

Strategic Plan | 2020 2024



Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS)



BNPS
STRATEGIC
PLAN
2020-2024



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Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS)

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Acronyms

BftW	Bread for the World
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EKN	The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
EU	European Union
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
MH	Menstrual Health
MHM	Menstrual Health Management
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NL	The Netherlands
PVE	Prevention of Violent Extremism
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USA	United States of America
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WPS	Women, Peace and Security
YFS	Youth Friendly Services
IMADR – AC	International Movement against All forms of Discrimination and Racism – Asia Committee

Highlights of the Strategic Plan 2020-2024

Our Vision

A society free from all sorts of discrimination, where nobody is left behind.

Our Mission

Engaging women to discover their potential as change agent and driving force for social transformation.

Our Guiding Principles

We believe in the principles of non-discrimination, diversity and secularism.

Who We Are

We are an activist women organization, founded in 1986, working to establish equality for women. We strive to develop women agency at the grass-roots and contribute bringing their voices to national, regional and international levels.

We take an active role in national, regional and international networks and have special membership status in the UN Economic and Social Council, ECOSOC.

BNPS is registered at the Directorate of Women Affairs (1986) and at the NGO Affairs Bureau (1988) of the government of Bangladesh.

Experienced and competent staff committed to BNPS's principles and values, guided by an executive committee composed of scholarly women from multi-disciplinary background, is BNPS's source of strength.

Interacting with communities, partners and authorities our staff is respectful, trustworthy, and responsible.

Our Programs and Actions

BNPS accomplishes its mission through four focus areas:

- Developing women's agency¹, we aim at their socioeconomic and political **empowerment**;
- Making **education** gender sensitive, we aim at shaping generation's mindset;
- Advocating and researching for **policy reforms**, we aim at women's emancipation, including ethnic and religious minorities;
- Engaging in **civic actions**, we advance policy reforms and act on gender-based violence and violent extremism.

¹ The principle that autonomous beings, agents, are capable of acting by themselves.

Our Strategic Goals: 2020-2024

- Promote women's interactions with local governments aiming at their **empowerment**, ensuring that their needs and rights are respected and increase their participation in local governance.

Promoting women's access to public resources and economic activities for the sustainability of their income-generating activities.

- Contribute to the national discourse on **education** promoting an enabling environment for women's emancipation and a culture of diversity.

Deepen the contacts with the public and private education sectors and network among organizations to encourage SRHR and gender sensitive education.

- Grasp opportunities to support **policy reforms** and participate in the planning process, favoring women's equal rights, emancipation and their participation in public decision-making.

- Organize **civic actions** that aim at strengthening women's movement advocating for their rights and at restraining gender-based violence and violent extremism.

Increase engagement with trade unions, women workers to make workers movement and environment gender sensitive.

Building bridges among like-minded organizations to strengthen the movement advancing women's empowerment.

Main outcomes of the strategic plan 2014-2018



Increase women's bargaining power to establish their rights

Through its fourteen field offices, BNPS has been implementing projects in the Haor district of Netrakona, selected slums in the cities of Dhaka and Chattogram, in the island of Sandwip and in three districts of Chittagong Hill Tracts, Jeshore and Mymensingh.

The organization of more than 23,000 grass-roots women and youth in the Haor area brought them and their families' better services from the various government departments and institutions. For example the installation of 297 tube-wells, the connection of 6 communities to the water supply system and the installation of 6 community arsenic removal water points. Additionally, the construction of more than 1,300 sanitary latrines and the provision with solar power and WASH for selected households contributed to improve their hygienic situation. Through social mapping processes, 36 CBOs formed and identified priority issues, prepared coping plans and communicated with the relevant government departments. This resulted in more than 4,000 households in two unions of the Mohangonj Upazila to mobilize local resources and to request the proper services to improve their disaster coping strategies.

The local primary health care centers provided services to 2,320 women and girls, and 13 disabled women and girls received wheel-chairs. Almost 4,000 women could benefit from the support of different safety nets and 125 women group members benefitted from legal counseling. Women's grass-roots organizations contributed to improve access to the communities, leading local authorities to construct 35 feeder roads with 14 culverts, including drainage systems and street lighting.

