works as a collaborating organization to achieve women's economic empowerment. In 2013 BMP identified the key areas of women's engagement in national economy over the last three decades such readymade garments industries; agriculture and fisheries; migration; and entrepreneurship in medium and small industries.

Bangladesh has become the second largest exporter of RMG in the world slightly behind China. By 2020 the exports of RMG will reach US \$ 36 billion from US \$ 20 billion in 2012-2013. More than 80% of export earnings of Bangladesh comes from RMG. The fact of the matter is that such kind of special position of RMG in Bangladesh is the result of untiring and cheap labour of women workers. It is estimated that 43.1% Garments owners in Bangladesh extract highest profit with the lowest facilities to women workers. Millions of women workers are giving their cheap labour without minimum supplies of wages and living environment. They have no protection for food, health, education, and from sexual violence. Agriculture is the backbone of Bangladesh economy. Between 1999-2000 and 2005-2006 the number of women workers in agriculture or fisheries increased from 3.7 million to 7.7 million. Women from 60-70% of landless and nearly landless families have been involved in agriculture as workers. Women work in many different sectors of agriculture such as irrigation, seeding, seed selection, sibilings, crop-cutting, crop harvesting etc. According to BMP, the most critical aspect of their deprivation of women in agriculture is lack of recognition of their labour. As they do not have ownership on land and properties, they do not get financial value of their labour. BMP implemented different programmes for mobilizing the women farmers such as rallies and processions in different divisional cities in Bangladesh.

Women are now engaged in migrant job in different corners of the world. They are sending money to their families regularly. According to BMIT information, from 1991 to 2012 more than two lac six thousand five hundred twenty five women are living abroad as migrant workers. They are largely based in Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arab, UAE, Mauritius and Singapore. In the process of migration, many women have also been regularly victimized at the hands of human traffickers. They do not get good treatment or facilities as special citizens from the embassies; rather they suffer from negligence of local high commission or embassies. Hence, BMP has submitted a number of recommendations to the Ministry of Labour and Employment and host governments which include sending women workers through government managed registration system; exploring labour market for women workers; reducing migration cost; support from embassies; better treat with women migrants; stopping women trafficking; and training centres in every sub-district and district in Bangladesh. BMP also thinks that it is a matter of satisfaction that the number of women entrepreneurs is increasing day by day. They are making themselves visible in the national economy despite the unfavourable conditions. BMP has close relations with the women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh. The organization has recommended providing industrial loans, budget allocation, reducing the rate of bank interest on loans, and decreasing the rate of VAT for women.

V.2 Strengthening the voice of anti-communal and progressive forces

Bangladesh is widely known to the international community for communal harmony and for its moderate and peaceful character of the society. The long traditions of communal harmony have been established largely due to contribution of democratic and progressive social forces in addition to the foundation laid by the 1972 Constitution. Since its establishment in 1970 BMP has not deviated from its struggle against communalism and fundamentalism. The year of 2013 was particularly significant for sudden assertions of the fundamentalist and communal forces, however small in number. Coupled with confrontational politics over elections the situation got worsened. In such a context BMP has mobilised people against this communal force through its central, district and grassroots level programmes and activities. It organised rallies, processions, seminars, and press conferences throughout 2013 to expose the fundamentalist elements. The role of BMP has evidently strengthened the voice of anti-

communal and anti-fundamentalist groups and organizations in Bangladesh. Although BMP has consistently targeted communal and fundamentalist forces since its creation, in 2013 the organization emphasized its role in this direction given the situations in Bangladesh. As a democratic and progressive platform BMP has been well equipped through its wide-ranging networks that became evident in 2013.

V.3 Civil society engagement

Although in Bangladesh civil society has been strong, vibrant and extensive largely due to its role in microcredit, education and health, this was not the case with gender and women issues. BMP as the pioneer of women movement in Bangladesh has changed the scenario. Over the years, the organisation has successfully involved civil society groups and individuals from different fields with its activities. It has created the unity among the likeminded organizations through its Social Action Committee. The number of organizations under this platform is increasing every year. It provides the organizations with the opportunity to better understand each other's policy, devise effective institutional and functional strategy, and work together. Importantly, the participation of like-minded organizations has been widened each year and at the same time members of the civil society have voiced their support for BMP's activities.

