



JOURNEY TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY

WOMEN'S VOICE AND LEADERSHIP (WVL) BANGLADESH PROJECT

For the past twenty-two years, Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) has been striving to ensure the well-being of marginalized people in Bangladesh and promote human rights, good governance, and gender equality through a rights-based approach. Manusher Jonno Foundation employs numerous strategies and initiatives, including advocacy, networking, campaigns, capacity building, research, and program development, to influence national policymakers and reform laws and policies to establish human rights and a society based on equality and justice.

The "Women's Voice and Leadership (WVL) Bangladesh" project was launched in 2019 and funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) under its Feminist International Assistance Policy. The project aimed to strengthen local women's rights organizations (WROs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) to advocate for the rights of marginalized women, girls, and transgender individuals and achieve gender equality. The WRO's leadership is built to advocate for intersecting diversity, amplifying their voices with government and decision-makers. This project provided grants and wide-ranging capacity-building support (organizational governance, organizational management, administration, human resource management, financial management, and program management) to grassroots WROs, enabling them to work closely with marginalized and at-risk groups.

FUNDING MODALITIES

- **Multi-year Funding**
WVL Bangladesh Project supported 18 Women Rights Organizations (WROs) under Multi-Year funding.
- **Fast Responsive Funding**
The project provided rapid and small financial assistance for organizing specific events or piloting new ideas, including addressing urgent discrete actions for 11 WROs and women's forums.

INTERSECTIONAL DIVERSITY

WVL-Bangladesh project worked with an intersectional diversity of the population, which includes violence survivors, ethnic women and girls, Dalit women and girls, Transgender, Sex Workers and their children, women migrant workers, women with disability, poor rural women & girls.

POPULATION COVERAGE

A total of 39,609 women, girls, and transgender individuals benefited as direct beneficiaries and 149,082 people as intermediaries. Also, 16,203,723 people were reached through different social media campaigns.

THEMATIC FOCUS

- Sexual and gender-based violence
- Sexual and reproductive health & rights
- Women's labor and employment
- Leadership & empowerment
- Rights of marginalized women, girls, Transgender

INTEGRATING FEMINIST APPROACH

The WVL-Bangladesh project applied feminist principles and followed a feminist approach to advance gender transformative change. WRO worked with a wide diversity, attended to their needs, shaped community-led actions, and successfully challenged the social norms, stereotypes, structures, and systems that cause barriers to equality and empowerment.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The project focused on strengthening institutions and providing WROs with policies, procedures, systems, strategic plans, advocacy plans, and succession plans for sustainability.

INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The project provided tailored capacity-building support to 200 staff and governing board members of WROs in institutional management, feminist leadership & governance, financial management, program design & management, advocacy & campaigns, and monitoring & evaluation.

POLICY INFLUENCING

WROs advocated at local and national levels to influence policy amendments and reinforcement by considering the specific needs of women, girls, and transgender people. The project significantly advocated

for integrating a gender lens in analyzing policies relevant to migrant workers' rights at the national level and marriage registration for ethnic communities in Chittagong Hill Tracts.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (WEE)

The WEE intervention was designed to promote the economic empowerment of marginalized women, girls, and Hijras after the COVID-19 fallout. It addressed the broader cultural and structural issues that prevent them from participating in economic ventures. Through this project, 1160 individuals engaged in economic activities.

AGENCY CREATION

The project's inclusive approach created opportunities for marginalized women to join a platform for collective action, experience sharing, and established sisterhood. Through the process, they gained the confidence to address challenges, boost self-esteem, and enhance agency. Women's voices were represented by 980 community-led groups and 3 networks across 20 districts.

SOCIAL ACTION INITIATIVE AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

The project organized youth leadership boot camps to foster leadership and provided training to 100 young girls and transgender individuals. It offered financial support and guided them to execute 10 small social action projects.