BNPS directly provided, or connected to public and private institutions and NGOs to ensure skills training for income-generating activities to more than 5,300 women. Amongst others, sewing and tailoring, handicrafts production, homestead gardening, duck and poultry rearing and animal husbandry. The participants also received support for the vaccination of their animals, and seeds and fertilizer for the homestead activities.

In a month long training, 20 women group members graduated as nursing assistant. Besides classroom sessions, they could train² their practical knowledge and the dealing with patients at the Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College and Hospital in Dhaka.

To improve their economic situation, almost 30,000 women engaged in income generating activities, as for example: garments sewing and trading, livestock rearing, agricultural farming, vegetable gardening, fish processing, producing and selling foods and fruits, operating tea stalls, grocery shops and local restaurants, running street cookeries, beauty parlors, producing fishing nets, shopping bags, shoes, handicrafts, Nakhshi Kantha quilts and fashion ornaments. After finishing their training many have found employment in the garment industry or in departmental

²Facilitators Dr. Durre Chowdhury of HBB and Dr. Professor Salma Jerin, Director, National Center for Control of Rheumatic Fever & Heart Diseases.

stores. Other moved to the cities where they found jobs as cleaner, housekeeper, etc. In the reporting period, BNPS has linked more than 500 grass-roots women entrepreneurs with market committees in its working areas.

Furthermore, the government conferred “Joyeeta” to six members of women groups for their distinguished role as entrepreneur at national level in three different categories.

Women’s participation in local elections increased, from 15 women competing 9 were elected in the local governments and one in the Upazila Parishad in working areas of BNPS. 113 women are actively participating in the local arbitration system and 210 in different committees of local governments, school managements, community clinics and social and cultural committees. In this period, more than 550 children, who dropped out from school, could be readmitted and 860 family conflicts were settled through the local arbitration process.

Around 1,200 youth received training to support women groups. The organized actions, combined with youth activism, contributed to create an enabling environment for women’s empowerment, increase their participation in society and to move towards gender equality.

In the domain of sexual and reproductive health and rights, MHM, VAWG, PVE, WASH and gender, 217 schools were touched, counting around 100,000 students, both boys and girls. To this end, 1820 teachers from secondary schools were capacitated to provide these trainings. Furthermore, 3,440 young people learned about SRHR through community-based trainings.



Girls gained self-confidence from BNPS organized martial arts skill camps.

Additional activities, including practicing menstrual hygiene and self-defense skills, made 720 girl students gain self-confidence. These efforts in the educational institutions contributed to increase awareness of community members, teachers, school management committees, local administration and government officials on the importance of SRHR information and services, MHM and preventing violence against women and girls.

Better knowledge contributed to achieve that more than 42,000 youths attended and received SRHR services from two youth friendly service centers. Youth and women groups, mobilizing local authorities' support, prevented more than 130 child and forced marriages, 21 dowry and 19 polygamy cases and intervened in more than 270 VAWG and 61 sexual harassment cases. Moreover, the family members of women groups ensured that more than 2,500 births were registered in their community.

BNPS organized youth volunteers to work in support of women groups, six of them attended two international workshops on Youth Unite Learning in Bangkok.

Through community initiatives, 36 food banks were established, saving more than two tons of rice and approximately BDT 10,80,000 to ensure food security during periods of adversities and disaster. In addition, the communities supported by local governments constructed protection walls for vulnerable villages in the Haor areas. Furthermore, around 900 women received resilience training to better cope with natural disasters and two market places, exclusively for women to sell their products, were established, adding value to the learnt knowledge.

In the Chittagong Hill Tracts, BNPS provided support to indigenous women and women led organizations resulting in the creation of a 20 member women activist forum advocating for gender sensitive customary laws, ending VAWG and increasing women's participation in the local government, customary system and administration.

Advocacy for policy development, reform and implementation

Advocacy efforts through talk shows, roundtables, letters to policy makers and other mass communication materials as well as knowledge sharing workshop based on BNPS researches, contributed to the introduction of new dimensions of democracy in the national discourse. Hence, it contributed to promote equal citizenship, to push for a level playing field for all citizens and, lastly, to women's liberation.

Through press conferences and contributions to newspaper, as well as direct contacts with the Election Commission and political parties, BNPS initiated and – later in alliance with other women organizations – raised gender and minority related issues in the context of the national and local government elections. Thus, BNPS contributed to promote a gender sensitive electoral process during and after the ballots, aiming at a level playing field for all.