Consequently, BMP was able to successfully engage legal experts in law reform, panel lawyers in mediation and case filing, academics in training programme for capacity building, artists in cultural activities, economists in gender budget analysis, medical professionals in health awareness programme, financial experts in financial capacity building, researchers and activists in designing course on gender development, mass women in advocacy and lobby and media. The number of organizations of Social Action Committee (A platform initiated by BMP) is now about 68 and they are playing visible role on different Women's Human Rights issues. Another notable case of engagement is that 35 organizations jointly prepared and submitted an Alternative Report on CEDAW to UNCEDAW Committee, held dialogue with MOWCA and also UNCEDAW committee concluding comments of UNCEDAW committee includes recommendations from Alternative Report. BMP celebrated International Women's Day including centenary anniversary jointly with 64 Women's Rights, Human Rights, Development and Socio-cultural organization and funder organizations participated in the rally. BMP with cooperation from organizations jointly drafted and advocated on Domestic Violence Act, Hindu Marriage Registration Act, and prepared UPR Report on HR.

V.4 Empowerment and capacity building

The activities and programmes of BMP have brought about positive changes in empowerment and capacity building of millions of women in Bangladesh. Particularly, political empowerment of women in the country is quite visible over the years in which BMP has an important contribution. It is widely argued that the declaration of National Women's Development Policy in 2011 was the outcome of demands by BMP and other organizations since 2004. BMP also gave input to update the policy. BMP, Social Action Committee, cross section of people, media strongly stand for NWDP 2011 against violent reaction of religious fundamentalists group. National Plan of Action prepared for implementation by MOWCA in consultation with BMP and Women Human Rights organization. Another significant area of impact is growing presence of women in decision-making positions in Administration, Judiciary, Law Enforcing Agency, Peacekeeping Mission, Bank and Corporate during this period. It is notable that 25 Ministries placed Gender Responsive Budget in 2012.

Legal aid services of BMP have ensured alternate dispute resolution and gender justice. It has increased access to justice for a large number of victims of violence. Through its mediation services, BMP helped the victims to recover a total of TK. 5,02,99,581.00 (five crore two lac ninety nine thousand five hundred eighty one only) till August 2013 as dower money and maintenance costs. This has been a huge support to distressed women who are suffering due to family disputes. Women are now getting opportunities to become financially self-reliant as BMP helps them collect dower and alimony. BMP also runs training programs for women. BMP was successful in developing collective leadership, especially in those districts where coordination and understanding among the core organizers are high. Besides, the number of organisers with good leadership potential has also increased over time. Researchers, students, professionals and others do have access in library for their study. The number of visitors in library has been increasing day by day signifying the importance of BMP for their capacity building.

Women representation in the national parliament has substantially increased over the years. The number of women parliament members elected directly is 19 while 50 members are nominated in reserved seats out of total 350. It is worthwhile to mention that the Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Leader of the Parliament, Deputy Whip, Chairman of Parliamentary Standing Committee, MOWCA, and Members of Different Parliamentary Standing Committee are also women in Bangladesh. Women lead the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Telcom, State Minister MOWCA, and Ministry of Labour. Local government has also seen increased representation of women. Women mayor was elected for the first time in Narayanganj with the support of civil society, not political party.

V.5 Networking

Networking is both an end and means of BMP activities and programmes. It plays a key role in political, economic and social changes for women in Bangladesh. The impact of interventions made by BMP on networking has been positive and significant. BMP has not only increased its networking with other women's human rights and socio-cultural organizations, social movements and individuals via participants and resource persons, but also strengthened its relations with them. BMP is linked with global and regional women's human rights movement since its inception. As a civil society organization affiliated with UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) BMP is in close contact with global women's rights movement and human rights movement and remains updated. During last year BMP representative attended and actively participated in CSW session and UN CEDAW meeting. BMP is in close contacts with UN Women (Bangladesh Chapter) participating in development of its strategic plan. President of BMP has been nominated of its Civil Society Advisory Group Member. BMP maintains network with global and regional Women's Rights and Human Rights Organizations. In fact, global and regional networking of BMP with CSW, UNCEDAW, IWRAW, and UN-WOMEN continued and strengthened. It may be mentioned that impact of networking at international level has contributed to greater access to global resources and arena. BMP has also established strong network with media in Bangladesh. The role of media is very important in shaping peoples' psyche. Due to collaboration with media, satellite channels broadcast the activities of BMP on a priority basis. Journalists view BMP as a good source for collecting information about women.