BNPS's advocacy efforts, in cooperation with the journalists' forums, the teachers' and doctors' associations, to include gender sensitive lessons, inclusive of SRHR and MHM, in the national curriculum, contributed to bring these issues into the national discourse and in the dialogue with the Ministries of Education, Health, Women and Children Affairs and the National Curriculum and Textbook Board.



Honorable Speaker Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, MP urged the importance to formulate National Action Plan on WPS agenda.

BNPS organized 21 district and 7 divisional consultations and one at national level to incorporate women issues in the National Action Plan of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda³. Additionally, BNPS developed a community-based

³UNSC resolution 1325

education and awareness curriculum and formed the national network “Women for Peace, Bangladesh” composed of 21 women headed CSOs.

As adviser to the economist panel preparing the seventh Five Years Plan of Bangladesh, BNPS provided input related to gender issues.

BNPS organized national and local dialogues with organizations and networks from the Chittagong Hill Tracts in presence of two circle chiefs, the Ministry of CHT and relevant authorities, addressing pressing issues as VAWG, explicitly harassment of school girls, and sensitizing and mobilizing CSOs on gender issues of the customary laws. One of the results is the formation of a special committee by the Circle Chief of Bandarban to review the customary law. Further, Circle Chiefs started occupying vacant positions with women and appointed 35 indigenous women as Karbari (traditional administration), hence improving women’s participation in the traditional system.

Based on a research that monitors the reporting of national media on GBV, BNPS developed a guideline for print and online media and disseminated it through national and regional consultations.

Conducting studies and working with national and regional networks, BNPS reached out to 30 trade unions, aiming at making them more gender sensitive, especially related to safer workplace for women and minimum wages for decent living.

An important part of the advocacy work is research and publication, allowing for informed dialogue on sensitive gender, ethnic and religious minorities’ issues. Major publications are on gender issues (8 research reports, 5 policy briefs, 10 journals and 5 learner’s books on SRHR and VAWG). In addition BNPS produced video documentaries, manuals, flip charts, flash cards, leaflets, posters and flyers.

Community mobilization and collective actions to promote sensitivity to and understanding of gender issues

BNPS organized rallies, cultural shows and discussion programs on violence against women as obstruction to democracy, gender equality and human rights. Drawing the attention of policy makers, BNPS aims at creating a supportive environment that will assure legal actions to stop violence against women and girls.

To strengthen its activities on MHM, SRHR and gender at grass-roots, BNPS arranged hearings for the broad public as well as specific ones for students, teachers, parents, school committee and community leaders.

For women leaders, community forum and cluster committee members, youth and social leaders, BNPS organized awareness sessions on women’s reproductive burden and unpaid care work, and on women’s rights and equal citizenship.

The community forums, constituted by different local actors, as professionals, business people, teachers, journalists and like minded political activists, contributed to building an enabling environment for advancing women’s cause in their community.

Addressing trade unions, labor representatives, factory owners and policy makers, BNPS promotes women’s participation in the trade unions and advocates for labor rights, living wages and safe work places for women workers.



The rally of 16 days campaign demanded to resist all forms of violence against women and girls.

BNPS focuses on national news regarding women’s rights, violence against women, cases of rape and killing. Organizing and participating in movements aiming at awakening public opinion claiming for justice, it creates pressure on duty bearer to act more decisively applying the law. To reinforce the claim for justice, BNPS, in cooperation with network members and coalitions, organizes and participates in human chains, public gatherings, protests and press conferences. Moreover, complementing the direct civic actions and creating a sense of urgency to act, BNPS directly addresses the relevant authorities and judiciary through petitions, leaflets, posters and social media posts.

Youth group members organize cycle rallies⁴, campaigns against drug and health camps in schools and in the communities.

⁴ Sponsored by Hero Honda Motors Ltd.

Enhance institutional capacity of BNPS

To strengthen its capacity, BNPS focused on social analytical skills to better understand gender equality and diversity, SRHR, PVE and citizen driven advocacy strategies. Additionally, BNPS promoted market extension, entrepreneurship and knowledge management. As part of institutional strengthening, BNPS updated and further developed its organizational policy manuals and revised its staff and community based training manuals.

BNPS staff participated in 48 training events abroad and to different training sessions organized by the government, donor organizations and CSOs. For project staff, women and youth leaders, BNPS organized exchange visits.