V.6 Government and societal response and recognition

BMP has ensured increasing attention from the government and the society for its works in women and gender issues and concerns in Bangladesh. The organisation receives more response and recognition from the government agencies and civil society actors. For example, the impact of law reform activities of BMP resulted in the enactment of new laws in Bangladesh. Unlike the past, the Government has increased its response to the correspondence of BMP on the incidents of VAW. In 2013 the administration replied on 167 occasions against 215 letters sent by BMP. This is almost 78 percent of total queries, which shows a very positive impact. Rokeya Sadan of BMP is working as a partner organization with the Victim Support Centre of Bangladesh police. Victimized women and children are regularly being sent by the court and the police to BMP's shelter centre "Rokeya Sadan." The Legal aid sub-committee has successfully increased collaboration and administrative lobbying with the administration.

The government has taken measures to formulate and implement gender budget in 25 ministries. Different Ministries, administrative offices and courts included women in the decision making process. The process of trial of war criminals and crimes against humanity has started and some prime accused were arrested. The government has amended family law and enacted "*Nari o Shishu Nirjatan Daman Ain.*" In addition, initiatives have been taken to formulate Domestic Violence (Deterrence and Protection) Law. The acceptability of BMP has increased within the administration. It becomes evident by the fact that different administrative units of the government consult with BMP before formulating any law regarding women. It also participated in social awareness and multi-sectoral programme against VAW by MOWCA. Another reflection of the impact of BMP's role is nomination of its members in different important committees of ministries and other government offices at central and local levels. For example, BMP represented in National Women Development Council, Anti Human Trafficking Act Implementation Committee, Acid Control Committee, Law drafting committee/Complain Committee against Sexual Harassment of UGC/Update NWDC, Informal Sharing Committee to Update NWDC, Informal Sharing on 6th 5 Year Plan, BMDC, Local Level Steering Committee, Health Ministry, TIB and anti corruption Commission in different Districts.

Similarly, the primary asset of this organization is social acceptability. BMP has successfully attracted the attention of women from different walks of life. Young people are showing interest to get involved in activities related to protesting violence against women as a result of regular awareness raising campaign by BMP. BMP's alternative dispute resolution through arbitration has gained popularity because of its less complicated and time saving procedure. People are becoming more and more interested about BMP's arbitration board because of its time saving procedure. The arbitration process is administered by Legal aid subcommittee, which manages it through the Arbitration Board. This process is done in lieu with alternative dispute resolution procedure declared by Government of Bangladesh. BMP has been involved in awareness raising programmes with students and teachers, sharing meetings with people, media campaign, and consultation with different section of civil society members.) Voice of BMP is taken into consideration by all sectors due to its sustained long-term activities in national and grass-root level and global exposure to Women's Human Rights Movement.

V.7 Strong sense of voluntarism in the society particularly in the youth community

BMP's programmes and activities have created a strong sense of voluntarism in the society particularly among the millions of youth people who constitute the most active segment of population in Bangladesh. In resisting VAW specifically in the cases of sexual harassments,

torture and cruel behaviour, BMP has inculcated critical perceptions about how the views of young girls are formed and how the sense of responsibility is created in their behaviour while they are exercising their individual freedoms. Study circles attract young generation to work on gender issues. More students join the study circles as participants in college campuses that contribute to change their traditional views. Members of study circles also work hard to organize study circles in different places including college campuses. This also builds a network with students, teachers as well as educational institutions. The growing interests of people in social movement for women's empowerment and justice reflect in their increased participation in BMP activities. It may be mentioned that 91,500 people participated in BMP activities in 2013 while 92,940 participated in 2012. Thus, it becomes evident that BMP has created a very positive impact on the people about their social commitment in the society.

V.8 Institutional sustainability and efficiency

As an organisation BMP has achieved remarkable institutional efficiency and sustainability through different capacity building activities and training programmes. Training and research both are important for building and enhancing institutional capacity. Awareness among the organisers, volunteers and employees about the importance of training to gain efficiency is now much higher than any time before. In 2013, the number of training programmes and trainees increased both at central and district levels. Number of trained organizers has also increased. Moreover, training programmes at district branches were conducted in accordance with central training module. It resulted in higher quality training programmes. The certificate course on gender, women empower and development has built a bridge between the academics and the organization, as the faculty members of this course were university teachers, researchers, and women leaders. Efficient financial management is very important for smooth running of an organization. Executives of the district committees were given training to increase their efficiency in office and financial management. In addition, the introduction of accounting software also contributed to the enhancement of the quality of the financial management. Participants are now more confident that they can apply gathering knowledge in professional level and also in personal and social life.

Indeed, the programmes and activities in improving organisational capacity of BMP have led to a number of positive outcomes. First, gender awareness of organizers has visibly increased over the years. Participants in different training programmes clearly understood gender issues, which assisted them to increase their efficiency and make them more active, and devoted for the organization as well as for women empowerment. Through ToT there has been improvement of their capacity and confidence to provide training in grass root level. ToT also exposed them to the specialists at national level. Grassroots level organisers in the divisions became involved with central level training through receiving direct training from central level organisers. Eminent persons from lawyers, teachers, and activists, in district level became interested regarding BMP and continue as trainers in grassroots training, which increased networking between grassroots organisers and resource persons.

Chapter VI: Dynamics, Challenges and Suggested Measures

Bangladesh came under scourge of political violence in 2013 resulting in political instability and crisis throughout the year. BMP like other human rights and social organisations had to function in a challenging context to implement the programmes and activities in 2013. The changed circumstances of domestic and global politics have led the organisation reorienting programme strategies and activities. It added a new responsibility to the leadership of BMP. The organisation has been continuing its movement for the last forty-three years with slogans of ‘Women’s Emancipation is Human Emancipation’ and ‘Women’s Rights are Human Rights’. The long route to success of BMP as women movement and organisation has never been a smooth journey, rather a trying path that BMP has been moving ahead. The organisation has now reached in a position of strength and respect in the society when Bangladesh has earned reputation from the global community for its notable achievements in women empowerment and development.

Essentially, any intervention for women empowerment and development in Bangladesh suffers from three vital factors –lack of favourable political environment, insecurity of women and existing patriarchal mindsets. As a non-government social entity, BMP has been facing a number of challenges, which are structural and originate from the societal gender relations dynamics and some are related to organisational level. This section attempts to look into dynamics and major challenges confronted by BMP and to provide recommendations for overcoming these challenges. It is critical to focus on the context of BMP operations in Bangladesh, which can be understood through socio-political dynamics.

VI.1 Political Threats

Challenges to BMP’s performance as an organisation and more specifically for implementing the project activities and programmes in 2013 came from adverse political environment. The continuing confrontation between the two major political parties has exacerbated the situations, which resulted in political violence. In this context, communal and fundamentalist forces have exploited the opportunity and have exerted their presence. The communal forces have become active in the society. As a result, political dynamics is turning into a more challenging to social movements for human rights, gender equality and justice. The current political dynamics has clearly negative impact on democracy and empowerment. BMP is determined to move ahead overcoming all hurdles to its programmes and activities.

VI.2 Societal dynamics

Societal dynamics is a critical determinant of social activism in Bangladesh particularly those related to women human rights and gender equality. The Bangladesh society is still widely marked by gender discrimination and violence on the one hand, misgovernance, corruption and political crisis, on the other. Gender-discriminatory personal laws and policies denying equal rights to marriage, divorce, custody and inheritance; inadequate enforcement of law, social stereotypes and stigma, lack of witness and victim protection contribute to continuing violence against women including domestic violence, rape, acid attacks, ‘fatwa’, stalking and sexual harassment which remain as major concerns. Few specific factors may be identified.

- (i) The first major challenge that largely affects the programmes and activities of women advancement is social stereotypical attitudes and norms about the roles and

responsibilities of women and men in Bangladesh society. As a result, a kind of traditional social prohibitive attitudes and perceptions exist in the society that significantly undermines women's ability and performance; i.e. in a way about half of the total population to some extent remain excluded or ignored in mainstream development activities. These largely cause social backwardness and patriarchal mode of thinking and keeping women's agenda as a low priority issue at both private and public spaces.