BNPS provided gender equality and diversity training to the teachers of public TVET institutes.

The acquired skills and knowledge were applied in the training of more than 2,250 people. Participants were staffs from BNPS regional offices, other NGOs, networks and government institutions. Also included were 181 teachers from public technical and vocational education and training institutes supported by ILO.

To ensure full transparency in its financial management and to quickly respond to the donors' requirements, BNPS introduced modern software for its financial management and accounting systems.

Challenges we faced

BNPS bases its work on the change theory that secular education, organization of grass-roots and awareness raising, complemented with civic actions that support advocacy at national level, will on the medium-term change people's mindset, resulting in an enabling environment for women's empowerment. Hence, conducting to a society where women, men – as well as individuals belonging to minority communities – live in peace, enjoying the same rights and opportunities. While in the first two decades of its existence BNPS could observe that these goals were within reach, during the last decade a reverse of the development flow sat in.

In Bangladesh the perception of democracy is generally limited to the elections. Moreover, an overwhelming majority believes in the supremacy of religion over the constitution. Even though the constitution dictates equal rights for women and men, the majority has difficulties in accepting that women's rights are equal to men's ones. Women's rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, are becoming increasingly difficult subjects to address in public and are strongly opposed by the traditional patriarchal mindset boosted by radical religious ideas.

Regional and international conflicts and particularly the impact of reckless politics on the Middle East countries are creating anger and agitation. Forces opposed to a secular society, where women and men, including religious and ethnic minorities, have the same rights, took advantage of the general sentiment of frustration, especially addressing youths, radicalizing and involving them in religious extremism, inspired by the propaganda of radical and foreign terrorist groups.

These extreme opposite political ideologies and the violent culture, topped with the danger of extremist attacks, hinder the free expression of progressive ideas and thoughts, opposes innovation and women's progress. This dreadful development goes back a long way, favored by repeated military interferences in the democratic rule and processes, weakened civil institutions and organizations. Moreover, the increasingly fluctuating mood of donors' funding strategies, swiftly responding to political shifts in their countries, contributes to weaken NGOs presence at grass-roots, leaving open space for radical propaganda.

The rural-urban and overseas migration resulted in the increase of women headed households. While initially rural-urban migration could have been seen as a winning game changer related to the traditional role of women, it often resulted in marginalization and poverty, making women even more vulnerable and exposed to gender-based violence. In the past decades, a sharp increase in the participation of women in the labor force has created a situation allowing women to escape the traditional boundaries and to contribute to the perception change related to their role in society and their contribution to the national economy. Furthermore, these changes of roles strongly contributed to develop women's agency.

Recently, following the increased use of capital-intensive technology, Bangladesh is experiencing a decrease in the demand for labor. As a consequence, unskilled workers' openings for paid jobs are shrinking, frequently disadvantaging women workers. Consequently, overseas migration of women workers is increasing, setting a range of new challenges dominated by sexual violence. Lacking gender sensitivity, the trade union movement neglects women workers' strategic and practical needs and primarily focuses on issues related to workers' remuneration. Employers and decision makers still perceive that men are the bread winner; therefore any pay to women workers is just good enough. Specific and safety needs of women workers are not, or rarely considered.

The number of women engaged fulltime in the work force, from low paid to higher level jobs, in business and politics is increasing. Even so, due to absence of supporting institutions from state or employer as well as lacking responsibility and burden sharing by the male family members, the large majority still have to bear the heavy traditional burden of unpaid care work. Limited social protection schemes and poor delivery leave women back in vulnerability.

Inadequate presence of women in power positions limits the inclusion of women's perspective in local decision-making, hence adequate consideration of their needs and rights. Inefficient local governance and poor public service delivery make access to basic services even more difficult.

Widespread abuse and availability of recreational drugs and negative use of social media are undermining youth's education and future and leads them into anti-social behavior and activities against the marginalized, especially women.

Lessons we learnt

Access to local government services can be improved through community awareness supported by advocacy and community forums. Providing information about due services, developing communication and negotiation skills to approach duty bearers, improves delivery of basic services, including for the less privileged population.

The level of poverty, risk and deprivation of women varies from region to region, community and ethnicity. Thus, promoting women's rights and emancipation requires different, context sensitive approaches and wide-ranging programs to be able to provide equal access to economic, social and political spaces.

The traditional perception of gender roles, social taboos and misconceptions make it difficult for young people to access information and services on SRHR and MHM. As a consequence, they suffer physically and mentally, and cannot fully enjoy their sexual and reproductive rights.

The self-defense skills training for girls and young women has proven to be an effective tool in developing their self-confidence, leading them to an increased participation in society.

Engaging youth in developing a more secular vision of a society that respects diversity and equal rights, will have a transforming and long-lasting impact on the society. Where the whole school approach is implemented, pupils positively change behavior. Though being a long-term strategy, it already shows to be effective.

To prevent violent extremism, it is important to change mindset of people, particularly youth, which requires time. Learning to analyze situations, internalizing the principle of diversity, non-discrimination and secularism will help them to understand that hate and intolerance are used to instigate violent behavior and oppression.

In recent years donors' funding modalities tend towards a project by project approach. Opting for short-term top down planned projects and abandoning long-term programs, which were generally planned including partners, makes it difficult for NGOs to contribute with their local knowledge and to retain experienced staff. This shift is negatively affecting the transformation process and social change towards a just society where equal rights for women and men are established and respected.

Our development partners

BNPS is implementing projects funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Simavi from NL, Bread for the World and Misereor from Germany, AmplifyChange from UK, Women's World Day of Prayer from USA, Oxfam in Bangladesh, UN Women, UN Trust Fund and UN Democracy Fund.

BNPS's activist and civic actions contribute to donor sponsored and project-based development work. Our civic actions aim at strengthening women's rights, at restraining gender-based violence and violent extremism as well as at building bridges between like-minded organizations to support women's empowerment movement.

The context in which we work

Bangladesh has become one of the world's economic success stories. Aided by a fast-growing manufacturing sector – its garment industry is second only to China's – Bangladesh's economy has averaged above 6% annual growth for nearly a decade, reaching 7.86% in the year through June (Nikkei Asian Review). From mass starvation in 1974, the country has achieved near self-sufficiency in food production⁵. The per capita income has risen nearly threefold since 2009, reaching USD 1,750 nowadays. In the same period the number of people living in extreme poverty (USD 1.25 per day) has shrunk from 19% to less than 9% of the population (World Bank). An important contribution comes from the remittances (USD 15 billion, 2018) of the 2.5 million Bangladeshi overseas workers. In the IT sector, Bangladesh could count with an outstanding success exporting software and IT services for nearly USD 800 million by June 2018, and with view to exceed USD 1 billion soon. To better distribute work and income in the country, the government is building a countrywide network of 100 special economic zones (11 completed, 79 under construction). Also on the service side Bangladesh can report successes: school enrollment has increased respecting gender parity. Health and agricultural services reached village level and the power generation capacity increased to cover 90 percent of the country needs. Despite progress, hurdles persist ranging from structural to governance problems. Gender inequality persists and hinders women's potential to fully unfold, while deep political divisions favor the proliferation of extremist ideals.

In this perspective of the long-lasting economic growth, Bangladesh will reach the middle-income status by 2021, on the eve of the nation's 50th anniversary. The last two five-year plans 2011-2015 and 2016-2020, designed to materialize the vision 2021, contributed to accelerate the pace of socioeconomic transformation, even in the backdrop of global stagnation. While economic growth is increasing the country's wealth, qualitative assessments show that, despite government's policy efforts, income and gender inequality are rising. Many programs formulated to balance economic growth and social wellbeing have not produced the expected results, suffering from poor design and implementation, leaving behind a vast share of population, mostly women. Women, even now, remain one of the social groups most at risk, exposed to poverty, exploitation and physical and emotional violence. Women are also most affected in case of natural disaster, lacking the resources for preemptive and recovery measures.

Government's over 140 social safety net programs have contributed to reduce poverty under 25% and extreme poverty under 10% of the population. Even so,

⁵ The current population of Bangladesh is 167,839,827 as of May, 2019, based on United Nations estimates. Bangladesh population is equivalent to 2.18% of the total world population.

additional efforts to mobilize grass-roots women and reinforce their agency are needed, as they are unaware of the existing services. This will allow them to access these facilities for their and their family's wellbeing.