- (ii) The second crucial challenge that affects BMP activities promoting women rights in Bangladesh is increasing use of religion and fundamentalism about the women's status by a group of people. For women, growing influence of religion and fundamentalism in Bangladesh is a threat to already limited rights and freedoms currently they have. Women rights and development are already affected by gender-biased social norms. In such case, fundamentalist attitudes towards women affect women rights and successfully exclude and marginalize them in the society. There are examples of biased mentalities that do not recognize women as equal citizens in Bangladesh. Many fundamentalist groups already have shown their activities and commitment to reviving religious doctrines on women's status. Protests against (recently adopted?) women policy and equal women rights over family property are the example of that revival. BMP has already experienced that kind of challenges in organization of activities in different grass-root and district levels, and consider it as crucial threat to promote women rights and dignity in the society.
- (iii) The third potential challenge is the non-compliance of national and international legal documents/obligations about women rights and empowerment. This directly affects BMP activities, as women issues are subject to national and international legal regimes, such as Constitutional clauses, national laws, CEDAW provisions and citizen initiatives and other UN Conventions, Covenants and Treaties related to women affairs. Bangladesh is not party or has shown reservation to many international documents, initiatives and provisions. For example, the implementation of CEDAW remains a challenge as the government has reservation to adopt two articles. This also affects the implementation of BMP's core mandate about women rights through international and national cooperation.
- (iv) The fourth potential challenge is the limited or non-availability of sex-segregated data in Bangladesh. This significantly affects to the effective and sustainable implementation of national and international policies and strategies towards women's advancement. The UN CEDAW often expresses concern about the lack of sex-segregated data about violence against women, unequal employment, poor working conditions and unequal practices of wages, etc. As a result, Bangladesh, adopts traditional approaches on gender statistics. Consequently, the issues those are important to women are frequently overlooked in the society.
- (v) Another structural challenge is the inbuilt lack of political and social commitment regarding women's rights and development. The political and social forces are heavily influenced by political and social agenda and often overlook issues related to promoting women rights in the society. As BMP works with different societal stakeholders at the local and national levels, lack of political and social

commitment affects implementation of different women development projects and activities.

- (vi) A vital challenge is the feminization of poverty; women suffer the most and bear the burdens of a poor economy in Bangladesh. About 70 percent of women in Bangladesh are illiterate, compared to 45 percent of men. The feminization of poverty and economic insecurity of women have caused the low status of women in the society. Consequently, women are devalued in the social process and increasingly affected by violence against women, mostly in the form of trafficking, attack, rape, fatwa, desertion, divorce, physical harassment, and killing. This has impact on the quality participation of women in different programmes and activities organized by BMP and other related organizations.
- (vii) Lack of networking among women, improper education, poor health facilities, etc. largely affects women's mobilizing about their rights and empowerment in Bangladesh.
- (viii) A common societal challenge the organisers of BMP faces is to ensure greater participation of male in programmes and activities organized particularly at the grassroots level. This is largely due to the pre-conceived notion that gender is a concern for women only.

VI.3 Global dynamics

The functioning of BMP as a social organisation and movement has also been shaped by global dynamics marked by economic, environmental, political and security factors. Particularly, negative implications of globalisation affect life and livelihoods of people in the developing country like Bangladesh. With the neo-liberal free market agenda pursued by most developed nations and organisations governing international economic and trade regimes, globalisation has posed challenges to all kinds of actors in the world. It is generally believed that globalisation has impacted adversely on vulnerable strata of society. It creates wider gap between rich and poor in the society and worsens poverty situation as well. Specifically, it creates job insecurity, weakens workers' rights, and undermines social welfare. Globalisation has perpetuated or even deepened conflicts, environmental degradation, unemployment, exploitation of workers, and social disintegration. Apart from globalisation, there are two more factors in the contemporary world which have serious impact on society and economy. One is the impact of climate change due to global warming. Bangladesh is extremely vulnerable to global climate change because of its location and geographical features as a low lying delta. The sea level rise has already caused climate refugees and migrants within the country and outside. Another factor is continuing global economic recession affecting economic performance of Bangladesh. It is causing problems regarding employment, wages and price hike. Due to long term recession government can also withdraw welfare benefits such as subsidy and safety net allowances. As a consequence, marginalised and minority groups enormously suffer in terms of their economic, cultural and civil rights.