The growth of urban centers is creating job opportunities also for women, but mostly in the informal sectors. The increasing population pressure in the urban areas is generating a hazardous urban life, opening doors to illegal activities and exploitation, severely affecting women. Despite the expansion of the formal job market (approx. 200,000 p.a. for women), the population growth is passing the job creation capacity of the manufacturing and service sectors. Sixty percent of the economic active population is still employed in the agricultural sector, which hardly will be able to absorb masses of newcomers, especially considering the progressive and capital intensive modernization trend. Indicators suggest that future jobs will mostly require skilled labor force to support industrialization, highlighting shortages where programs aiming at creating economic opportunities for women should invest.

The last years Bangladesh has experienced a rise in religious extremism with growing violence against a range of groups as secular bloggers, outspoken critics of fundamentalism, members of religious minorities and foreigners, threatening the social peace. At the same time, reactionary groups are organizing religious discussion groups (taleem), which quickly spread among the female population, conveying values opposed to women's liberation. Gender-based violence has increased, often widespread through social media, hence attracting youths into anti-women activities.

In the aftermath of military regime in 1975 and the repeated coups d'état, the last in 2007, the political climate has changed. Partisan politics, corruption, lack of vision and program eroded political parties' credibility and popular support. Muscle power, armed support and money define the new type of successful politician, creating an unfriendly environment for women's participation. Vote rigging and use of arms during elections have a negative impact on people's confidence, especially women's, in the electoral system, in parties and, finally, in democracy. Though the political parties are recognizing the situation, they are too entangled in their historic feuds, which impact negatively on the political context, hindering the promotion of a peaceful electoral environment that would favor women's participation, both at national and local level. In the last national parliament election (December 2018), only 68 women against 1,848 men were nominated as candidates from the different political parties. Local government elections are partisan, hindering women's political empowerment and access to leadership.

Our strategic priority areas

To accomplish our mission, we mobilize grass-roots fostering women's agency, we address key networks and organizations, both private and public, contributing to build a diverse and just society free from discrimination.

At the different levels of society, we advance strategic issues in four interrelated areas:

- Developing **women's agency**, we aim at their economic and political empowerment;
- Through gender sensitive **education**, we aim at shaping younger generation's mindset;
- Advocating and researching for **policy reforms**, we aim at women's emancipation, including ethnic and religious minorities, and
- Engaging in **civic actions**, we advocate for a diverse and tolerant secular society, free of gender-based violence and violent extremism.

The strategic goals we aim at

Overall, we aim at women's emancipation. We understand that economic, social and political empowerment leads to independence and self-determination, hence freedom from legal, socioeconomic and political restrictions. In our focus areas we aim at following goals:

Developing women's agency

We mobilize grass-roots and organize interactions with local governments to ensure those women's needs and rights are respected, to claim their rights to services and economic spaces and to increase women's participation in local governance.

We link women's grassroots organizations with public and private service provider for skill development and financial services, facilitating women's access to economic activities at community level and, generally, to income-generating activities.

Making education gender sensitive

We address public and private education institutions, we network among organizations to promote an education that respects our nation's constitution and is clearly gender sensitive, thus on the long-term promoting gender equality.

We grasp opportunities to support policy reforms in the education sector, promoting teaching methods that follow a consistent and gender sensitive educational approach.

We advance sexual health, health rights and reproductive rights education aiming at women's right of self-determination on their bodies and sexual autonomy.

We promote civic actions aiming at a secular education where women and men are equal and live in a diverse society free from violence against women, religious and violent extremisms.

Advocating and researching for policy reforms

Our own research as well as research done by others is the basis for informed advocacy. We advocate and promote networking to bring strategic issues forward, addressing policy reforms that contribute to women's emancipation, including ethnic and religious minorities.

We advocate for and promote women workers' rights, security and protection for migrating women workers. Advising government institutions we stand-in for gender sensitive planning and budgeting.

We advocate for violence free and rule compliant electoral processes, to favor advancement of women's political rights and their participation in public decision-making.

Engaging in civic actions

We engage in civic and cultural actions supporting secularism and a culture of peace. Promoting networking in-between different social actors and involving youths, we aim at changing mindsets.

We address media to foster gender sensitive reporting, therefore we work to sensitize journalist, print, online and social media.

We organize press conferences, talk shows and round tables for wide-ranging campaigns on specific issues and opinion mobilization.

Globally, with our civic actions we aim at fostering an enabling environment for women's progress and liberation.

With like minded organizations we address strategic issues and bring them afloat for the public and to the attention of the responsible government organizations and CSOs.

We build bridges between like-minded organizations to strengthen national engagement for women's rights and to prevent gender-based violence and violent extremism.

Our organization, BNPS

BNPS with its civic actions reaches districts and divisions depending on the nature of action. To ensure effectiveness, it implements projects in specific areas. For a responsible implementation of the projects – clustered in our four focus areas, contributing to our strategic goals – BNPS has decentralized the implementation management to eight field offices.

Overall, 120 professionals are following up the projects in eight regions and 30 professionals work at the central office in Dhaka, responsible for the overall management, communication and linking with development partners.

On request of our development partners, monitoring, evaluation and financial auditing is made project by project. The reporting on single project is well established and the reliability of an irreproachable financial management proven.

The project by project procedure makes overall impact measurement at organizational level difficult; therefore, specific issues are addressed in key studies and reported in BNPS' periodic publications.

Currently, BNPS is implementing 12 projects with a financial volume of approx. USD 9 million.

Currently active projects as on June 2019

Project Basics	Project Brief
<p>1. REE-CALL 2021 Resilience through Economic Empowerment, Climate Adaptation, Livelihood and Leadership Donor: Oxfam, GB Duration: 10.2017 to 03.2020</p>	<p>Focuses on coping mechanism of women and men at risk of disaster and climate change. Strengthen CBOs and local government institutions to anticipate a possible impact of climate change, to create sustainable income and employment options for women and men at risk. Address the legal framework to ensure rights and access to services, natural resources and markets.</p>
<p>2. PRiME Promoting Rights through Mobilization and Empowerment Donor: BftW Duration: 01.2015 to 06.2018 and 07.2018 to 06.2021</p>	<p>Promotes activism of grass-roots women and youth through improved conceptual clarity, better analytical and negotiation skills and leadership capacity to gain more space in the society, creating pressure on local policy makers and duty bearers for better accountability. In Chittagong Hill Tracts strengthen the capacity of indigenous organization and traditional leaders to take action for making the customary law gender sensitive.</p>
<p>3. AWAM Advancing Equality of Women and Marginalized People Donor: Misereor Duration: 07.2015 to 06.2018 and 07.2018 to 06.2020</p>	<p>Leadership development of grass-roots women and youth to facilitate dialogue with duty bearers and local government bodies, enabling them to raise their voices and claim their rights and access to services.</p>
<p>4. UBR-2 Unite for Body Rights Programme Donor: EKN</p>	<p>School young people, irrespectively of their age, gender, social background or sexual preference to know their rights, to take informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health and rights. Facilitate access to quality,</p>

Project Basics	Project Brief
<p>Duration: 01.2016 to 12.2019</p>	<p>youth friendly sexual reproductive health services, within a supportive socio-cultural and political environment.</p>
<p>5. I am One, I am Many Combating discrimination on the basis of religious identities and beliefs. Donor: Oxfam, BD Duration: 02.2016 to 02.2019</p>	<p>The project, encompassing Bangladesh, Indonesia and Pakistan, engages youth to combat religious and gender discrimination, to promote pluralistic mindsets and to value diversity in society through inclusion and harmony. Youth are trained to work with CSOs, CBOs and institutions to promote diversity and favor inclusion in their community, generating a positive public opinion, thus preventing discriminatory laws.</p>
<p>6. Ritu: A research based MHM program designed and implemented following Evidence Based Programing (EBP) approach. The Impact Centre of the Erasmus University (ICE) and Maastricht University are doing the evaluation part of the program. Donor: Simavi, EKN Duration: 09.2016 to 04.2019</p>	<p>and measurement of the actual BNPS works with students, parents, school committees and communities to impart MHM knowledge and to foster a better attitude and practice on menstrual hygiene. Periodical data collected between intervention and control schools, will allow comparisons and measurement of the actual attitude changes.</p>
<p>7. Creating Spaces Creating Spaces to take Action on Violence against Women and Girls</p>	<p>The project, encompassing Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Indonesia and the Philippines, aims at reducing VAWG. BNPS is engaging key community leaders (including religious, political and private</p>