VI.4 Organizational challenges

Although BMP has achieved tremendous institutional capacity and sustainability based on its long involvement and experience, it faces a number of internal questions in implementing its

programmes and activities. This is particularly important for further consolidation of BMP as a social movement organisation. Most of these organisational challenges are related to implementation capacity, leadership deficiency, programmes, finance, bottom-up participation, etc. The 12th National Conference 2013 was a right occasion to reflect on the challenges that BMP is currently facing. Based on the conference report and general observations the following challenges may be identified.

- (i) With growing expansion of the organisation, implementation becomes a key challenge to BMP. As the organisation and its programmes are mainly based on voluntarism, it remains a critical factor to develop organizational capacity to implement projects efficiently. Technological advancement especially the introduction and application of accounting software at district and local units has not been completed yet. There is a general lack of evaluation of performance in a systematic way, which may be a barrier to efficient running of organization.
- (ii) Capacity at the grassroots level of BMP poses a challenge. Grassroots or district branches often face the problem of responding against incidents of VAW immediately. District branches are not well equipped to address immediate challenges about the violation of women rights. Strengthening of the central and district level monitoring mechanism is an important issue for the organization.
- (iii) BMP has been facing challenges in financial and management . Accounting system in district branches is not at satisfactory level. Financial statements have not been prepared on right time. Internal auditing has not been regularly done on behalf of the centre in every district. The accounting system in the districts needs to be manually as well as computer based.
- (iv) Use of modern technology, particularly, information and communication technology by the organisation as well as organisers.
- (v) Inspiring new and young leadership to bring about dynamism in the organization.
- (vi) Ideological compulsions of members as part of BMP, a mass women organisation in the society.

VI.4 Suggested measures

BMP is a dynamic civil society organisation. It always responds to changing realities in the broad canvas of national politics as well as women human rights, justice and gender equality. There is no doubt that new ideas and measures can further energize and strengthen Bangladesh Mahila Parishad as an organisation and movement. Although BMP has established a solid profile through its unwavering commitment and massive engagement at all levels – from village to city over the past forty-three years, it requires coping with changed contexts of society and state. The organisation is in need to find ways to overcome the above-mentioned challenges to pursue its goals and objectives. It must be mentioned that some of the challenges are beyond the purview of BMP as they are linked with larger political and social structures and milieu in Bangladesh. It depends on response of the state, market and society to prevailing gender inequality and injustice. Moreover, global initiatives such as CEDAW, UN, and feminist movements can also play a significant role for women development and empowerment. However, the following measures may be suggested for future plans of BMP as an organisation and a civil society movement.

- (i) **Voluntarism:** As a social movement organisation, BMP overwhelmingly depends on the strength of voluntarism. The more the organisation expands, the more voluntarism becomes significant for its success. There should be adequate measures for building voluntarism in BMP. Currently, with such a large number of general

members and organisers there is a need for giving top priority to voluntarism in BMP.

- (ii) Leadership development: Specific course of actions to be continued to develop leadership at all levels. The central leadership of BMP will have to play a supportive role and at the same time, there is a need for enhancement of quality of leadership with better conceptual knowledge, good will and time management. In this context, divisional workshop programmes are in demand for leadership development.
- (iii) Organisers: Organisers are the key forces of BMP as a voluntary and network institution. Professional skills of organisers need to be enhanced. BMP should take initiatives to make policymakers and administration gender sensitized. They should always be updated about the current situation of women's movement in devising strategy, and planning and implementing programmes. BMP should take steps to involve women from different professions with women's movement. Organizers need to take special steps to overcome the weakness related to the programme evaluation and delay in report sending. BMP needs to be vigilant because lack of transparency, accountability and good governance are the foremost national problems in Bangladesh.
- (iv) Programmes: Programme management is the key to success of BMP. Programmes provide direction to the organisation about its impact on the society in terms of improving conditions for women empowerment and development. There is a scope to think anew about programmes of BMP. BMP needs to be more active in creativeness and strategic in rapid pace. Programmes (such as study circles) for young women of the organisation should be continued and increased in number over the coming days. More projects related to employment generation can be undertaken. Special focus on VAW is necessary. A unified course of action needs to be taken from district level to the centre in order to accelerate the movement against VAW. In addition, more innovative approach should be adopted in planning and implementing programmes related to the prevention of violence against women and children. In general, BMP should expand the magnitude of its movement against gender disparity by organising increased number of meetings, trainings, workshops, rallies, human chains and exchange of views to raise awareness, as regards violence against women, amongst the various stakeholder groups.
- (v) Grassroots participation: BMP is the leading platform for grassroots participation for the cause of women in Bangladesh. However, there has been a scope to widen the participation of grassroots activists and organisers. In this regard, an emphasis must be given on grass roots branches of BMP. Initiatives should be taken to form citizens' forums like the Village Watch Committee. People from all segments of the society should be made aware of the positive outcomes of such social groups. Brigades of trained and informed workers and activists of the organisation should be formed at grassroots level.
- (vi) Training and Skills: Training and skill development programmes are continuous process and vital for human resources development. Number of trainings and workshops with updated module, as part of organisational capacity building, should be increased in BMP. Activists of the organisation should be motivated in a way as

to participate in such training programmes with due sincerity. Financial, organizational and official management of the organization must be done with efficiency, professionalism and there should be accountability and transparency at all levels. The accounts section of the organization should be fully computerized. Officials of the organization should be given training in financial and office management. Result Based Management (RBM) training programme should be introduced at all levels from Central to Local.

- (vii) Advocacy, lobby and networking: BMP should further strengthen advocacy and lobby for achieving its goals and objectives as well as implementing programmes under different component. For example, the demand for one-third reserved seats for women in the parliament, implying that movements for mainstreaming women in the country's political system should be geared up. Networking with like-minded organizations should be increased. It must facilitate GO-NGO collaboration at both national and regional levels, and strengthen national process to review the progress as regards full implementation of the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights (1993), CEDAW, CRC, BPFA and the Beijing+5 and Beijing+10 Declarations. BMP should continue strong advocacy lobby for withdrawal of reservations to Article 2 and Article 16.1(c) of UNCEDAW and its domestication to establish state responsibility for promoting equality and eliminating discrimination in all spheres including both public and private. Mobilizing mass opinion and carry out advocacy lobby for equal rights to property and resources.
- (viii) Centre and local linkage: Over the years BMP has developed close connection between the centre and local in implementing its countrywide activities and programmes. Measures should be taken to strengthen the relations between centre and local. As a rural and semi-urban society there is a need for special focus on local context. The policy makers, for that matter the leadership of BMP, must give special consideration to local dynamics both at structural and situation levels.
- (ix) Financial arrangement and capacity: Special focus should be given on financial issues of district branches. Providing financial assistance to the district branches is a lengthy task. The whole procedure should be performed faster. Moreover, strong evaluation and monitoring mechanism is necessary in order to oversee financial issues. Evaluation system should be strengthened and regularised before allocating fund to district branches. Performance of district branches needs to be considered as they are the prime forces for implementing BMP programmes. Initiatives should be taken to sensitise the district committees about financial support. Necessary steps must be taken to use computers at the district branch level. Steps should be taken to arrange training programmes in financial management for officers and staff of the centre. It was decided that BMP Accounting Department will visit every district branch and arrange training respectively at least once in a year.
- (x) Inclusiveness: As a movement BMP needs to take further initiatives for becoming inclusive in participation of people in terms of gender, age, occupation and location. Men and women from all strata of society should be motivated on some of the key issues relating to gender and development like VAW, political empowerment of women and human rights. Planned activities should be designed to engage more women, men, young men and young girls in the movement for gender equality. Particularly, participation of men in different programmes at

rural/grassroots level is a key. There should be more efforts on the part of the organisers at divisional and district levels to involve men in the activities of BMP.

- (xi) Institutionalisation: Organisational sustainability, accountability and transparency are closely linked with institutionalisation process. Although BMP has strong institutional foundation due to its leadership and long experience in the field, in order to meet new demands and challenges in the 21st century it should focus on further institutional development. Measures should be taken for capacity building and professionalism among the staffs and organisers at various levels of the organisation – grassroots to central.

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