Project Basics	Project Brief
<p>Donor: Oxfam, BD Duration: 12.2016 to 03.2019</p>	<p>sectors) and youth in advancing women’s leadership and rights. These activities aim at improving access to services as shelters, to economic opportunities, to legal and to psycho-social support. Introducing new knowledge and best practices it claims better accountability of duty bearers in ending VAWG, early and forced marriage.</p>
<p>8. Girls Power Advancing Girls Power and Participation in School Sports and Outdoor Activities Donor: Women’s World Day of Prayer Duration: 01.2019 to 12.2020</p>	<p>The project arranges martial arts training for girl students to build confidence, it promotes participation in school sports, fostering a proactive attitude and actions against VAWG in schools and in the community.</p>
<p>9. Youth in PVE Countering Religious Extremism in Bangladesh Donor: UNDEF Duration: 02.2018 to 01.2020</p>	<p>Promote diversity, peace and tolerance to counter violent religious extremism. BNPS collected information from different women organizations and individuals throughout districts, divisions and at national level. The two studies reflected women’s perspective on the effects of violent extremism on their life. The findings were shared with the network of women headed NGOs to promote peace and tolerance.</p>
<p>10. MHM Collective Initiatives to Improve the Menstrual Health (MH) Situation in Bangladesh by Engaging NGOs, Civil</p>	<p>Build the capacities of the MH platform NGO-members to enable them to more effectively address MH issues with the CBOs, linking them to service provisions, organizing joint campaigns and advocacy.</p>

Project Basics	Project Brief
<p>Society and the Private Sector.</p> <p>Donor: AmplifyChange</p> <p>Duration: 05.2018 to 04.2020</p>	
<p>11. SRHR-VAWG for CHT Girls</p> <p>Our Lives, Our Health, Our Futures</p> <p>Donor: EU, Simavi</p> <p>Duration: 01.2019 to 12.2023</p>	<p>BNPS, in consortium with Simavi, NL, is developing the organizational and financial capacities of ten local indigenous NGOs in the Chittagong Hill Tracts that implement activities for the wellbeing of indigenous women and girls.</p> <p>Besides supporting the capacity building of these NGOs, BNPS provides funds, monitors program activities and finances, ensuring quality implementation.</p>
<p>12. Minority Rights, PVE</p> <p>Upholding Rights of Minorities beyond Borders – South Asia</p> <p>Donor: EU, IMADR - AC</p> <p>Duration: 01.2019 to 12.2021</p>	<p>It's a multi country project (India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal) implementing for reinforcing capacities and skills of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs), organisations and networks in combating discrimination, intolerance and violence on the grounds of religion and belief (or non-belief), strengthening South Asian platforms and networks that are voices of minorities and producing a report on status of religious minorities.</p>

BNPS timeline

■ 1986: The Founding of BNPS

Group of women activists; Understanding the context and way forward

■ 1986-1990: Engaging with Grassroots Women

First foreign donation; Office setup in Sandwip; Dhaka city slums and Netrakona; Integrated economic, social and political empowerment

■ 1990-1996: Expanding to National Level Advocacy

Joining ADAB; 5 office setup (Chittagong, Jashore, Khulna, Mymensingh and Barhatta); New program: gender discrimination in Madrasha education; Women rights in CHT; Recognition of women freedom fighters contributed in the liberation war; Making media gender sensitive; Pro-democracy movement and formation and leading few networks on VAW, child rights, solidarity networks, Contributing to influence national discourse

■ 1996-2001: Promoting Women in Governance

Citizens roles and responsibility in governance; Election monitoring and getting direct election to the reserve seat of local government; Training of elected women members of local government; Diversified programs and new donors (16 new projects with 8 new donors); National and regional level networks and partnering; People organization with three tires; Cultural activism; Gender budgeting; Political empowerment of women

■ 2002-2006: Backlash and Institutional Crisis

Dark days of BNPS; Strategic alliance with an NGO to survive; Starting the process for making trade union movement gender sensitive

■ 2007-2009: Rebuilding and Resurgence

Rebuilding the supporting forum for women and grassroots empowerment; Making education gender and youth sensitive

■ 2009-2018: Inclusion of Adolescent and Youth

Adding facilitation of local organizations; SRHR and MHM, VAW/G in school and community; PVE; Extending grassroots empowerment; Support to hard to reach area; gender and climate change

■ 2019: Facilitation of Local Organizations

Mobilize 21 women organizations through a network and contributing to the National Action Plan development on WPS by Bangladesh Government; Support 10 CHT organizations for improving the lives of young girls

Celebrating

33

years

Of Struggle For Equality
1986-2019



Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS)