



Women workers in the tea gardens of Bangladesh: Diagnosis of workers' rights and decent work statutes

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ACRONYMS

BCSU	:	Bangladesh Cha Sromuk Union (Bangladesh Tea Workers Unions
BILS	:	Bangladeshi Institute of Labour Studies - BILS
Boshot Vita	:	House
CEC	:	Central Executive Council
CSO	:	Civil Society Organisation
DIFE	:	Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments
FGD	:	Focus Group Discussion
FoA	:	Freedom of Association
GOV	:	Government
NTUC	:	National Trade Union Center
PEC	:	Primary Executive Council
RMG	:	Ready Made Garment
TU	:	Trade Union
VEC	:	Valley Executive Council
VAT	:	Value Added tax

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

Context and settings

Bangladesh has 167 tea gardens¹. The industry is one of the main women employment providers in the country, more than 50% workers of the tea sector are women. In recent years, production efficiency has been tremendous. The tea industry brewed up 96.5 million kg of tea in 2021, the highest in 168 years of commercial production². Labour rights situation too has improved a lot. Such as, wage has been increased to almost double in the last five years period.

Despite these pleasant parts, the industry is consistently critiqued for having one of the fragile labour rights situations. The workers' right and decent work status in the tea gardens especially for women workers is not in any comfort zone. Gender-based violence is common and healthcare facilities are never adequate for women.

UN research counts that about 74% of tea garden workers live below the poverty line (UN Women, 2021)³. Despite several time increases, a registered tea worker now gets only 170 taka⁴ daily, the lowest in the world. The workers have to fulfil daily set targets (typically 23 kg) and have their wages cut when they fall short. Women-friendly washroom facilities in the workplace are far from the minimum acceptable reality and the workers have only limited access to safe drinking water while at work. On the other hand, workers live a substandard living in the thatched, mud-walled shanty, called 'labour lines'.⁵

Formed in 1948, Bangladesh Tea Workers Union (BCSU) is the largest union in Bangladesh, representing about 1.5 lakh workers. Given the above-mentioned appalling labour rights situation of the tea garden workers, it can be easily assumed that despite long experiences and acquired skills and competences, there must be some lacking that failing BCSU to effectively bargain and negotiate with the employers and the government. And for women trade unionists, there is clearly a lack of capacity. Women leaders in the 1) National Committee, 2) Valley committees and 3) Ponchayet committees reportedly lack proper knowledge on workers' rights.

In the underlying circumstances of above, this research endeavours to make a situation analysis of the prevailing workers' rights and decent work statuses of the tea garden workers in Bangladesh. To the extent, an effort has been made to assess the union's capacity with particular focus on the women trade union leaders. Oxfam has funded this research. Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies –BILS is the implementing partner.

Research objectives

This research aims to capture the following specific objectives:

- To identify the overall workers' rights situation of woman tea garden workers in Bangladesh;
- To analyze the decent work statuses of the women tea garden workers in Bangladesh;
- To make a general assessment of the socio-economic condition of the women tea garden workers;
- To assess the knowledge and capacity of the tea sector TU leaders, particularly the valley committee and PEC leaders.

¹ List of Tea Gardens, Bangladesh Tea Board, Retrieve from

<http://www.teaboard.gov.bd/site/page/77c5802c-8aa8-4d93-ad31-07807f4edd0f/->

² <https://bdnews24.com/economy/2022/01/20/bangladesh-tea-production-heats-up-to-a-historic-high-in>

³ <https://www.businessinsiderbd.com/economy/9513>

⁴ <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/c511ril245#:~:text=Tk%20170%20has%20been%20fixed,>

⁵ <https://www.ucanews.com/news/covid-19-intensifies-misery-of-bangladeshs-tea-workers/88792#>

- To assess the knowledge and capacity of the women TU leaders
- To explore the opinion/knowledge/suggestions of stakeholders including national-level TU leaders and local community people on the situation of women tea garden workers.

Research questions

Relevant to research objectives, this research dealt with the following six (6) sets of research questions:

- A) What about the status of prevailing worker-rights situation of the women tea garden workers?
 - What about the status of employment security of workers?
 - What about the practices of working hours and overtime?
 - What about the status of wage practices?
 - What about the status of different other facilities at work?
 - What about the status of leave and rest at work?
 - What about the status of maternity protection at work?
 - What about the status of occupational health and safety at work?
 - What about the status of general welfare at work?
- B) What about the decent work statuses of tea garden workers?
 - What about the statuses of FoA and Collective bargaining?
 - What about the statuses of child laboring?
 - What about the statuses of forced laboring at work?
 - What about the statuses of discriminatory and non-equal practices at work?
 - What about the statuses of social security at work?
 - What about the social dialogue practices at work?
- C) What about the socio-economic condition of the women tea garden workers?
 - What about life and family?
 - What about the housing status?
 - What about the statuses of living?
 - What about the statuses of access and non-access to service providing institutions and services?
 - What about the status of health and education?
 - What about the status of income and expenditure?
- D) What about the trade union capacity and gaps?
 - What about the skills and competencies of the valley level and Panchayet level leaders and activists?
 - What about the skills and competencies of the women TU leaders and activists?
 - What is the status of their knowledge on workers' rights and decent work?
 - What are their roles and responsibilities? How do they know that?
 - What about their performances?
 - What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats?

- What are the barriers?
 - What can be done differently?
- E) What are the opinions/knowledge/suggestions of the national-level TU leaders and local community people on the situation of women tea garden workers?
- How do the national TU leaders assess the rights and decent work statuses of the tea workers?
 - How do the national TU leaders and community people perceive the life and living of the tea garden workers?
 - How do the national TU leaders and community people evaluate the tea workers' access to institutions and services and their acceptance/social stigma in the society and living?
 - What is their assessment about language differences?
- F) What are the ways forward?
- What are the expectations of the workers?
 - What are the expectations and recommendations from the Bangladesh Cha Sramik Union?
 - What are the expectations and recommendations from the valley level TU leaders and activists?
 - What are the expectations and recommendations from the Panchayet level leaders and activists?
 - What are the recommendations from the national TU leaders and activists?
 - What are the recommendations from the employers, government and CSO actors and experts?

Research approach and methodology

A combination of both 1) quantitative and 2) qualitative research approaches, methods and respective tools and techniques are followed. Data collected both from 1) primary sources and 2) secondary sources. 92 tea gardens and tea estates situated at Moulvibazar district constituted the study locales.

Quantitative Research

- ➡ By nature, it was a descriptive research and descriptive research statistics are emphasized
- ➡ Considering the audience and users of the research report and findings, univariate analysis is particularly emphasized.
- ➡ A representative 150 tea garden workers are surveyed from forty-one (41) tea gardens from the study locales.
- ➡ A structured questionnaire consisting of dichotomous, polychotomous, multiple response, Likert scale, and some open-ended variables is used for data collection in the survey.
- ➡ Multistage cluster and purposive sampling method are particularly followed. Entire tea growing areas under Moulvibazar district are grouped into four (4) main tea producing valleys. Proportional to tea gardens and workers, workers are surveyed purposively from each of the valleys.
- ➡ Educated youths and young trade unionists from tea workers families were employed as data enumerators who have clear knowledge and understanding about the survey clusters. Data collectors are trained adequately before administering the survey.
- ➡ To encounter non-sampling error, sufficient qualitative research is further administered.
- ➡ Following table presents the sampling design of the study:

TABLE: SAMPLING DESIGN

Survey Locales	Sample (Actual)	
	Workers	Tea gardens
Monudoloi Valley	22	6
Balishira Valley	61	15
Longla Valley	33	10
Juri Valley	34	10
Total	150	41

Qualitative Research

Following table presents the qualitative research methods and respective tools and techniques used for the study:

SL	Methods	No	Area	Participants
A	FGD	2	1 in Balishari valley and 1 in Mondholai valley	Community people
B	Employers Interview	3	1 in each category (A, B, C)	Employers
C	Interview	2	Moulovibazar, Dhaka	NGO/CSO/Experts/Academics
D	Consultation	5	Dhaka and Moulovibazar	1) National TU leaders, 2) Bangladesh Cha Sramik Union, 3) Valley committees, 4) Ponchayet committees and 5) Women leaders in the national committee
E	Case Study Collection	4	1 in each of the 4 Valley	Workers
F	Observation	4	1 in each of the 4 Valley	On the spot observing of housing, living and work life
G	Desk-review	1	Online based available research articles and reports, relevant newspaper articles and reporting, and relevant available literatures	

SECTION TWO: DEMOGRAPHIC ATTRIBUTES

This section of the report details the key demographic attributes of the survey respondents. Cent Percent (100%) survey respondents were women tea garden workers. Mean age of the workers is recorded at 39 years. Most (87%) workers are 28 to 52 years old. 7% nearly 53 + years aged category workers are detected. Only 1% workers are from the age category 18 to 22 years meaning newly recruits are not satisfactory at all.

Table: Demographic attributes															
Status			Frequency			%			Status			Frequency		%	
Age of the respondents									Educational Status						
18-22			2			1.3			Illiterate			69		46.0	
23-27			7			4.7			Can sign only			45		30.0	
28-32			26			17.3			Can read only			2		1.3	
33-37			30			20.0			I-V class			8		5.3	
38-42			25			16.7			Primary Pass			3		2.0	
43-47			35			23.3			VI-X class			19		12.7	
48-52			15			10.0			SSC			4		2.7	
53 +			10			6.7									
Total			150			100.0			Total			150		100.0	
Marital status of the respondents									Religion of the respondents						
Unmarried			24			16.0			Muslim			6		4.0	
Married			107			71.3			Hindu			143		95.3	
Divorced			1			0.7			Christian			1		0.7	
Widowed			18			12.0									
Total			150			100.0			Total			150		100.0	
Family size															
Size	15M	13M	12M	11M	9M	8M	7M	6M	5M	4M	3M	2M	1M	Total	
N	1	1	2	1	6	4	13	18	46	37	17	3	1	150	
%	0.7	0.7	1.3	0.7	4.0	2.7	8.7	12.0	30.7	24.7	11.3	2.0	0.7	100	

Among the workers 71% are married and 16% are unmarried. More than one-tenth workers are either widowed or divorced (12.7%). Nearly eighty percent (77%) workers at Moulvibazar are recorded as illiterate. National figures and figures for Moulvibazar for women literacy respectively are 73% and 53%. Those who have studied VI grade and above, of them 78% are less than 32 years of age. 95% of tea garden workers belong to Hindu religion and only 4% are recorded Muslims.

Family size and earning members

On average, 5.2 members' family size is recorded. 7% families have 9 or 9+ family members. National figures and figures for Sylhet are respectively 4 and 5 as per latest population census count (page 21). On average, 1.57 earning members are recorded in each family.

Table: Earning Members		
Earning members	Frequency	%
1 EM	73	48.7
2 EM	69	46.0
3 EM	7	4.7
4 EM	1	0.7
Total	150	100.0

SECTION THREE

STATUS OF WORKERS RIGHTS

This section analyses the prevalent workers' rights situation of the tea garden workers. Overall, the status is analysed dissatisfactory than to the established legal standards. Limited employment opportunity only in the tea gardens. Employment security is not well-protected. Notices are served in English. Workers are paid well below the upper poverty line wage and there is wage theft. Tea gardens have one of the worst sanitation and water supply facilities. Abuses prevalent silently. There is clear concern regarding PPE supply and maintenance, maternity protection, and health and menstruation hygiene practices in the workplace. What is more worrying is that despite one of the highest union affiliation and practices workers are mostly unaware of rights and entitlements. Union practices are both limited and restricted for day to day issues of rights violation, depends on management willingness. Last but not the least, overall monitoring and supervision of workers' rights violation is too weak either from the management or from the government.

Employment security

Length of services: Mean average services length is recorded 15 + years. 63% reportedly have been serving the industry for more than 10 years. 15% of workers said to us that it is for the continuation of the housing facility that they are working in the tea gardens. Around one-third (34%) reported that it is a traditional family job and they inherited it after retirement and or death of their family member. One-fifth (20) report to us that they have no alternative skills or opportunity rather to serve in the tea gardens.

Table: Employment Records					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Length of services			Reasons for working in the tea garden		
1-5 Years	21	14.0	Inherited Job	51	34.0
6-10 Years	34	22.7	No alternative employment option	30	20.0
11-15 Years	31	20.7	Employed in self-will	12	8.0
16-20 Years	26	17.3	Need for a living	66	44.0
21-25 Years	24	16.0	To avail housing	23	15.3
26-30 Years	6	4.0			
31-35 Years	7	4.7			
36 & + Years	1	0.7			
Total	150	100.0			

Job security: Job security is reported better in the tea gardens. One worker claimed, "Unless any serious irregularity is committed, employment continues as it is".

Appointment letter: According to section 5 of the Bangladesh Labour Law 2006, it is a must to issue an appointment letter to hire a worker. Our research however finds that 97% of women workers have no appointment letter. 19% of workers categorically said to us that they don't even know what an appointment letter is. Those (3%) who reported having an appointment letter, in a second supplementary question said to us that they don't read or know what is inside it.

Table: Employment Status					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Nature of Job			Status of Appointment Letter		
Permanent	142	94.6	Yes	5	3.3
Temporary	8	5.4	No	117	78.0
			Don't know	28	18.7
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Status of Identity card			Status of Service Book		
Yes	19	12.7	Yes	0	0.0
No	116	77.3	No	113	75.3
Don't know	15	10.0	Don't know	37	24.7
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0

Identity card: According to section 5 of the Bangladesh Labour Law 2006, it is mandatory to issue a pictured identity-card to each and every worker. Only around one-tenth (13%) women workers reportedly have an identity Card. 87% of workers said to us that they don't have an identity card. One-tenth (10%) of the women workers reported that they don't even know what an identity card is.

Service book: According to section 6 of the Bangladesh Labour Law 2006, it is mandatory for employers to maintain in their own cost, individual service book for each and every worker, except for the temporary workers. Section 7(2) further has specified that a service book should record among others 1) length of service, 2) rank and position, 3) wage and incentives, 4) status of leave and 5) employee behaviours from time to time and both parties must sign on the updates. Our research however finds that maintaining a service book is not a practice in the tea industry. Cent percent workers have reported to us the same. Interestingly, one-fourth (25%) of the workers said to us that they never heard of this. Qualitative research findings best well supplement these quantitative research findings.

Attendance register: To ensure employees attendance and departure, maintaining an attendance register is practiced largely. In the tea gardens of Moulvibazar, our research finds no such practice. Around one-fourth (25%) of the workers reported to us that they don't even know about this.

Table: Status of Attendance Register		
Status	Frequency	%
Yes	0	0.0
No	112	74.7
Don't know	38	25.3
Total	150	100.0

Status of wage and Benefits

BDT4982 is the current mean average income per worker per month. Cent percent studied respondents get paid wages weekly. Wages are reportedly paid in cash. More than two-third (69%) of workers reported that no pay slip is issued before wage payment. Some 31% said that they at times got a pay slip.

This is too poor an income to run a family a month in any consideration. Stakeholders at different levels and tiers have expressed their anger and frustration to this. "What is the price of 1 liter of edible oil now? Family of 3 needs at least 500 taka daily; they earn 200 only from working all day long; Who will pay her another 300 taka?", says one community level stakeholder. Another community level stakeholder said to us, "cost is ever increasing, electricity cost, gas cost, tax and VAT; if you cannot increase wage then at least lessen services cost deduction amount". One NTUC leader said to us, "Totally vague wage concept; out of any civilized world; other benefits outweigh real wages."

Along with poor wages paid, wage theft is further reported. Wage theft reportedly practiced through recording of less weight for tea-leaves. Less weight causes less wage paid. 15% reported that inaccurate calculation of wage or forgery in calculation is a regular practice. Some two-third (67%) claimed that it happens sometimes. "I witness, the weight was 22 kg; it was registered as 20.5 kg",

says one media personnel from Shomshernagar. 91% told us that there is no discrimination on wages between men and women, while some 9% claimed discrepancy persisted.

Table: Wage calculation and wage cut					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Inaccurate wage calculation			Status of Pay Cut		
Very often	22	14.7	Always	4	2.7
Sometimes	100	66.7	Very often	42	28.0
Never	28	18.7	Sometimes	38	25.3
			Seldom	30	20.0
			Never	36	24.0
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0

Wage amount remains the same year round and doesn't increase even at year end. 31% of workers claimed that wage cuts are a regular practice. Some one-fourth (25%) have reported sometimes a wage-cut and another nearly one-fourth (24%) claimed that they seldom experienced such a wage cut. One media personal from Shoshernagar reported, "Employers cut wage as they wish."Target failure, late attendance, sick leave and poor quality work are reportedly among others the main reasons for wage cut.

In general, workers get paid festival bonuses regularly. Permanent workers are entitled to get ration facilities in subsidized price as per following:

Each worker is entitled to get ration with his/her 3 dependents as follows:

Worker 3.50 kg (Flower/rice) per week.

Dependent 2.45/1.225 kg (atta) per week.

Dependent of age 1 year to 9 year...1.225 kg (Flower/Rice) per week.

And age 10 year to 12 year 2.45 kg (Flower/Rice) per week.

Old aged father, mother 2.45 kg (Flower/Rice) per week

After retirement, retired workers get rations as dependent.

Table: Benefits at work					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Pension			Provident fund		
Yes	118	78.7	Yes	141	94.0
NO	12	8.0	No	9	6.0
Don't know	20	13.3			
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Gratuity			Welfare fund		
Yes	8	5.3	Yes	0	0.0
No	86	57.3	No	108	72.0
Don't know	56	37.3	Don't know	42	28.0
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0

Status of working hour and overtime

Regarding working hours, the tea industry in Moulvibazar fully complies with the labour law. 62% of workers work legally 8 hours a day. 38% reported that they even work less than 8 hours a day. Almost half of the workers (49%) reportedly perform 1-2 hours overtime work occasionally for additional income.

Status of occupational health and safety

Workers need to walk long distance to reach to the workplace. "Among 300 workers in the garden 218 are female. They walk for almost 1 hour to reach to the work place", says one PEC leader from

Shomshernagar. 24% of women workers reportedly have caught some health issues in garden in the last year while were returning after work at dark. 8% further have reported occupational accidents in the garden while at work. Hand and leg injury, falling apart and snake bites are among other the main accidents they reportedly have faced.

Status of leave and rest

Our research finds that the tea industry better complied with the labour law on leave practices, specifically weekly leave, sick leave, festival leave and maternity leave. The industry 100% complied with the weekly leave practices and for maternity leave it is 97% compliant. Highest irregularities found in casual leave practices and it is second highest for annual leave. 44% respondents reported that casual leave is either denied or can be obtained in rare circumstances and for annual leave the percentage of leave denial is recorded 29%.

Table: Status of leave and rest					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Weekly holiday			Sick Leave		
Yes	150	100.00	Yes	131	87.3
No	0	0.00	No	8	5.3
			Sometimes	11	7.3
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Casual Leave			Annual Leave		
Yes	84	56.0	Yes	107	71.3
No	57	38.0	No	32	21.3
At times	9	6.0	Some times	11	7.3
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Festival Leave			Maternity Leave		
Yes	133	88.7	Yes	145	96.7
No	9	6.0	No	5	3.3
Sometimes	8	5.3			
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0

Tea workers pluck leaves in the tea garden. There are no structural arrangement facilities in the garden for them to take shelter or rest in any uncertain/emerging situation like rain or cyclone. *"The tea workers bask in the hot sun when it's sunny, drenched in the rain when it rains"*, says one worker leader.

Status of vital services and facilities

Nearly, cent percent (100%) workers expressed their utmost dissatisfaction regarding the available primary health care services and facilities prevalent in the workplace. *"Whatever the reasons are, we shall be treated with paracetamol"*, says one worker. Some one-third (32%) of workers claimed that a first aid box is not available at their workplaces.

Many of the vital services and facilities like sanitation arrangement and access to safe drinking water are reported very much scarce in the tea gardens. 97% of workers said that there is no toilet arrangement in the workplace. Some 88% workers defecate in the open place and 12% in the tea gardens. *"We go to the jungle to defecate while at work"*, says one worker.

There are no regular and/or permanent drinking water sources in the gardens. Workers cannot get drinking water when they are thirsty. There is a water man/woman carrying water in the bowl. They supply water in certain places after a regular interval. 30% of workers reported that there is no such drinking water arrangement in their workplaces. Those who have reported a drinking water facility in the workplace some 88% claimed that supplied water is never sufficient and safe.

Table: Status of Services and facilities					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
First Aid Box (FAB)			Primary Health Care (PHC) facility		
Yes	48	32.0	Yes	121	80.7
No	102	68.0	No	29	19.3
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
If yes (FAB), level of Satisfaction			If yes (PHF), Level of Satisfaction		
Satisfied	0	0.0	Satisfied	3	2.5
Unstaisfied	20	41.7	Unstaisfied	72	59.5
Very unsatisfied	28	58.3	Very unsatisfied	46	38.0
Total	48	100.0	Total	121	100.0
Toilet at Workplace			Drinking Water at Workplace		
Yes	5	3.3	Yes	105	70.0
No	145	96.7	No	45	30.0
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
If no Toilet, Where Defecate			If yes, do the water safe		
Open Place	127	87.6	Yes	13	12.4
Garden	17	11.7	No	23	21.9
Home	1	0.7	Continuous sickness	69	65.7
Total	145	100.0	Total	105	100.0

Status of promotion and training

Almost cent percent (97%) workers have reported to us that they never got a promotion in their service career or there is no such an opportunity for promotion. Despite serving on average 15 plus years, 93% of women tea garden workers have never received training in their service career.

Table: Status of Promotion and Training					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Status of promotion			Status of training		
Yes	4	2.7	Yes	11	7.3
No	69	45.9	No	139	92.7
No option	77	51.4			
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0

Status of maternity protection

One-tenth (10%) of women workers don't know their rights on maternity leave days. 13% of women workers reported having only 12 weeks maternity leave. Weight lifting particularly in the form of tea leaves is a regular work in the tea garden. Pregnant women don't have any different arrangement. "Pregnant workers carry the same weight like others, no excuse is allowed", says one worker. Day care facilities are not available in more than two-third (68%) tea gardens. Those who have reported having day care facilities in their gardens 54% of them further said to us that it is a showcase arrangement since babies are not allowed in them.

Table: Status of maternity protection					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Maternity Leave			Wage during leave		
16 Weeks	116	77.3	Full wage payment	143	95.3
12 Weeks	19	12.7	No or partial payment	7	4.7
Don't Know	15	10.0			
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Any discrimination for pregnant women			Day Care Facility		
Yes	32	21.3	Yes	48	32.0
No	118	78.7	No	102	68.0
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0

Monitoring and supervision

Monitoring and supervision of workers' rights is reported to be one of the weakest exercises in the tea gardens. Internal monitoring and supervision of labour rights and the respective accountability arrangement are not clear and specified. *"Every night, you shall find trucks loaded away with tea leaves to other gardens; no supervision at all"*, says one reputed media person from Shomshernagar.

Stakeholders at different tiers and levels expressed their dissatisfaction too on government monitoring mechanisms. *"GOV monitoring is only for showing; suppose he/she visits a factory; no bathroom is there but no result; this is the common practice year after year"*, says one PEC leader. One CEC leader says *"DIFE officials come; meet with the manager; take tea; go away; that's all."* One media personal from Shomshernagar says, *"Garden's land have been taken lease for producing tea; now, they are increasingly planting rubber and lemon in the tea gardens land; no one there to see."*

SECTION FOUR

STATUS OF DECENT WORK

This section details the decent work statuses prevalent in the tea gardens particularly in the country's Sylhet region. In general, it is analysed that decent works statuses are not in any satisfactory stage in the tea gardens. *"Tea-garden workers are simply out of any decent work parameters; specially, their wages are very much indecent"*, says one NTUC leader. Another NTUC leader said to us, *"Decent work is totally absent; carrying weight like 50 kg is a regular practice; no hygiene practice; no different toilet or washroom facility for women."*

Status of Employment

Status of full employment: Against huge demand, job openings are reported less now a day. One worker said to us, *"Many have employed their children in outside jobs to maintain a living."* Another worker claimed, *"Now, we have graduated sons without a job."* Unemployment rate is reported increasing day by day. *"Only one working; there are another 10 unemployed; they have no work"*, says one women leader.

Recruitment style: Only 4% reportedly have been employed naturally following the formal processes. However, in 96% cases, recruitment is done by informal settlement either following death or retirement of the elderly family member (85%), or lobby/claim (3%) or recommendation/pressure from the power holding right bearer authorities.

Table: Status of Recruitment and Lay off Practices					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
System of Recruitment			Status and nature of lay off practices		
Naturally as per formal process	6	4.0	Every now and then	16	10.7
Following retirement/death of employed family member	127	84.7	As and when the employer want	8	5.3
Upon recommendation by the PEC	11	7.3	Prior serve a dismissal notice	117	78.0
Lobby/claim	4	2.7	Fairly and legally	2	1.3
Recommendation by the superior authority	2	1.3	Half legal and half illegal	7	4.7
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0

Lay off Practices: 16% of workers claimed that it is a very whimsical practice to lay off workers. Only 1% of workers reported that lay off is executed fairly and legally. 78% though reported that employers serve a legal notice before executing a lay off order.

Status of Right to FoA

71% of women workers reported that union membership is mandatory in the tea gardens. Our research finds that 6% of workers are not members of the union. When investigating further we find that they are all non-permanent workers. 79% of workers hold the opinion that union-membership is beneficial to them. Almost half (46%) of the respondents claimed that they can at least talk on their demand and to the extent can bargain on their demand because of their association with the union.

Union fee is fixed at 15 taka a month for all workers paid on a weekly or daily basis and for monthly waged workers the fee is 30 taka only. The employer deducted the union fee from the payment and

deposited it to the account of the BCSU. There is no safety committee reported in the tea gardens. And there is no welfare committee as well.

Table: Status of Right to FoA					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Mandatory Union Membership			Are you a member of TU		
Yes	107	71.3	Yes	141	94.0
No	43	28.7	No	9	6.0
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Benefits to be a union member			Process of Complaining to The Management		
Power	24	16.0	Through TU	54	36.0
Unity	20	13.3	Self-demanding	61	40.7
Can talk & Bargain	69	46.0	Collective bargain	35	23.3
Can protest	5	3.3			
No benefit	32	21.3			
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Number of Leaders in the CEC			Number of Women Leaders in the CEC		
Know	0	0.0	Know	0	0.0
Don't know	52	34.7	Don't Know	83	55.3
Misinformed	98	65.3	Misinformed	67	44.7
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Number of leader in VEC			Number of Women Leader in the VEC		
Know	69	46.0	Know	66	44.0
Don't Know	56	37.3	Don't Know	55	36.7
Misinformed	25	16.7	Misinformed	29	19.3
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Number of leader in PEC			Number of Women Leader in the PC		
Know	103	68.7	Know	41	27.3
Don't Know	14	9.3	Don't Know	12	8.0
Misinformed	33	22.0	Misinformed	97	64.7
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Evaluation of women leadership			Dispute Resolution		
No value at all	12	8.0	Through VEC	11	7.3
Don't call in meeting	19	12.7	Through PEC	134	89.3
No role or importance	46	30.7	Through CEC	3	2.0
Lack of knowledge & understanding	46	30.7	Through protest	19	12.7
Lagging behind men	30	20.0	Formal settlement	24	16.0

Despite widened TU practices 41% of workers report to us that they self-report verbal complaints to the management when there are any. PEC's role in dispute resolution is though highly praised. 89% of workers said to us that it is through an active role played by the PEC that their disputes are solved.

Workers' information and knowledge regarding TU practices is analysed very poorly. Cent percent of workers (100%) either don't know or are misinformed about the number of members in the CEC and the number of women members in the CEC. Nearly three-fourth of workers (73%) are ignorant about

the number of leaders in the VEC. Nearly one-third (31%) even have ignorance or misunderstanding about the number and role of the PEC.

Status of Child Labouring

Around one-seventh (15%) workers have joined tea garden works when they were still below 18 years of age. In a second query, what is the approximate percentage of workers below the age of 18 years currently employed in the garden, more than half of the workers (53%) reported that it is between 16 and 25 percent. 17% of workers reported that 1-5% of their employees are below 18 years of age. More than one-fourth (29) however reported that their industry have not employed any child labour.

Table: Status of Child Labouring					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Employment Age			Status and nature of lay off practices		
Before 18 years of Job	23	15.3	5% or less	26	17.2
18 years or above	127	84.7	6-15%	1	0.8
			16-25%	80	53.3
			No Child Labour	43	28.7
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0

Status of discrimination

79% of women workers reported that in-equal practices are prevalent in the workplace. Of them, 83% further reported that men get the most opportunity while 17% said it is women who are favored the most. Answering to a different question, 21% of women workers said to us that pregnant women are discriminated against in the workplace to avail their rights and entitlements.

Table: Status of Inequality and/or discrimination					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Any inequality			Who gets the most opportunity		
Yes	119	79.3	Men	99	83.3
No	31	20.7	Women	20	16.7
Total	150	100.0	Total	119	100.0
Any discrimination for pregnant women					
Yes				32	21.3
No				118	78.7
Total				150	100.0

Qualitative research further have explored a number of discriminatory practices existed in the tea gardens as analysed under:

Discriminatory practices in job giving: “For some families only 1 member shall work; for some families 2 members shall get job”, says one worker.

Discriminatory bonus giving practices: “Someone gets 2000 taka, and someone gets 3000 taka”, says one worker. Clarifying this practice, one CEC leader says, “Tea workers are paid an encouraging bonus, not festival bonus.”

Discrimination in utility packages: “Electricity charge is different for different workers; for one it is 100 for another it is 150 and for a 3rd one it is 200 taka”, says one media personal from the locality.

Discrimination in public services distribution: “Those who have a defined political identity get the most public services benefits”, says one women leader.

Nepotism: “She is the leader’s sister, she will get favour always”, says one tea sector worker.

Status of abusive Practices

Nearly, one-tenth (9%) of workers said that physical abuses are common, while another 7% reported it as an irregular practice. 42% of workers have reported verbal abuses in the workplaces. “There is always a quarrel with the Sorder/Babu; they will register less weight; play two roles (Dui nazar) for two workers”, says one women worker leader from Moulvibazar.

11% of women workers have told us that sexual abuses are common in the tea gardens. Another 4% while reported sexual abuse as an irregular practice. Some 9% women reportedly have been victimized sexually in the tea gardens sometimes in the past. Those who have reported sexual victimization of them 69% further reported that they did not make any protest. In the RMG factories in Bangladesh there is a large practice to form an anti-harassment committee in the workplace to look after sexual violence. But, such a practice is reported nil in the tea gardens.

Table: Status of Abusive Practices					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Physical abuse			Verbal abuse		
Regular	14	9.3	Regular	8	5.3
At times	11	7.3	At times	55	36.7
No	125	83.3	No	87	58.0
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Sexual abuse			Victim of sexual abuse ever		
No	128	85.0	Yes	13	8.7
Regular	17	11.4	No	137	91.3
Seldom	5	3.6			
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Do the victim protest			Anti-harassment committee		
Yes	4	30.8	Yes	0	0.0
No	9	69.2	No	150	100.0
Total	13	100.0	Total	150	100.0

SECTION FOUR

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION

Largely, tea workers have a very disadvantaged socio-economic condition and living. Our research finds, majority live below the upper poverty line. *“They are hard core poor”*, says one NTUC leader. *“For 60% grassroots level families, I don’t see any status changes over the years”*, says one community leader from Moulovibazar. *“Overall livelihoods are of very low quality, don’t go with the developing country economy status”*, says one NTUC leader. *“No house, no latrine, no tube-well, only pluck tea-leaves and mange eating; this is our living”*, says one women worker. *“They always wear very cheap and dirty clothes”*, claimed a number of local media personnel. Following sections have detailed prevailing socio-economic conditions of the tea garden workers particularly those based in the Sylhet zone.

Status of Income and Expenditure

Status of Income: Mean monthly family income is recorded BDT 7463 only. More than half of the workers’ families (57%) earn less than 6500 taka a month. 29% families earn between 9501 and 11000 taka a month. Only 5% of families earn more than 11000 taka a month.

Table: Status of Income and Expenditure					
Income level	Frequency	%	Expenditure level	Frequency	%
Monthly Family income			Monthly Family Expenditure		
5000 or less	29	19.3	6000 or less	18	12.0
5001-6500	56	37.3	6001-8000	52	34.7
6501-8000	12	8.0	8001-10,000	29	19.3
8001-9500	2	1.3	10001-12000	12	8.0
9501-11000	44	29.3	12001-14000	1	0.7
11001 & above	7	4.7	14001-16000	20	13.3
			16001-18000	7	4.7
			18001-20000	4	2.7
			20001 & above	7	4.7
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Status of income-expenditure Gap			Financial Status at Month End		
Always	65	43.3	Always out of money	44	29.3
Very often	81	54.0	Often out of money	93	62.0
Sometimes	4	2.7	Sometimes out of money	10	6.7
Total	150	100.0	At times	3	2.0
Status of meal taking during crisis			Income-expenditure gap minimizing strategy		
Always skip meal or eat less	8	5.3	Borrowing	58	38.7
Often skip meal or eat less	53	35.3	Loan	61	40.7
Sometimes skip meal or eat less	46	30.7	Purchase on credit from local shop	80	53.3
At times skip meal or eat less	12	8.0	Cut expenditure further	8	5.3
Never skip meal or eat less	31	20.7			
Total	150	100	Total	150	100.0

Status of Expenditure: Mean average monthly expenditure is recorded BDT10762 a month. Two-third families (66%) spend less than 10000 taka a month. Around one-tenth families spend less than 6000 taka a month. Around one-third (35%) spend between 6001 and 8000 taka a month.

Income-Expenditure Gap: On average, income to expenditure gap is recorded 3299 taka per family per month. 43% of workers' families reportedly are in a consistent crisis, and for 54% it is very often.

Implications from income-expenditure gap: Around two-third workers (62%) claimed that they very often remained in empty pockets at the last few days of the month. Nearly one-third (29%) families reportedly are in empty pockets in the last few days of every month. 63% families reportedly eat only rice with potato mash to make up the rest of those days.

Gap minimizing strategies: Around 41% of workers told us that they skip meals or eat inadequate meals regularly, while a further 39% told us this happens from time to time. 79% of workers take loans or borrow from relatives and others and 53% purchase on credit from the local shop to fill in the income expenditure gap. 5% cut down their expenditure further to make up living costs.

Housing and living

95% of workers live in company provided land and houses inside the gardens. Three (3) different living arrangements of houses are marked such as 1) 12 feet by 21 feet (8 hands X 14 hands), 2) 11.5 feet by 21 feet (7 hands X 14 hands), and 3) 12 feet by 24 feet (8 hands X 16 hands). Mostly, they live in a dilapidated shanty. It's like a slum arrangement, families living in different rows. *"It's like a cattle house, they live in"*, says one NTUC leader. Few individual structured houses also are marked. TU leaders reportedly have built those houses. Nearly half (46%) of the instances, the entire family live in a single room. 27% instances 3 to 6 persons live in 1 room. Rest of the cases (27%) 2 persons live in 1 room. Only 5% live in their own arrangement.

Table: Status of Housing and living					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
No of persons live in 1 room			Safety of living place		
2 persons live in 1 room	41	27.3	Safe	77	51.3
3 persons live in 1 room	15	10.0	Unsafe	32	21.3
4 persons live in 1 room	8	5.3	Theft	32	22.0
5-6 persons live in 1 room	17	11.3	Unhealthy	8	5.3
Entire family live in 1 room	69	46.0			
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Electricity			Sources of Water		
Yes	141	94.0	Tube well	120	80.0
No	9	6.0	Lake & River	30	20.0
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Toilet arrangement			Distance of workplace from living place		
Open defecation	24	16.0	20< Minutes by walk	66	44.0
Open/Kancha latrine	24	16.0	21-40 minutes by walk	47	31.3
Latrine with pit slab	72	48.0	41-60 minutes by walk	24	16.0
Pucca but don't flash	28	18.7	1 hour plus by walk	13	8.7
Safe & can flash	2	1.3			
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0

For housing facilities, a certain fixed amount is deducted from every day payment from each of the workers. However, against a huge need, only a few are entitled to housing facilities. *“For twenty years I had no house for living; I needed to pay house-holders for living”,* says one tea garden worker. One women PEC leader said, *“Someone leave in her brother’s house; someone leave in her parent’s house.”* One PEC leader from Juri said to us, *“We could not make a proper arrangement for the boshot-vita; we wanted boshot vita for 18 families to the manager sir, but only 3 families were given”.*

Secondly, though housing rent is deducted from every worker, everyone is not entitled to housing facilities. Suppose, in a larger family there may be three adult working members, they are married, and they have their separate family arrangements. Housing rent is deducted from three of them but in most cases they are altogether provided with a single housing facility. *“In one yard we two brothers work; we have our individual families; they charge rent from both of us; but, we are entitled to only one boshot-vita; they only show a large amount but eventually, they give us a small portion”,* says one tea garden worker.

Health, Nutrition and Education

In the last year, workers’ families have spent on average 1254 taka each month for treatment purposes. 93% of workers could not afford proper treatment when they were sick in the last year. Those who could not afford treatment of them 69% told us that they simply do not earn enough to pay for healthcare. While 21% told that it is because of the information gap they could not get the proper healthcare.

Few tea gardens like Duncan brothers have their own hospital arrangement to treat their workers. For most other tea gardens, sick workers are referred to the district hospital for treatment purposes. Whatever services and facilities are available, in the qualitative part of the research, workers in general expressed their apprehension regarding the scarcity and quality of the prevalent services. *“In the hospital, there is only a very few medicines, there is no good doctor, and no ambulance for the emergency”,* says one worker.

“Women tea workers are seriously mal-nutrients, you can see with your open eyes”, says one media person from Shomshernagar. *“They eat only chutney with tea leaves”,* says another community key informant. 69% of workers categorically told us that they can eat fish and meat at best only once/twice in a week.

75% of workers reported that it is impossible to afford proper education for their children by their current level of income. One-fourth (25%) of workers claimed that for financial hardship in the past they needed to stop education and drop out of children from school. Many gardens reportedly don’t have any education facilities for children.

Table: Status of Alcohol Taking					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Patra in the Garden			If yes, Types of Patra		
Yes	79	52.7	Government approved	57	72.2
No	71	47.3	Not authorized by the gvt.	22	27.8
Total	150	100.0	Total	79	100.0
Family members access to Patra			Expenses in Patra		
Men only	28	18.7	All income	4	14.3
Don’t go	4	2.7	Half of the income	12	42.9
Didn’t answer	118	78.7	One-fourth income	12	42.9
Total	150	100.0	Total	28	100.0

Alcohol Taking Status

Bar/saloon is popularly known as 'Patra' in the tea gardens. More than half of the tea gardens (53%) have Patras. 72% of them are government approved and the rest 28% are unauthorized and thus illegal. We want to know from the women respondents whether their family members go to Patra. 79% didn't answer or avoided this question. Only 3% said that their family members don't go to Patra. 19% said that only male family members drink in the Patra. Of these, reportedly, 43% spent half of their income, another 43% spent one-fourth income, and the rest 14% full of their income for drinking in the Patra.

Qualitative research findings however analyse that alcoholism has increased noticeably in recent years. "Many tea workers families now produce and sell alcohol; in every garden there is Patra either legally or illegally; comparatively aged members are the most alcohol taker", says one CEC leader from Moulvibazar. "20% of their income is spent on alcohol habits. Men's family members grab money from women family members to drink alcohol", says one VEC leader.

Child Marriage and Violence Against Women

60% claimed that there is no child marriage in the community. 7% reported that child marriage is common in the community. "Child marriage has increased around 10%", says one VEC leader from Juri. One-third (33%) though reported that it is decreasing over time.

45% claimed that to some extent violence against women is prevalent in the community and 10% didn't answer this question. Control over income (49%), drinking alcohol (18%), dowry (6%), and bad-habit (28%) are among others reported the main causes for violence against women in the community. 45% though said to us that there is no violence against women in the community.

Table: Status of Child Marriage & Violence Against Women					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Status of Child Marriage			Status of Violence Against Women		
Common	10	6.7	Always	4	2.7
Decreasing	50	33.3	Sometimes	64	42.7
No Child Marriage	90	60.0	No	67	44.7
			Did not Answer	15	10.0
Total	150	100.0	Total	150	100.0
Reasons for Violence Against Women					
Income control				33	48.5
Drinking habit in the Patra				12	17.6
Dowry				4	5.9
Habit				19	27.9
Total				68	100.0

Status of other violence: Qualitative data suggest that family disputes are increasingly high in the tea worker community. Alcohol is reportedly one of the main reasons for this. Local media reported claimed that suicide over phone affairs have increased considerably in recent years.

Loan Taking Status

87% of workers reportedly have taken loans from local sources. On average, workers have taken 28298 taka loans each.

Table: Status of Alcohol Taking					
Status	Frequency	%	Status	Frequency	%
Status of loan taking					
Yes	131	87.3	NGO	113	86.3
No	19	12.7	Relatives	12	9.2
			Bank	1	0.8
			Local Businessmen	5	3.8
Total	150	100.0	Total	131	100.0
Reasons for taking loan					
Child education purpose				13	9.9
For treatment				14	10.7
For daughters marriage				13	9.9
Make up living cost				90	68.7
Buying asset				1	0.8
Total				131	100.0

Mostly, workers have taken loans from the local NGOs (86%). “NGO activities have increased several times; workers take loans easily; they are getting indebted”, says one key informant from the locality. Around one-tenth (9%) have borrowed from their relatives. Only a very few have taken loans either from local businessmen or from banks.

Those who have taken loans, more than two-third (69%) of them have taken loans to make up the day to day living cost. Respectively for child education, treatment and daughters marriage purposes, around one-tenth have taken loan in each of the cases.

Status of others

Status of land right:

Tea workers are yet denied land rights. “We are 100% landless”, says one CEC leader.

Access to services

Tea workers reportedly have limited access to the available public services. “They have only 40% access to the different mainstreaming opportunities”, claimed one media reporter from Moulvibazar.

Religious practices:

Religious practices are reported too high in the tea workers community. “Kirton shall start just after dark every day and shall continue until 11 pm at night”, says one community person from the locality.

Climate Change Related Emergencies:

Tea plants are disappearing. Many tea gardens have now been desertified which can be noticed in the open eye. Climate change reported a main cause for this. “There is only few rain this year; entire production suffers; now, our prime concern is to go for cent percent irrigation; we have invested a lot for this; All gardens don't have ability”, says one employer

SECTION FIVE

ANALYSING KNOWLEDGE & CAPACITY OF THE TU LEADERS

Tea gardens have 3 different tiers of trade union practices such as 1) Primary Executive Council (PEC)/Panchayet committee, 2) Valley Executive Council (VEC)/Valley committee, and 3) Central Executive Council (CEC)/BCSU. Election held on the same day for a tenure of three (3) years. 4 ballots are given on the same day such as a) ballots for PEC, b) ballot for VEC, c) ballot for president panel of the CEC, and d) ballot for secretary panel of the CEC. Worker union members cast their votes in all 4 different ballots and elect the PEC, VEC and CEC.

Primary Executive Council (PEC)/Panchayet committee

What it is

In every tea garden or estate there is a workers representative committee, popularly known as PEC. Including 1 President, 1 Vice-President, 1 Secretary, 1 Assistant Secretary, and 1 Finance secretary and depending on the volume of workers in a garden, an 11/13/15 member PEC is elected having respectively 4/5/6 reserved women seats. Workers employed in a tea garden are by default members of the workers union. These union members of a defined tea garden directly elect the PEC.

Role and Responsibilities of the PEC

Role and responsibilities of the PEC is never written or defined. Article 18 of the Constitution of the BCSU has defined roles and responsibilities of the different members of the central executive council. Article 18 (10) further has provisioned that PEC members shall carry out the same role and responsibilities as the CEC. But, in reality they have different roles. And the day to day bargaining and negotiation is a missing priority.

A couple of the PEC members expressed their haziness to us when they were asked to tell us their roles and responsibilities. In general, there is an expression of opinion that they shall do good for the general workers when an issue of dispute arises or reported to them either in the workplace or in the community. Such as, housing, toilet and drinking water related issues.

One PEC member from Juri said to us, "During election, in the manifesto, we committed to unite workers, to assist them in their need fulfillment. That's our roles and responsibilities."

One PEC member said to us, "We didn't get any training after the election. We were not supplied any legal or written document either from the valley office or the BCSU how we shall work."

One PEC member from Juri said, "We have a secretary and he lets us know what we need to discuss in a meeting. If 15 members cannot make a decision then 4/5 members decide in small groups. We also have a network with other gardens. If there's a need we contact each other".

What they do in practice

PEC members reportedly play a good role in the day to day issues of the workers. There is no hard and fast rule to follow. They got no training on their conducts. They have no documents to follow.

The practice is that individual workers first let the nearest PEC member know his/her issue, whatever it is, either related to workplace or with the living place. Respective PEC members immediately discuss with the senior officials and try to solve the issue. In case of a complex issue, they accompany other union members and discuss with the senior managers. When the matter is still unsolved, they let it be known to the Valley committee and finally to the BCSU. As such, there is no systematic practice of industrial relations in the tea gardens.

"If someone is having a headache or stomach pain or she cannot pluck he/she tell me about his/her issue, I ask boro babu and settle. If there is something serious then we talk to the manager. If I cannot do it alone, I accompany other members. We do not have a panchayat

committee office. We do everything through a verbal agreement. We don't have regular meetings in the panchayat committee. There used to be in the beginning days. We went to the manager for a purpose many times but it didn't work. Everything has been loosened up", says one women PEC member from Juri.

"If there is an accident or any fight in any village then the villagers contact us and after that, we give a solution to them. In case we cannot give a solution then we tell the staff manager to solve the issue", says another PEC member from Juri.

"If anyone gets 20 tk less payment and let us know. First of all, we will discuss it within 3 or 4 members to know the reason. If it's a big issue then all the 15 members will discuss. Here 200 female workers pluck and if they face any problem or get sick we go to the senior manager and he can allocate a car or budget for the treatment", says one PEC member.

Valley Executive Council (VEC)

Entire tea gardens in Bangladesh are grouped into seven (7) valleys. According to article 8 (KA), except for Balishira in other six valleys, a three-member valley executive council including 1 President, 1 Vice-president and 1 Secretary are elected by direct vote by the general members. In Balishira valley, including 1 additional organizing secretary, a four-member executive council is elected directly. Since, this valley covers a comparatively large area and tea gardens. Apart from this, all the elected presidents in the Panchayet committees under each valley are by default included as members in the respective valley executive council.

The position of 'Vice-President' is legally reserved for women. Though it is open for women to compete for any position either in the valley committee or in the panchayet committee, in practice, all valley committees now have only one woman elected representative that is 'Vice-President'.

Valley Executive Council is the second tier of the union after the Panchayet Council and election held on the same day. Valley council is entitled to structured office facilities and can appoint support staff as per requirement. Valley council is the legal authority to control 45% of the contributory union members' fund. The tenure of the valley council is 3 years. Last election was held in 2018.

Like the PEC, the role and responsibilities of the valley committee are not clearly defined. Legally, there is haziness in this. Article 18 (10) of the BCSU's Constitution has assigned the valley committee with the same roles and responsibilities as the CEP. In practice, valley committee members are analysed as the key role players in both central aspects and in the tea-garden aspects. Conflict between employers and panchayet committee and/or any unsettled matter in the garden is ultimately referred to the valley committee. Secondly, VEC assist the central committee when there is a need. Our research finds that VEC is the most mobilized tier among all three tiers of unions in the tea-gardens. They reportedly lead the tea-workers movement from the forefront.

"When PEC cannot solve an issue inside a tea garden they let it know to the valley committee", says Komol Chandra Boonarji, one valley committee member from Juri.

Srimoti Bouri, Vice President of a Valley committee said to us, "When PEC informed the valley committee of an internal tea garden related issue which they cannot solve, we step in, discuss with the employers and workers and solve the problem."

"We implement what the central union decides. We lead in the workers' rights movement from the forefront", says one valley committee member

"It is our responsibility to look after the status of the implementation of the bi-partite collective bargaining agreement signed between the employers and the workers. The Central Working Committee assists us in this," says one valley committee member from Juri.

"We had a big engagement in dues clearance of workers in the tea gardens as per CBA signed in 2019-2020", says one valley committee leader

“We assist in legal aspects when there is a need. We communicate, we lobby with the government and departments in favour of workers”, says one valley committee member.

“Including Dhamai and Atia, 5 tea gardens were closed for a long time. We lobbied and won. Previous leases were cancelled. From fresh leases, new companies have taken over responsibility. Now, the tea gardens are open. Workers have got their job back”, says one valley committee leader from Juri.

Central Executive Council (CEC)/Bangladesh Cha Sromik Union (BCSU)

Along with Panchayet council and valley council and on their same election day, an eight (8)-member Central Executive Council is elected directly (Article 09 (KA)) for 3 years. Tea garden workers from entire Bangladesh who are contributory union members vote for electing this central council.

Central Executive Council (Elected directly)	
<u>Presidents Panel</u>	
President	: 1 Position
Executive President	: 1 Position
Vice-President	: 2 Position (1 reserved for woman)
<u>Secretaries Panel</u>	
General Secretary	: 1 Position
Joint General Secretary	: 1 Position
Assistant General Secretary	: 1 Position (Reserved for woman)
Finance Secretary	: 1 Position

In two different panels, these eight members compete for the election such as A) Presidents Panel and B) Secretaries Panel. More particularly, union members cast their vote in two different ballot papers to elect separately A) Presidents Panel and B) Secretaries Panel.

Along with these directly elected eight representatives, a 35-members central executive committee is formed. Having recommendation from the defeated President (3) and Secretary (2), 5 non-elected members are coopted in the committee. Apart from this, all seven (7) elected Presidents of the Valley Executive Councils by default included as Organizing Secretaries and Seven (7) Vice-Presidents and eight (8) Secretaries as members in the central executive committee.

Central Executive Council popularly known as the Bangladesh Cha Sromik Union (BCSU) is considered the 3rd and last tier of the union. It has its multi-storied furnished office building located at Moulovibazar, Sylhet and regular office staff. CEC is the legal authority to control 45% of the contributory union members' fund. Article 06 (KHA) permits the CEC to adopt and pass a motion of no confidence by majority vote to dismiss an elected union representative from his/her position. The tenure of the Central Executive Council is three (3) years. Last election was held in 2018.

According to Article 17(4), the General Secretary of the CEC is mandated to form a central women committee having due consultation with the President. In practice, no such a women committee exists to date.

Different stakeholders have rated the role of the BCSU differently. Union leaders, in general, see the BCSU as a source of their knowledge and support. One PEC member said to us, “BCSU handled everything, they let us know what we need, and they are our life saviors”.

Achievements

Trade union leaders in a number of sittings have demanded with us following of their major achievements in the last couple of years:

Office for VEC

Bargain and win office for the valley council. Now every seven valley committee has their office set-up along with supporting office staff.

Office for PEC

Bargain and win office for the Panchayet council. In the last collective bargaining agreement employers reportedly have endorsed formally to set up offices for the PECs. Couple of CEC leaders have claimed to us the same in a sitting. To date, though, no implementation is observed elsewhere. It is assumed that after the upcoming election, we shall see visible progress in this.

Wage increase

After years of continued bargaining and negotiation, wage was reviewed and increased reasonably to taka 170 per worker per day. Previously, it was only 120 taka per day. Workers came to know for the first time real wage calculation along with other benefits and payments. "Before this movement, we were never informed that house rent, electricity bill, and other benefits are provided along with the wage", says one VEC leader.

Arrear wages paid

Following last wage review and increase, successfully bargain with the employers to clear arrear wages. Major part of the arrear wages reportedly have been paid to the workers.

Open closed Tea-gardens

Successfully lobbied, bargained and negotiated to open a couple of closed tea gardens. "A second time leasing was called on; 5 closed tea gardens have been resold to new employers; they are now open. Workers have resumed works", claimed a couple of TU leaders from Moulvibazar.

Workers recruitment

Successfully negotiated to recruit tea garden workers as 'shorder (Leader)'/ 'shorderni (Women Leader)'. Last signed collective bargaining agreement reportedly included a provision to recruit 1 sorder/sorderni for every 40 women.

Improved housing

Continued bargaining and negotiation for housing/boshot-vita as well as have succeeded to allocate a good number of housing facilities in the last couple of years. Renovations of previous housing structures have been done in many instances. "We demanded that we renovate 387 houses. 200 houses actually get renovated", says a PEC leader from Juri.

Better water access

Continued bargaining and negotiation for better water access particularly to set up deep tube wells in comfortable places in the communities. This research has found that they have been successful many times and many times not.

Better sanitation

Continued voicing, bargaining and negotiation for better sanitation facilities particularly to set up sanitary latrines both in the living place and at the workplace. This research has found that sometimes they have succeeded in allocating sanitary latrine in the living place and many times not.

Better services benefits

Continued bargaining and negotiation for improving various services benefits. To some extent, they have been successful. Retirement benefits reportedly have been increased reasonably. "Previously it was 1 lakh taka, now it is 4/5 lakh taka", says one union leader. Paid day-off reportedly has been newly introduced.

Improve social security benefits

Significant progress achieved for social security benefits. Gratuity and Group insurance facilities reportedly have been formally endorsed in the last signed collective bargaining agreement. Although, to date, it lacks any visible implementation on the ground. Successfully lobby with the

Department of social services to win to give direct cash benefit to the destitute tea workers families. 200 families have been provided 5000 taka each for once.

Enhanced employment security:

Many workers and leaders have been assisted to get their jobs back. Apart from bargaining and negotiation only, legal assistance has been provided to many workers.

Enhanced democratic practices:

Democratic norms and practices reportedly have been established fully. “Everyone now needs to compete in the vote to elect and to occupy a seat in the union office”, says a couple of CEC leaders.

Education support:

Managing funds/scholarship for students is reportedly a regular practice.

What they could not achieve

We further asked the PEC members despite initiatives what they failed to achieve in the last couple of years. They said us the following:

No change/improvement in the livelihoods: “We don’t see any change or improvement in the livelihoods of the grassroot level tea garden workers; they count almost 60%,” says one community leader.

Work is yet to any decent status: “Tea-garden workers are simply out of any decent work parameters; specially, their wages are very much indecent”, says one NTUC leader. “Decent work is totally absent; carrying weight like 50 kg is a regular practice; no hygiene practice; no different toilet or washroom facility for women”, says another NTUC leader from Dhaka.

Limited housing: There is real shortage of housing facilities. Not all workers are entitled to housing, though housing rent is deducted from everyone’s wages. One PEC member said, “We could not make a proper arrangement for the boshot-vita; we wanted boshot vita for 18 families to sir; we only could have given to 3 families”.

No sanitation facility in the workplace: Union leaders are vocal as well as consistently pressing this demand to ensure sanitation facilities in the workplace. Our research though found no sanitation arrangement in a couple of tea gardens we visited.

Limited education facility: Only a few tea gardens now have primary schools, others not. “We could not achieve primary school in every tea-garden”, says one PEC leader

Limited access to water and sanitation in the living place: Union leaders are observed persistently pressing this demand particularly for safe water and sanitation arrangement both at living and at workplace. But, in practice, our research finds only limited achievement in these.

Limited health care facility: This is another pressing demand we find from the grassroots level workers. In practice, only a very few gardens such as Duncan brothers one reportedly have comparatively better healthcare facilities and most others do not.

Restricted opinion: Everything depends on the manager. One PEC member said to us, “After we get permission from our authority, we came to talk to you today. If our MD or board manager does not give us any orders we cannot do anything.”

No right to land: Tea workers live in Tea garden land. Garden authority may allocate farming land to certain families or committees. But, legal entitlement to land rights is totally restricted up to date. “We are 100% landless”, says one tea garden worker.

Weak dispute resolution arrangement: Dispute resolution reportedly is not up to the mark. “In the Sonarupa tea garden and in the Laskmishara tea garden employers have illegally fired a few workers using section 26 of the labour law. We bargained. Employers agreed to give jobs back to the sacked workers. But, in practice, they didn’t execute their commitment”, said one valley committee members from Juri

Unimplemented CBA: Our research finds no accountability arrangement in place either for employers or for union leaders or relevant government officials to implement the CBA. Many of the points agreed in the CBA are marked totally unimplemented such as gratuity, group insurance, 5% profit sharing and others.

Unemployed educated youth: Tea gardens now have an increasing number of educated youths. There is very little space to employ these educated youth in the tea gardens. Although leaders have a general commitment to address the issue, their authority is limited and in practice the rate of unemployment of educated youth is ever increasing. “Despite we committed publicly, we could not employ our educated youths as per expectation”, says one CEC leader

Unpaid arrear wage: Last wage increase was made effective from a previous work months. Despite consistent endeavor, arrear wage yet to be paid fully to the workers. “30/40% arrear wages are unpaid till to date”, says one CEC leader

Unaddressed legal reform: Tea workers have their defined communities and live inside the tea gardens. Employment in the tea garden enables housing for living. Section 26(Ka) and 32 of Bangladesh labour law conflict with the housing and community living rights of the workers. This has long been a pressing demand from the leaders to change these sections or to incorporate new subsections in the law that properly address tea workers’ issues. Such a legal reform is yet to be addressed.

Restricted access to information: Despite persistent demand, profit and audit reports are yet to disclose with the workers or union leaders. “We always hear that it is loss, loss and loss every year; but, we have no real information on this”, says one PEC leader

Analysing weaknesses and capacity gaps of the TU leaders

In different sessions with the PEC, VEC and CEC we analyse differently their weaknesses and capacity gaps. Considering the purpose, having after due synthesis we have made here a combined presentation:

PEC bargains with managers not with employers: “We cannot talk directly with the Employer. We bargain with the managers”, says one PEC leader. “Employer live in London. They will visit once a year. The garden will be decorated finely. They shall visit and go. They shall never enquire about us”, says another PEC member.

Verbal complaint reporting and settlement: “No written agreement followed. Everything done verbally with the managers”, says one PEC member. “It is verbal communication followed everywhere. For every complaint; for every commitment”, says another PEC leader

Employers are reluctant: It is repeatedly claimed that employers are reluctant and the industrial relation aspects are only a show-case arrangement to serve the legal purpose. “The employers actually follow a strategy for excuses. Whenever they sit for a meeting they arrange it in Dhaka and the meeting never continues for more than two hours. They usually provide a possible date for the meeting and sometimes they even change it”, says a couple of trade union leaders.

Politicization of the union: Available qualitative information analyses that the trade union practices in the tea gardens particularly in the Sylhet region have been over politicized in recent years. “Political influence has become a sun eclipse, we were never so divided; local MP and his/her supporters whatever their capacities shall dominate union practices; capacity or strengths

have no consideration”, says one CEC leader. “The situation is like that if you don’t with me, you shall lose your cow at night”, says one community leader. “Entire garden belongs to Awameleague. Ours is an Ameleague panchayet panel”, says one Panchayet council leader. “We could have gone further but political division is the main culprit. Whoever is capable or active if he is not in my zone then I will not count it. This is the current political motto”, says one CEC leader

Leaders are divided: Leaders are divided into 3/4 main groups. Mostly, political division. It is often because of power and authority conflict.

Lack of true leadership: “Union leaders at least are not working for the workers interest. If leaders would have been in the hardline, employers would have bound to address workers’ rights. They don’t bargain properly”, says one media reporter.

Leaders are corrupted: “A group of leaders now have turned into brokers only. They have their furnished living houses. Others live in dilapidated houses where water leaks when there is a rain”, says one community leader. “Leaders are criminals; they shall get feed from workers; they shall get feed from employers; many of them now avoid workers; they shall not know workers,” says one reputed media personal from Shomshernagar. “You see, there was a huge movement for wages; leaders have full-filled their stomach; what the workers actually get”, says one women leader. “Few leaders now have their own car. They have huge amounts of money. They are managed”, says one community leader. “Nepotism is largely practiced”, says one community leader.

Many leaders have been managed: Employers know if they can influence the leaders they shall influence workers. And the practice of influencing has increased significantly in recent years. “Many leaders have been allocated 2/3 workers to work in their home. If needed to go somewhere, they are given car facilities. Now, if they get stuck with worker rights, all benefits will be curtailed”, says one community member. “Reality is that comprising workers’ rights in exchange of some favours from the employer”, says one NTUC leader

PEC has no office space: To date, no office set-up is reported for PEC in any garden. Central Executive Council members though have confirmed that decision already obtained to provide office facility to the PEC

Reluctance to perform role: Elected members are not active enough like the beginning. Outdated PEC members are reluctant to perform their electoral roles and responsibilities. Because of the legitimacy crisis, most PEC members reportedly are reluctant to perform routine responsibilities.

Resources constraint: PEC holds authority for only 10% of the members’ contributory fund. BCSU and VEC individually hold an equal financial authority of 45% of the members’ contributory fund each.

No defined authority and process: BCSU’s constitution didn’t clearly define any authority or processes to follow by the PEC and the VEC.

Roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined: Article 17 of the BCSU’s Constitution has defined specifically roles and responsibilities for the directly elected eight Presidents and Secretaries of the CEC. Roles and responsibilities of the PEC and VEC are not clearly defined. Many of the PEC and VEC leaders categorically expressed their frustration to us in this. “As our elder ancestors do, we do the same”, says one PEC leader. Another one said to us, “As managers say, we do the same. there is no opportunity to go beyond them; our attendance bonus shall be cut off”.

Limited tenure: “We could not do many things. Out time was over”, says one PEC leader

PEC leaders have only limited capacity:

- Huge need and demand, only limited capacity and ability.

- Little or no education
- Lack of awareness
- Lack of information and knowledge
- Bargaining and negotiation capacity not up to the mark to win with the employers
- Lack of leadership skill

VEC leaders have identified following of their capacity gaps:

- Lack of information and knowledge
- Little education. “We didn’t read the constitution”, says one VEC leader.
- Lack of awareness.
- Lack of bargaining skills and efficiency
- Poor information dissemination. “We are given a small book-letter detailing collective bargaining agreement, that’s all”, says one VEC leader
- Digital equipment usage not up to the mark
- Avoidance/overlook by the CEC

Uninformed of rights: “Only after the last wage negotiation processes particularly with the honourable Prime Minister we first time came to know that employers paid 500 taka to each worker as for house rent, electricity bill and medical bill”, says one valley committee leader.

Legal loopholes: “Article 26 and 32 of the labour law are the main culprit. They are not framed keeping in mind tea-workers issues”, says one valley committee leader

Lack of accountability: “There is a lack of accountability at every level. If my commitment/initiative remains unimplemented, there is no authority to check it”, says one CEC leader.

Power and authority conflict: BCSU leaders consider them as the supreme authority. They want everything to be done through them. Valley leaders often work directly with the PEC which is not acceptable to them. “Valley is just only a branch of the BCSU”, says one CEC leader. Another CEC leader said to us, “VC leaders are already out of control”.

Irregularity in CBA signing and implementation: CBA don’t sign regularly. Last one CBA signed 4 year gap. “Only commitment, no implementation”, says one VEC leader. “Our agreement is about 8 to 10 pages where we have 120 points. Meetings are held with the employers once in two month; meeting time is always at best two hours; we can discuss only a few points”, says one CEC leader.

Employers are too powerful. They have strong political linkage. “Are the employers Bangladeshi? It seems they are in a different land within the same country”, says one NTUC leader. “I need to get signing approval in paper from my manager (Shaheb) to compete for the election”, says one woman leader

BCSU’s interest supersede PEC interest: As per article 06 (Kha) of the Constitution of the BCSU, a motion of no confidence can be adopted against any elected members on the ground of engaging in any anti-union activities, which are never specified. If the motion is passed by the majority vote in the BCSU, the concerned person can be discharged/sacked from his/her role/position. Appeal and other investigation opportunities are allowed. This legal provision has limited the authority and functional boundary of the PEC. There is always political grouping among members in the BCSU. Mostly, align with the ruling political party. Thus, any elected members having neutral or different political identity can be easily discharged/sacked by the BCSU. This has a clear implication on the day to day performance of the PEC members.

Election don’t held regularly: Legal provision is to elect PEC after each three year. Election are not held regularly. It completely depends on the government. It is the government, particularly the

Department of Labour under the Ministry of Labour and Employment held with the main responsibility to conduct the election. Last election was held in 2018.

Government is reluctant: “In the tripartite meeting, there is never a presence of the government representative. They only call this meeting just to show”, says one CEC leader.

Poor monitoring and supervision by the government: “Government monitoring is just to show only. They only visit and give a monthly report. Suppose, they visit a factory where they find no restroom. But for that, they don’t take any action”, says one union leader.

Weak IT base: BCSU has furnished office set-up but they have no official website/webpage. Manual information generation and dissemination are particularly followed. On the other hand, overall IT skills of the tea sector TU leaders is reported low.

Analysing knowledge and capacity gaps of the women leadership

In different sessions with the PEC, VEC and CEC, we further analyse weaknesses and capacity gaps of the women leadership. The following section details the same:

Unaware of roles and responsibilities: Mostly, women leadership is unaware of their roles and responsibilities. “If men members tell us anything to do, we do that”, claimed a group of women leaders from Shomshernagar. “We have no role; pluck tea leaves; get paid for this; go home”, says one women leader. “The good thing is that they do know nothing”, says one CEC leader. “If the male members tell this is your work then we do that”, says one female leader. “When there is a quarrel, our mother and sister, we step in, try to resolve”, says one PEC female leader.

Lack of information and knowledge: 31% of workers categorically said to us that women leadership have very poor knowledge and understanding about TU practices and on labour law. Qualitative research findings analyse that women leaders, particularly those in the PECs, are mostly in the dark about union practices and labour law. They are not informed. They lack proper education and knowledge. “Men members shall go every week in the meetings; we don’t know; we have no participation”, says one PEC women leader. “I have heard that the government has allocated cash support for the destitute families, we never informed or consulted”, says a group of women leaders. “Women tea pluckers have only limited knowledge about Union practices”, says one CEC leader.

Lack of training: Women leaders need training on how to talk, how to include and lead. “We did not train properly. Elected members have been supplied only a copy of the CBA. They shall work to accomplish the CBA”, says one CEC leader. “No one tell me what my roles and responsibilities are, I was never trained”, says one woman PEC leader. “Keeping standing like a banana tree; no one inform nothing; no training we received”, says one female PEC leader.

Unaware of rights and entitlement: “We come, work in the garden, and then go home; we know nothing”, says one women leader.

Poor participation in the meeting: Women participation particularly in the bipartite and tripartite meeting is reported very dissatisfactory, from nil to very much insignificant. “In the last employer-union meeting 10 leaders attended; none was a woman”, said one CEC leader.

Degrading treatment: 31% of workers said to us that women TU leaders don’t have any importance in the tea garden. 8% of workers said that women leaders have a degraded value or are disrespected in the union practices. “We have no importance; no cooperation; never inform or call; only men members’ works; we only pluck tea in the garden”, says a woman leader.

Lacks bargaining capacity: Both women and men leaders repeatedly claimed to us that women leaders truly lack bargaining and negotiation capacity. “We never know; we never bargain with the employers; we were never trained” says one woman PEC leader

Lack of leadership skills: “I agree, women leadership is weak. We could not raise them properly”, says one CEC leader from Moulvibazar.

No power and authority: “Lots of issues; workers need house, tube well; But, I cannot settle things; I have no tube-well giving authority”, says one women PEC leader

No work-life balance: In the tea workers community women members reportedly are responsible to do all household chores. It is the same for the women leaders too. “Women do not get enough time for leadership they work all day long inside and outside the house”, said one CEC leader

No decision making role: “I have no work as a PEC member. Work in the garden all-day long, then go home. Men members do everything. After vote we have no need”, says one female leader

Lack of authority and resources: “We shall see the sorrows and happiness of all. But, we have no authority or resources”, says one woman leader.

Women leaders have only limited mobility: “Single women leaders don’t want to accompany men leaders to go outside the tea garden to participate in a union meeting. There is often family restriction too”, says one women PEC leader. “We started at 4am; their husband must not allow them to join men members to go to Dhaka for a meeting”, says one CEC leader

Lack of cooperation/support from the men members: Women PEC leaders repeatedly claimed to us that men members don’t cooperate with them properly. 13% of workers told us that men leaders don’t call women leaders in meetings or avoid them consciously. One-fifth (20%) of workers reported that women leaders clearly lagged behind men in their skills and performances.

Evaluation of women leadership		
No value at all	12	8.0
Don’t call in meeting	19	12.7
No role or importance	46	30.7
Lack of knowledge & understanding	46	30.7
Lagging behind men	30	20.0

Rhetoric presentation: “My manager said me to contest for the PEC”, says one women leader from Shomshernagar. “Women leaders are here only to serve the legal purpose. Usually, president and/or secretary represent everywhere. Women leaders have no role”, says one valley committee leader Srimoti Bouri.

Family burden: “Who shall do my household works”, says one women PEC leader.

Political selection of candidates: “There is politics. I have been offered a senior position like president or secretary. Now, it has become a responsibility to manage two women to compete in the election who are loyal to party politics”, says one VEC leader.

Vote matters, not skills: “Vote matters; priority is to take woman candidate from a community which have more women voters; capacity or skills have no choice”, says one VEC leader.

Central leadership is reluctant: Women leadership have repeatedly claimed that they have only little or no connection with the central leadership.

Constitutional loopholes: Article 03 has set 21 Goals and objectives. Everything has been covered such as better industrial relations, dispute resolution, bargaining and negotiation,

conciliation, economic, social, cultural and moral development, policy and law formulation, legal assistance, fund creation and management and others. Women improvement though not a special focus in the goals and objectives.

Analysing strengths of the TU leadership

Along with analysing weaknesses and capacity gaps we too analyse strengths of the current leadership as follows:

Greater acceptance among workers: “387 workers shall accept and follow whatever we say,” says one PEC leader from Shilghat Tea Garden

Workers are united: “There is strong unity among workers. But, leaders are divided. It is for the leaders, workers finally step back in the minimum wage movement”, says one community leader

TU has strong bondage with the community: Specially, PEC has a greater tie/unity with the workers at community level. “If we say we will call for a protest then they all will join”, says one PEC leader.

Leaders are hard-working: Leaders including women leaders reportedly work hard non-stop and for long hours.

Institutionalized democratic norms and practices: TUs have their own constitution and furnished office set-up. TUs have their own funding arrangement. Elections are competitive. It is a must to elect as a leader. CBA signed regularly and there is an established bipartite arrangement to look after its implementation.

Huge membership base: BCSU is one of the largest trade unions in the sub-continent considering its members volume. It has more than 1 lakh regular contributory union members.

Women leadership created: Only women workers can compete for nearly 40% positions in the PEC. One-third position in the VEC is particularly reserved for women. CEC has nearly one-fourth defined women leaders. Rest other positions are open to competition by either men or women.

Connected to different Forums: BCSU has its established connection and network with the most reputed national, regional, and international TUCs and Forums.

Can Talk: A good number of leaders have developed who can talk non-stop and fluently on workers matters.

Enlighten leadership: Particularly at valley and central level, informed and knowledgeable leadership have been developed.

Family support: Culturally, tea sector leaders have strong family bondage. Family members are positive and help and support performing each and every responsibilities

SECTION SIX

OPINION/KNOWLEDGE/SUGGESTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

A complete section in the survey schedule was dedicated to seek opinion/suggestion from the workers on a number of specific research issues. We seek opinion/suggestions/advice from every stakeholder we talk to at different levels. This section presents a synthesis summary of all of them.

For Government



Ensure proper representation of tea workers in the formulation and review of legal matters which have an implication on tea sector workers.



Along with production issues emphasis systematic information and knowledge generation on tea workers issue



Ensure proper representation of the tea workers unions in the law and order protection committees in the respective Upazilas and Zilas.



Establish legally, rights to land entitlement by the tea garden workers.

For Central Executive Committee



Regular communication with the workers shall have to be given a core priority (37%)



Leadership capability deserves furthermore strengthening (36%)



Access to the leadership should be made more easy and flexible (27%)



Visible actions desirable in promoting and protection of labour rights (12%)



Ensure gender training and ToT for the central leadership



Planned and defined actions, steps and processes should be taken to advance women leadership and to ensure their effective participation in the union practices.



Legal review and amendment specifically of sections 26 and 32 to be given a core priority. Lobby, advocacy and allocation of resources for this is a must.



Emphasis linkage building with the mainstreaming trade union movement in the country.



Take concrete steps to monitor and prevent corrupt TU practices.



Strengthen IT capacity of the CEC leadership.



Review and amend the union constitution to make it more responsive to union practices.



Create and ensure constitutional accountability by the central leadership to perform defined roles and responsibilities.



Take concrete steps for systematic information and knowledge generation on the tea workers' rights situation. Ensure that right bearer stakeholders know correctly the prevailing tea workers statuses.

For PEC and VEC



Formulate and establish democratic guidelines and practices to select young and educated workers to compete for the PEC and VEC.



Like the CEC, ensure defined roles and responsibilities for the PEC and VEC as well as train and equip them with appropriate resources.



Ensure that PEC and VEC leadership have been trained properly on 1) dispute resolution 2) bargaining and negotiation skills and capacity, 3) leadership skills, and 4) Gender aspects



Ensure that PEC and VEC elected leadership have been informed and educated properly on 1) workers' rights, 2) decent work, and on 5) labour law



Allocate resources and engage effort to make aware the community particularly on 1) VAW, 2) Child marriage, 3) Alcohol taking, 4) education, and 5) health and hygiene practices



Formulate and establish complaint and dispute reporting authority, channel and effective compliant/dispute handling processes in both at workplace and in the community. Ensure that general workers know about them.



Ensure that PEC and VEC leadership properly know and understand the Union constitution and Collective Bargaining Agreement. Equip them with handy resources on them for easy usage.



Ensure office facility for the PEC.



Voice for and act non-stop to establish effective monitoring and supervision of workers' rights in the workplace.



Ensure constitutional accountability of the PEC and VEC leadership.

For Women Leadership



Ensure that women leadership have been trained properly on 1) dispute resolution 2) bargaining and negotiation skills, and on 3) leadership skills. 33% of workers said the same to us.



Ensure that women leaders are properly informed and educated on 1) workers' rights, 2) decent work, 3) Gender aspects and 4) Labour law. 39% of workers said the same to us.



Engage women leadership to make the community aware.



Engage women leadership to promote reproductive health and menstruation hygiene practices among the women workers.



Organizing women workers deserves to be a continuous process. Women leadership should be appropriately trained and prepared for this.



Ensure that women leadership properly know and understand the Union constitution and Collective Bargaining Agreement. Equip them with handy resources on them for easy usage.



Act to establish effective due diligence practices in the workplace to stop abuses of all kinds against women workers.



Formulate and establish women-friendly complaint and dispute reporting authority, channel and effective compliant/dispute handling processes in both at workplace and in the community. Ensure that women workers know about them.



Ensure constitutional accountability of the women's leadership.

Issue-based recommendations

For Better Women Workers Protection



Formulate and implement women protection policy (15%).



Create appropriate authority, structure and processes to deal with women workers issues in the workplace (25%).



Make aware women workers their rights and protection (72%)

For Employment Security



Stop cultivating lemon and rubber in the tea gardens' land (65%)



Formulate proper policy to ensure full employment by the adult members of the tea workers families (19%).

Dispute Resolution Specific



Activate PEC and VEC in dispute resolution (19%)



Train properly leaders on dispute resolution skills and capacity (40%)



Select/nominate comparatively better educated persons for the leadership position (47%)



Educate leaders on labour law (11%) and equip them with handy resources toolkit on this.



Detailed and defined processes and arrangements for dispute reporting and dispute resolution both at workplace and at community and trained leaders adequately on them.

For OSH Protection



Ensure proper health infrastructural facilities like hospitals and clinics (46%)



Ensure sufficient doctors and nurses and required number of medicines in the available health related structural arrangements (63%)



Ensure proper awareness and compensation to the occupation victims (9%)



Ensure sufficient personal protective equipment (2%)

Regarding WATSAN



Act to ensure required allocation of finance and resources (5%)



Employers must be made accountable by law to arrange for sufficient toilet and drinking water facilities for workers both in the workplace and in the living place (53%)



Act to ensure different toilet arrangement facilities for women workers in the workplace (33%)



Ensure sufficient safe drinking water supply in the workplace (17%)

Regarding Social Security Protection



Act to ensure permanent entitlement to housing and living (53%)



Act to ensure farming opportunity of workers in the fallow land (19%)



Act to ensure legal rights to pension and gratuity (24%)



Act to ensure better access to education and relevant other scholarship and facilities (25%)

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ANNEX I: GUIDELINE & CHECKLIST

Interview with the employers

GUIDELINES

- Conduct the interview in a comfortably indoor place
- Least, one Research Associate shall conduct the interview.
- Ensure that the entire interview is audio-recorded. For this, it is important that the employer is informed in the beginning the purpose of the research as well as consent is taken for audio-recording.
- Ensure that 1/2 good photos are taken for every interview.
- In no way can the question be asked by looking at the front of the question paper. Take appropriate preparation well in advance.
- Interview shall continue maximum of 40 minutes.

CHECKLIST

- **General Information**
[What is the year established? What were the challenges? What was the number of employees? What is the number of employees now? What are the challenges the tea garden faces now?]
- **Status of workers right**
[Your tea garden must be following some labour codes of conduct. What is that? How was that established? Which mechanisms are most relevant to check compliance with labour standards? What is the current practice of recruitment & employment security? What are the major trends of employment? What is the general trend of absent of workers due to sickness and injuries? What are the main implications? What about the toilet and drinking water facility at workplace? What are the OHS measures? How maternity protection is addressed, Training and promotion]
- **Status of decent work**
[Evaluation about current status of FoA and Collective bargaining, assessing capacity of TU leaders particularly women leaders (strengths & gaps), status of child laboring, status of forced laboring, status of in-equality, social security, social dialogue] What is the trend of introducing new equipment, production processes or new work practices or procedures in past 5 years? How do you train workers to enable them to use new technologies?]
- Would you please tell us the % of the total cost of production accounted for by labor costs in the last year?
- **Housing and living**
[Housing, Toilet arrangement, Water access, Land access, Freedom of movement, Access to services, Alcohol taking status, Religious and cultural inclusion]**Any particular issue??**
- **Expectations/Suggestions/advice/opinions for future improvement**

ANNEX II: GUIDELINES & CHECKLIST

CONSULTATION WITH TRADE UNIONISTS

(PEC, VEC, CEC)

GUIDELINES

- 4 Consultations, 1 with the Valley Committee members, 1 with the panchayet committee members, 1 with the women trade unionists and 1 with the BCSU members
- 4 to 8 trade unionists shall present in each of the consultation
- Except for women group, rest of the 3 consultations shall include men and women mixed group
- In a comfortably indoor place
- Entertaining with light snacks

CHECKLIST

- **Roles and responsibilities**
[Sources of knowledge, Policy/legal obligation, Accountability]
- **Skills and competencies**
[Leadership, Education, training, experience, exposure visit, Network, expectations and gaps]
- **Actions in the last 6 months**
[What works well, what didn't work well and why, what could have been done differently]
- **Achievements**
[Major achievements, learning, supportive elements]
- **Failures**
[What could not be achieved, reasons and learning, what could have been done differently]
- **Knowledge**
[Decent work (Fundamental principles at work/decent employment/social security/social dialogue), Labour rights, women rights]
- **Level/status of disputes and their settlements at community level (Valley/Panchayet)**
[Issues/conflicts, No & intensity, status of freedom of movement, access to basic services, status and process of rights defending/status and process of participation in dispute settlements/Success/Failures]
- **Status/level of Labour rights and women rights**
[Employment security, forced labour, child labour, abuses, status of inequality, skill development opportunity, wage status, status of FoA & Collective Bargaining, OHS status, Leave and rest]
- **Promotion and protection of workers' rights**
[Role of TU, status of collective bargaining, status of women representation, fee and financials, leadership status, tri-partism, monitoring and accountability, capacity gaps]
- **SWOT Analysis**
[Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threats]
- **Expectations**

ANNEX III: GUIDELINE & CHECKLIST

FGD WITH COMMUNITY PEOPLE

GUIDELINES

- 2 FGDs, 1 in Balishira Valley and the other 1 in Monodholi Valley
- 6 to 8 persons from the community
- Men and women mixed group
- Relatively same age
- Middle class with relatively same socio-economic status
- In a comfortably indoor place (house/class room) in the community
- Entertaining with light snacks

CHECKLIST

- **Family life**

[Who they live with, family size, family relation, Dowry, Gender violation, Good practices, Bad practices (Patra & others)]

- **Economic status**

[Housing, Clothing, Livelihood assets, land resources and cultivation, Living standard, Debt and savings, Poverty and other vulnerabilities]

- **Social life**

[Marriage and affairs including child marriage, freedom of movement, relation with the mainstream communities, social stigma, acceptance-non acceptance in the society, access to health and education, access to services providing institutions]

- **Cultural life**

[Religion and ethnicity, Language and associated implications, festivals, cultural activities]

- **Working life**

[Employment security/Forced labour/work-life balance/Status of rights and decent work]

ANNEX IV: SURVEY SCHEDULE

জরীপের জন্য প্রশ্নপত্র
নারী চা শ্রমিকদের শ্রম অধিকার ও শোভন কাজ পরিস্থিতির মূল্যায়ন বিষয়ক একটি গবেষণা
পরিচালনাঃ বাংলাদেশ ইনিস্টিটিউট অব লেবার স্টাডিজ - বিল্ডস

১.০ বিভাগ (ক)ঃ সম্মতি

১.১ উদ্দেশ্য	জরীপের উদ্দেশ্য হচ্ছে নারী চা শ্রমিকদের শ্রম অধিকার পরিস্থিতির একটি মূল্যায়ন।
১.২ লাভ	আপনি চা শ্রমিকদের একজন প্রতিনিধি হিসেবে আপনার মূল্যবান মতামত ও সুপারিশ বৃহৎ পরিসরে জানানোর সুযোগ পাবেন।
১.৩ গোপনীয়তা	গবেষণা প্রতিবেদনে আপনার মতামতের যথাযথ প্রকাশ নিশ্চিত করা হবে। তবে, আপনার নাম-ধাম ও ঠিকানা গোপন রাখা হবে।
১.৪ ঝুঁকি	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ কোন প্রশ্নের উত্তর জানা না থাকলে আপনাকে বলতে হবে, “আমি জানিনা”। ✓ কোন প্রশ্নের উত্তর দিতে না চাইলে বলুন, “আমি এই প্রশ্নের উত্তর দিতে চাই না”। ✓ প্রশ্ন না বুঝলে পুনরায় বুঝিয়ে দেয়ার জন্য আমাকে বলুন। ✓ কিছু প্রশ্নের একাধিক সঠিক উত্তর হতে পারে। উত্তরসমূহ বলা হবে। আপনার কাজ হবে সঠিক উত্তরসমূহ বেছে নেয়া।
১.৫ সম্মতি	আপনি কি জরীপে অংশগ্রহণ করতে রাজি? ১ <input type="checkbox"/> হ্যাঁ ২ <input type="checkbox"/> না

২.০ বিভাগ (খ)ঃ সাধারণ পরিচিতি

২.১ নমুনা নং (ঢাকা অফিস লিখবে)	
২.২ উত্তরদাতার নাম	
২.৩ পদবী	
২.৪ চাকরির ধরন	১ <input type="checkbox"/> স্থায়ী ২ <input type="checkbox"/> অস্থায়ী/ক্যাসুয়াল (দৈনিক/মাসিক/মৌসুমী)
২.৫ চা বাগান/এস্টেটের নাম ও গ্রুড	
২.৬ জরীপ এলাকা (ভ্যালি, গ্রাম, উপজেলা)	
২.৭ ফোন নম্বর	
২.৮ তারিখ ও সময়	
২.৯ উত্তরদাতার স্বাক্ষর	
২.১০ তথ্য সংগ্রহকারীর নাম ও স্বাক্ষর	

৩.০ বিভাগ (গ)ঃ প্রাথমিক তথ্যাবলি

৩.১ উত্তরদাতা সম্পর্কিতঃ

ক্র.নং	বিষয়	উত্তর	কোড-নম্বর সমূহ
৩.১.১	বয়স		১ <input type="checkbox"/> <১৮ ২ <input type="checkbox"/> ১৮-২২ ৩ <input type="checkbox"/> ২৩-২৭ ৪ <input type="checkbox"/> ২৮-৩২ ৫ <input type="checkbox"/> ৩৩-৩৭ ৬ <input type="checkbox"/> ৩৮-৪২ ৭ <input type="checkbox"/> ৪৩-৪৭ ৮ <input type="checkbox"/> ৪৮-৫২ ৯ <input type="checkbox"/> ৫৩ এবং তার বেশি
৩.১.২	বৈবাহিক অবস্থা		১ <input type="checkbox"/> অবিবাহিত ২ <input type="checkbox"/> বিবাহিত ৩ <input type="checkbox"/> তালাক প্রাপ্ত ৪ <input type="checkbox"/> বিপত্নিক/বিধবা

৩.১.৩	শিক্ষা		০□ নিরক্ষর ১□ সই করতে পারে ২□ পড়তে পারে ৩□ ১ম-৫ম শ্রেণী ৪□ প্রাইমারি পাশ ৫□ ৬ষ্ঠ-১০ম শ্রেণী ৬□ SSC ৭□ HSC ৮□ স্নাতক বা তদোদ্বর্ণ ৯□ মাদ্রাসা শিক্ষা
৩.১.৪	ধর্ম		১□হিন্দু ২□বৌদ্ধ ৩□খ্রিস্টান ৪□মুসলিম ৫□অন্যান্য (নির্দিষ্ট করুন)

৩.২ পরিবারের/খানার সদস্যদের সম্পর্কিতঃ

ক্র.নং	বিষয়	উত্তর	কোড-নম্বর সমূহ
৩.২.১	পরিবারের সদস্য সংখ্যা কত?		প্রকৃত সংখ্যা উল্লেখ করুন।
৩.২.২	পরিবারে কয়জন আয় করে?		১□ ১ জন ২□ ২ জন ৩□ ৩ জন ৪□ ৪ জন বা বেশী

৪.০ বিভাগ (ঘ)ঃ উত্তরদাতার কর্ম সংশ্লিষ্ট

ক্র.নং	প্রশ্ন	উত্তর	কোড নম্বর সমূহ
৪.১	যখন চা বাগানে কাজ শুরু করেন বয়স কত ছিল?		১□ ১৮ বছর এর কম ২□ ১৮ বছর বা তার বেশী
৪.২	নিয়োগ কিভাবে হয়েছিল?		১□পারিবারিক সদস্যের অবসর/মৃত্যু ২□পঞ্চায়েতের সুপারিশে ৪□বয়স হয়েছিল ৫□দেন-দরবার করেছি ৬□আনুষ্ঠানিক ৭□অন্যান্য
৪.৩	কত বছর যাবৎ চাকরি করছেন?		প্রকৃত উল্লেখ করুন
৪.৪	বাগানে ১৮ বছরের নীচে শ্রমিক থাকলে কত %?		১□১-৩% ২□৪-৫% ৩□৬-১০% ৪□১১-১৫% ৫□১৬- ২৫% ৬□না
৪.৫	চা বাগানে কাজ করার কারন কি? (একাধিক উত্তর প্রযোজ্য)		১□উত্তরাধিকার চাকরি ২□অন্য কাজের সুযোগ নেই ৩□স্ব-ইচ্ছায় ৪□পরিবারের প্রয়োজনে ৫□আবাসনের জন্য ৬□অন্যান্য
৪.৬	কখনো কোন পদোন্নতি পেয়েছেন?		১□হ্যাঁ, ১বার ২□হ্যাঁ, ২বার ৩□হ্যাঁ, ২ বারের বেশি ৪□না ৫□নেই
৪.৭	কখনো কোন প্রশিক্ষণ পেয়েছেন?		১□হ্যাঁ, একবার ২□হ্যাঁ, দুইবার ৩□হ্যাঁ, দুই বারের বেশি ৪□না

৫.০ বিভাগ (ঙ)ঃ কর্মক্ষেত্রের বাস্তবিক অবস্থা ও শোভন কাজের বিষয়াদি

ক্র.নং	প্রশ্ন	উত্তর	কোড সমূহ
৫.১	নিয়োগপত্র ও চাকরি নিরাপত্তা		
৫.১.১	নিয়োগপত্র আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ জানি না
৫.১.২	(উত্তর হ্যাঁ হলে) নিয়োগপত্রে কি আছে?		১□দেখি/পড়ি নাই ২□কাজের ধরণ ৩□কাজের বিবরণ ৪□কর্ম ঘন্টা ৫□বেতন-ভাতা ৬□সুযোগ-সুবিধা ৭□জানিনা ৮□অন্যান্য
৫.১.২	পরিচয়পত্র আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ জানি না
৫.১.৩	সার্ভিস বুক আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ জানি না
৫.১.৪	হাজিরা কার্ড আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ জানি না

৫.১.৬	কর্মী ছাঁটাই কিভাবে হয়? (একাধিক উত্তর প্রযোজ্য)		১□যখন-তখন ২□মালিকের ইচ্ছা ৩□নোটিশ দেয় ৪□ন্যায্যভাবে ৫□দেনা-পাওনা দিয়ে বিদায় ৬□আংশিক পাওনা দেয় ৭□অন্যান্য (লিখুন)
৫.২	কর্মঘণ্টা ও ওভারটাইম সম্পর্কিত		
৫.২.১	প্রতিদিন গড়ে কত ঘণ্টা কাজ করেন?		১□ <৮ ২□ ৮ ৩□ ৯-১০ ৪□ ১১-১২ ৫□ ১৩-১৪ ৬□ ১৫ ও তদোর্ধ্ব
৫.২.২	ওভারটাইম করতে হয়?		১□ ১-২ঘণ্টা ২□ ৩-৪ঘণ্টা ৩□ ৫-৬ঘণ্টা ২□ না ৩□অন্যান্য
৫.২.৩	উত্তর হ্যাঁ হলে, কেন ওভারটাইম করেন?		১□বাড়তি আয় ২□উপায় নাই ৩□টার্গেট পূরণ ৪□অন্যান্য
৫.২.৪	রাতে ফেরার সময় কখনো কোন সমস্যা হয়েছে?		১□কখনো না ২□কদাচিৎ ৩□মার্বো-মধ্যে ৪□প্রায়ই ৫□সবসময়
৫.২.৫	বাগানে কখনো কোন দুর্ঘটনার শিকার হয়েছেন?		১□হ্যাঁ ২□না ৩□মার্বো-মধ্যে ৪□প্রায়ই
৫.২.৬	উত্তর হ্যাঁ হলে, কি সেই দুর্ঘটনা/সমস্যা?		প্রকৃত উল্লেখ করুন
৫.২.৭	কোন চিকিৎসা/ক্ষতিপূরণ পেয়েছেন?		১□ক্ষি চিকিৎসা ২□ক্ষতিপূরণ ৩□চিকিৎসা ভাতা ৪□ না ৫□অন্যান্য
৫.৩	মজুরি ও মজুরি সংক্রান্ত অন্যান্য সুবিধাদি		
৫.৩.১	বেতন দৈনিক, সাপ্তাহিক না মাসিক?		১□ সাপ্তাহিক ২□ মাসিক ৩□ দৈনিক
৫.৩.২	বেতন কিভাবে দেয়?		১□নগদ ২□চেকে ৩□ব্যাংক/এটিএম ৪□বিকাশ/নগদ ৫□অন্যান্য
৫.৩.৩	বেতনের স্লিপ দেয়?		১□ সবসময় ২□ প্রায়ই ৩□ কখনো-সখনো ৪□ না
৫.৩.৪	এমন কি হয় যে বেতন কম/ভুল দেয়া হয়েছে?		১□সবসময় ২□প্রায়ই ৩□কখনো-সখনো ৪□কখনো না
৫.৩.৫	নারী-পুরুষের মজুরি কি সমান?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ মার্বো-মধ্যে ৪□জানি না
৫.৩.৬	মাসিক কত টাকা মজুরি পান?		প্রকৃত পরিমান টাকার অঙ্কে লিখুন
৫.৩.৭	বছর শেষে বেতন বাড়?		১□সমান থাকে ২□বাড়ে, মূল বেতনের ৫% ৩□জানি না
৫.৩.৮	বেতন কাটা যায়?		১□সবসময় ২□প্রায়ই ৩□কখনো-সখনো ৪□কদাচিৎ ৫□ কখনো না
৫.৩.৯	(উত্তর হ্যাঁ হলে) কি কারনে বেতন কাটা যায়?		১□টার্গেট না হলে ২□দেবীতে কাজে যাওয়া ৩□কাজের মান খারাপ ৪□অসুস্থতা ৬□অনুপস্থিতি ৭□অন্যান্য (নির্দিষ্ট করুন).....
৫.৪	কর্মক্ষেত্রে সুযোগ-সুবিধাদি		
৫.৪.১	উৎসব বোনাস আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৫.৪.২	রেশন পান?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৫.৪.৩	রেশন পেয়ে থাকলে তা কি কি? (প্রকৃত লিখুন)		
৫.৪.৪	বাগানভেদে (রেশন) কোন তারতম্য আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না

৫.৫	ছুটি, বিশ্রাম, মাতৃত্ব							
৫.৫.১	সাপ্তাহিক ছুটি আছে?			১□ হ্যাঁ	২□ না	৩□ মাঝে-মধ্যে		
৫.৫.২	পারিবারিক/নৈমিত্তিক ছুটি আছে?			১□ হ্যাঁ	২□ না	৩□ মাঝে-মধ্যে		
৫.৫.৩	অসুস্থতাজনিত ছুটি আছে?			১□ হ্যাঁ	২□ না	৩□ মাঝে-মধ্যে		
৫.৫.৪	বার্ষিক ছুটি আছে?			১□ হ্যাঁ	২□ না	৩□ মাঝে-মধ্যে		
৫.৫.৫	উৎসব ছুটি আছে?			১□ হ্যাঁ	২□ না	৩□ মাঝে-মধ্যে		
৫.৫.৬	মাতৃত্বকালীন ছুটি আছে?			১□ হ্যাঁ	২□ না			
৫.৫.৭	মাতৃত্বকালীন ছুটি কয় দিন/সপ্তাহ?			১□ ১৬ সপ্তাহ	২□ ৪ মাস	৩□ জানি না	৪□ ৮+৮ সপ্তাহ	৫□ অন্যান্য
৫.৫.৮	ছুটিতে থাকাকালীন কি মজুরি দেয়?			১□ পূর্ণাঙ্গ মজুরি	২□ আংশিক	৩□ বেতন কাটে	৪□ না	
৫.৫.৯	গর্ভবতী মহিলার জন্য কোন বৈষম্য আছে?			১□ হ্যাঁ	২□ না	১□ মাঝে-মধ্যে		
৫.৫.১০	ডে-কেয়ার সেন্টার আছে?			১□ হ্যাঁ	২□ না			
৫.৫.১১	উত্তর হ্যাঁ হলে, শিশু থাকে?			১□ হ্যাঁ	২□ লোক দেখানো	৩□ না	৪□ শিশু নাই	
৫.৬	বৈষম্য ও নির্যাতন/হয়রানি							
৫.৬.১	সবার জন্য কি সমান সুযোগ?			১□ হ্যাঁ	২□ না	৩□ নারীদের বেশী সুযোগ	৪□ পুরুষের বেশী সুযোগ	৫□ সুন্দর মেয়েদের বেশী সুযোগ
৫.৬.২	শারীরিক নির্যাতন আছে?			১□ না	২□ নিয়মিত	৩□ মাঝে-মধ্যে	৪□ খুব কম	
৫.৬.৩	মৌখিক হয়রানি আছে?			১□ না	২□ নিয়মিত	৩□ মাঝে-মধ্যে	৪□ খুব কম	
৫.৬.৪	যৌন হয়রানি আছে?			১□ না	২□ নিয়মিত	৩□ মাঝে-মধ্যে	৪□ খুব কম	
৫.৬.৫	কখনো যৌন হয়রানির শিকার হয়েছেন?			১□ হ্যাঁ	২□ না			
৫.৬.৬	হ্যাঁ হলে, আপনি কোন প্রতিবাদ করেছেন?			১□ চুপ থেকেছি	২□ প্রতিবাদ করেছি	৩□ প্রত্যাখান করেছি	৪□ অন্যান্য	
৫.৬.৭	নির্যাতন প্রতিরোধে কোন কমিটি আছে?			১□ হ্যাঁ	২□ না			
৫.৭	সাধারণ কল্যাণমূলক ব্যবস্থা							
	কল্যাণমূলক ব্যবস্থার হাল-হকিকত	আছে/নাই?		আপনি কতটা সন্তুষ্ট?				
		হ্যাঁ	না	খুবই অসন্তুষ্ট	অসন্তুষ্ট	জানি না	সন্তুষ্ট	খুবই সন্তুষ্ট
৫.৭.১	First Aid Box	১	২	১	২	৩	৪	৫
৫.৭.২	স্বাস্থ্য সেবা (চিকিৎসক/আয়া/নার্স/ঔষধ)	১	২	১	২	৩	৪	৫
৫.৭.৩	কর্মক্ষেত্রে টয়লেট এর ব্যবস্থা আছে?	১	২	১	২	৩	৪	৫
৫.৭.৪	(টয়লেট না থাকলে) কোথায় টয়লেট করেন?			১□ উন্মুক্ত জায়গায়	২□ বাগানে	৩□ দূরে বাগানের অফিসে	৪□ বাসায় চলে যান	৫□ অন্যান্য

৫.৭.৫	কর্মক্ষেত্রে খাবার পানির ব্যবস্থা আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৫.৭.৬	উত্তর হ্যাঁ হলে, পানি কি নিরাপদ?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ অসুখ-বিসুখ লেগেই থাকে ২□ জানিনা
৫.৮	সামাজিক নিরাপত্তা		
৫.৮.১	পেনশন আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ জানা নাই
৫.৮.২	প্রভিডেন্ট ফান্ড আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ জানা নাই
৫.৮.৩	গ্রাচুইটি আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ জানা নাই
৫.৮.৪	ওয়েলফেয়ার/কল্যাণ তহবিল আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ জানা নাই
৫.৮.৫	পেশাগত দৃষ্টিভঙ্গির ক্ষেত্রে ক্ষতিপূরণ আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ জানা নাই
৫.৯	আপত্তি, প্রতিনিধিত্ব ও দরকষাকষি		
৫.৯.১	ইউনিয়নের সদস্য হওয়া কি বাধ্যতামূলক?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৫.৯.২	আপনি কি ইউনিয়নের সদস্য?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৫.৯.৩	(সদস্য না হলে) কেন সদস্য হননি?		১□ অস্থায়ী ২□ সংগঠন করার স্বাধীনতা নাই ৩□ চাকরীর যাওয়ার ভয় ৪□ TU নেতারা অসৎ ৫□ অন্যান্য (নির্দিষ্ট করুন).....
৫.৯.৪	ইউনিয়নে মাসে কয়টাকা চাদা দিতে হয়?		প্রকৃত টাকার পরিমাণ উল্লেখ করুন।
৫.৯.৫	ইউনিয়নের সদস্য হলে লাভ কি?		১□ শক্তি ২□ একতা ৩□ দাবী-দাওয়া নিয়ে কথা বলা যায় ৪□ প্রতিবাদ করা যায় ৫□ কোন লাভ নাই ৬□ নেতারা অসৎ ৭□ অন্যান্য...
৫.৯.৬	ম্যানেজমেন্ট এর কাছে অভিযোগ জানানোর উপায় কি?		১□ TU ২□ ব্যক্তিগতভাবে দাবী উত্থাপন ৩□ যৌথ প্রতিবাদ ৪□ কোন উপায় নাই ৫□ সরদারের মাধ্যমে ৬□ অন্যান্য.
৫.৯.৭	শ্রমিক ইউনিয়নে নেতা কত জন?		প্রকৃত পরিমাণ উল্লেখ করুন।
৫.৯.৮	নারী নেতা কত জন?		প্রকৃত পরিমাণ উল্লেখ করুন।
৫.৯.৯	ভ্যালি কমিটিতে নেতা কত জন?		প্রকৃত পরিমাণ উল্লেখ করুন।
৫.৯.১০	নারী নেতা কত জন?		প্রকৃত পরিমাণ উল্লেখ করুন।
৫.৯.১১	পঞ্চায়েত কমিটিতে নেতা কত জন?		প্রকৃত পরিমাণ উল্লেখ করুন।
৫.৯.১২	নারী নেতা কত জন?		প্রকৃত পরিমাণ উল্লেখ করুন।
৫.৯.১৩	নারী নেতৃত্ব সম্পর্কে মূল্যায়ন কি?		১□ মূল্য নাই ২□ মিটিং এ ডাকেনা ৩□ কোন গুরুত্ব নেই ৪□ জানা বোঝার অভাব ৫□ পুরুষদের চেয়ে পিছিয়ে ৬□ কম ৭□ অন্যান্য
৫.৯.১৪	বিবাদ মিমাংসা হয় কিভাবে?		১□ ভ্যালি কমিটি ২□ পঞ্চায়েত কমিটি ৩□ শ্রমিক ইউনিয়ন ৪□ মালিক মিমাংসা করে ৫□ প্রতিবাদ হলে ৬□ নিয়মতান্ত্রিক ৭□ হয়না
৫.১০	সামাজিক সংলাপ		
৫.১০.১	ওয়েলফেয়ার/কল্যাণ কমিটি আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ আছে, কার্যকর না
৫.১০.২	সেফটি কমিটি আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না ৩□ আছে, কার্যকর না
৫.১০.৩	সরকারী কোন পরিদর্শন হয়?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৫.১০.৪	উত্তর হ্যাঁ হলে, কে বা কারা?		১□ ডাইফ ২□ চা-বোর্ড ৩□ অন্যান্য (নির্দিষ্ট করুন)

৫.১০.৫	শ্রমিকদের সাথে তাদের অধিকারের বিষয়ে কথা বলে/জানতে চায়?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৫.১১	কর্মক্ষেত্রে ঝুঁকি ও দুর্ঘটনা		
৫.১১.১	কর্মক্ষেত্রে কি নিরাপদ?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৫.১১.২	না হলে, কেন অনিরাপদ মনে হয়?		১□ পিপিই নাই ২□ রাসায়নিকের ব্যবহার ৩□ ময়লা-কাঁদা ৪□ সাপের উপদ্রব ৫□ গুঁড়া-মাস্তান ৬□ মেয়েদের নিরাপত্তা নাই ৭□ অন্যান্য

৬.০ বিভাগ (চ): কর্মক্ষেত্রে বাইরের জীবনযাত্রা

ক্র.নং	প্রশ্ন	উত্তর	কোড নম্বর সমূহ
৬.১	বাসস্থান ও আবাসন		
৬.১.১	আপনি কোথায় থাকেন?		১□ মালিকের দেয়া বাড়ি ২□ ভাড়া বাসা ৩□ অন্যান্য
৬.১.২	বাসার সাইজ কত?		প্রকৃত
৬.১.৩	এক রুমে কয়জন থাকেন?		১□ ১ ২□ ২ ৩□ ৩ ৪□ ৪ ৫□ ৫ ৬□ ৬ বা বেশী ৭□ পুরো পরিবার
৬.১.৪	নিরাপত্তা পরিস্থিতি কেমন?		১□ নিরাপদ ২□ যখন-তখন চুরি হয় ৩□ কোন নিরাপত্তা নেই ৪□ মাস্তান বা মেলা করে ৫□ রাজনৈতিক বাধা ৬□ অন্যান্য. . .
৬.১.৫	বিদ্যুৎ আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৬.১.৬	টয়লেটের অবস্থা কি?		১□ ফ্লাশ করা নিরাপদ ২□ ফ্লাশ করা অনিরাপদ ৩□ স্ল্যাবসহ পিট লেট্রিন ৪□ স্ল্যাব ছাড়া উন্মুক্ত পিট ৫□ কাচা/খোলা লেট্রিন ৬□ খোলা/উন্মুক্ত
৬.১.৭	পানির উৎস কি?		১□ টিউবওয়েল ২□ সাপ্লাই ৩□ পুকুর ৪□ নদী ৫□ খাল ৬□ লেক
৬.১.৮	বাসা থেকে বাগানের দূরত্ব কত?		১□ ১০ মিনিট এর কম ২□ ১১-২০ মিনিট ৩□ ২১-৩০ মিনিট ৪□ ৩১-৪০ মিনিট ৫□ ৪১-৫০ মিনিট ৬□ ৫১-৬০ মিনিট ৭□ ১ ঘণ্টার বেশী
৬.২	সংস্কৃতি ও সামাজিক জীবন		
৬.২.১	মাতৃভাষা কি?		প্রকৃত উল্লেখ করুন
৬.২.২	মাতৃভাষা বাংলা না হলে অসুবিধ কি?		১□ লেখা যায়না ২□ বাচ্চাদের স্কুলে সমস্যা ৩□ সমাজে মিশতে সমস্যা ৪□ কোন সমস্যা নেই ৫□ অন্যান্য (উল্লেখ করুন)
৬.২.৩	চা বাগানের বাইরে যাওয়া হয়?		১□ সবসময় ২□ মাঝে-মধ্যে ৩□ কদাচিৎ ৪□ বাধ্য না হলে ৫□ না
৬.২.৪	কোন বাধা আছে?		১□ ভয়-সংকোচ ২□ ভাষার সমস্যা ৩□ পরিবারের আপত্তি ৪□ অসমতা ৫□ অবহেলা/হেনস্তা ৬□ ঠকায় ৭□ আদিবাসীদের কটাক্ষ করে
৬.২.৫	পরিবারে নারীদের মতামতের গুরুত্ব আছে?		১□ সবচেয়ে বেশী ২□ সমান-সমান ৩□ কম ৪□ কোন গুরুত্ব নেই

৬.২.৬	বাল্য বিবাহ আছে?		১□অহ-রহ ২□এটাই নিয়ম ৩□কমে যাচ্ছে ৪□নেই ৪□অন্যান্য
৬.২.৭	সামাজিক ও ধর্মীয় উৎসবে কোন বাধা আছে?		১□ সবসময় ২□ মাঝে-মধ্যে ৩□ কদাচিৎ ৪□ না
৬.২.৮	বাগানে পাত্রী আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৬.২.৯	(পাত্রী থাকলে) তার ধরন?		১□ সরকার অনুমোদিত ২□ অ-অনুমোদিত
৬.২.১০	পরিবারের সদস্যরা পাত্রীতে যায়?		১□পুরুষরা ২□যুবকরা ৩□নারী সদস্য ৪□সবাই ৫□বয়স্করা ৬□বাচ্চারাও
৬.২.১১	মাসে পাত্রীতে কয়টাকা খরচ হয়?		১□সব আয় ২□অর্ধেক আয় ৩□১/৪ ভাগ আয় ৪□পুরুষের সব আয় ৫□ কোন খরচ নাই ৬□অন্যান্য (নির্দিষ্ট করুন)
৬.২.১২	নারী নির্যাতন আছে?		১□ সবসময় ২□ মাঝে-মধ্যে ৩□ কদাচিৎ ৪□ না
৬.২.১৩	উত্তর হ্যাঁ হলে, কারন কি?		১□আয় নিয়ে ২□পাত্রী নিয়ে ৩□যৌতুক ৪□স্বভাব ৫□অন্যান্য
৬.৩	আয় ও ব্যয়ের হিসাব		
৬.৩.১	আপনার পরিবারের মাসিক আয় কত?		প্রকৃত পরিমাণ (টাকায়) :-
৬.৩.২	পরিবারের মাসিক ব্যয় কত টাকা?		প্রকৃত পরিমাণ (টাকায়) :-
৬.৩.৩	আয় ও ব্যয়ের মধ্যে কোন ঘাটতি আছে?		১□সবসময় ২□প্রায়ই ৩□কখনো-সখনো ৪□বাড়তি আয় ৫□ না
৬.৩.৪	(যদি ঘাটতি থাকে), কিভাবে পূরণ করেন?		১□ধার-কর্য ২□ঋণ ৩□দোকানে বাকি ৪□খরচ কমিয়ে ৫□পরিবারের অন্য সদস্যদের আর্থিক সহযোগিতায় ৬□ অন্যান্য
৬.৩.৫	কোন ঋণ আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৬.৩.৬	উত্তর হ্যাঁ হলে, কত টাকা ঋণ আছে?		প্রকৃত ঋণ টাকার অংকে লিখুন।
৬.৩.৬	কোথা থেকে ঋণ নিয়েছেন?		১□এনজিও ২□ব্যাংক ৩□আত্মীয় ৪□স্থানীয় কারবারি ৫□অন্যান্য
৬.৩.৭	কেন ঋণ নিয়েছেন?		১□সন্তানের শিক্ষার জন্য ২□চিকিৎসার জন্য ৩□বিয়ের জন্য ৪□মেয়ের বিয়ের জন্য ৫□স্বাবর/অস্বাবর সম্পদ ক্রয় ৬□খরচ মেটাতে ৭□অন্যান্য. .
৬.৩.৮	মাসের/সপ্তাহের শেষাংশে টাকা নাই, এমন হয়েছে কি?		১□সবসময় ২□প্রায়ই ৩□কখনো-সখনো ৪□কদাচিৎ ৫□কখনো না
৬.৩.৯	এরূপ হলে, কি করেন?		১□শুধু ভাত-আলুভর্তা খাই ২□সকালে নাস্তা বাদ দেই ৩□ ধার-কর্য ৪□ঋণ করি ৫□বাকিতে কিনি ৬□অন্যান্য . . .
৬.৩.১০	আপনি/আপনার সন্তানকে কি কখনো না খেয়ে বা কম খেয়ে থাকতে হয়েছে?		১□সবসময় ২□প্রায়ই ৩□কখনো-সখনো ৪□কদাচিৎ ৫□কখনো না
৬.৩.১১	ভবিষ্যতের জন্য কোন সঞ্চয় আছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৬.৩.১২	সঞ্চয় থাকলে তার পরিমাণ		

৬.৪	স্বাস্থ্য ও পুষ্টি সেবা		
৬.৪.১	গত ১ বছরে কোন অসুখে ভুগেছেন?		১□১ বার ২□২ বার ৩□৩ বার ৪□নিয়মিত ৫□না
৬.৪.২	অসুখের সময় যেভাবে চান সেভাবে চিকিৎসা নিতে পারেন?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না
৬.৪.৩	(যদি না পারেন), তাহলে কারণ কি?		১□টাকার অভাব ২□জানামশোনার অভাব ৩□গরীবের চিকিৎসা নেই ৪□অন্যান্য
৬.৪.৪	গত বছর চিকিৎসা বাবদ কত খরচ হয়েছে?		প্রকৃত খরচ টাকার অঙ্কে লিখুন
৬.৪.৫	সপ্তাহে কয়দিন মাছ/মাংস খান?		১□প্রতিদিন ২□১-২ দিন ৩□৩-৪ দিন ৪□৫-৬ দিন ৫□কখনো না
৬.৫	শিক্ষা বিষয়ক		
৬.৫.১	আপনার সন্তান কি স্কুলে যায়?		১□আদিবাসি স্কুলে ২□সরকারি স্কুলে ৩□বেসরকারী স্কুলে ৪□পড়ে না
৬.৫.২	স্কুলে যেতে কোন সমস্যা আছে?		১□ভিন্ন ভাষা ২□অবজ্ঞা/অবহেলা ৩□আদিবাসী ইস্যু ৪□অন্যান্য
৬.৫.৩	আপনার আয় কি সন্তানের শিক্ষার জন্য যথেষ্ট?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ কখনো-সখনো ৩□ না
৬.৫.৪	আর্থিক কারণে সন্তানকে স্কুল ছাড়তে হয়েছে?		১□ হ্যাঁ ২□ না

৭.০ বিভাগ- (ছ): আশা ও প্রত্যাশা

ক্র.নং	প্রশ্ন	উত্তর	কোড নম্বর সমূহ
৭.১	চা-শ্রমিক ইউনিয়নের বিষয়ে আপনার মতামত কি?		১□ইউনিয়ন দরকার নাই ২□যোগাযোগ বাড়তে হবে ৩□যোগ্য নেতৃত্ব ৪□শ্রম অধিকার আদায়ে কাজ করা ৫□সবসময় পাশে পাওয়া ৬□অন্যান্য
৭.২	বিরোধ নিষ্পত্তির বিষয়ে কোন পরামর্শ?		১□ইউনিয়নকে সক্রিয় হওয়া ২□ ইউনিয়নের দক্ষতা বাড়ানো ৩□ শিক্ষা দরকার ৪□ প্রশিক্ষণ প্রয়োজন ৫□ আইন জানা ৬□অন্যান্য(নির্দিষ্ট করুন)
৭.৩	ইউনিয়নে নারী নেতৃত্ব এর বিষয়ে আপনার প্রত্যাশা কি?		১□ সংখ্যা বাড়তে হবে ২□ দক্ষতা বাড়তে হবে ৩□ শিক্ষা দরকার ৪□ প্রশিক্ষণ প্রয়োজন ৫□ আইন জানা ৬□অন্যান্য (নির্দিষ্ট করুন)
৭.৪	নারী শ্রমিকদের সুরক্ষার বিষয়ে কোন পরামর্শ?		১□নীতি প্রয়োজন ২□কমিটি/কাঠামো দরকার ৩□সচেতন হতে হবে ৪□ শিক্ষা/প্রশিক্ষণ প্রয়োজন ৫□অন্যান্য (নির্দিষ্ট করুন)
৭.৫	পেশাগত স্বাস্থ্য ও নিরাপত্তা বাড়তে আপনার কোন পরামর্শ?		১□হাসপাতালের ব্যবস্থা করতে হবে ২□চিকিৎসক,নার্স, ওষধ দিতে হবে ৩□যথাযথ ক্ষতিপূরণ ৪□সঠিক পিপিই ৫□অন্যান্য
৭.৬	টয়লেট এবং পানির উৎস ও ব্যবহার বিষয়ে আপনার কোন পরামর্শ আছে?		১□টাকা বরাদ্দ ২□মালিককে করে দিতে হবে ৩□কর্মস্থলে আলাদা টয়লেটের ব্যবস্থা করা ৪□নিরাপদ পানি সরবরাহ ৫□অন্যান্য

৭.৭	সামাজিক সুরক্ষা বিষয়ে কোন পরামর্শ?		১ <input type="checkbox"/> জমিতে চাষাবাসের সুযোগ ২ <input type="checkbox"/> বসবাসের নিরাপত্তা ৩ <input type="checkbox"/> শিক্ষা সুবিধা ৪ <input type="checkbox"/> স্বাস্থ্য বিমা ৫ <input type="checkbox"/> পেনসন/গ্রাটুইটি ৬ <input type="checkbox"/> অন্যান্য
৭.৮	চাকরি নিরাপত্তা বিষয়ে কোন পরামর্শ		১ <input type="checkbox"/> চা-বাগানের জায়গায় লেবু ও রাবার বাগানের চর্চা বন্ধ করতে হবে ২ <input type="checkbox"/> এ বিষয়ে নীতি প্রণয়ন করতে হবে ৩ <input type="checkbox"/> অন্যান্য

জরীপে অংশ নেয়ার জন্য আপনাকে ধন্যবাদ

ANNEX V:

TRANSCRIPT: CONSULTATION WITH THE CEC

Purpose of the project:

The project's objective is to develop the leadership of the female tea workers as far as Union is the authority so the Union will be engaged in related development activities. There are two types of authority for female tea workers: CHA SRAMIK UNION and National Trade Unions (at the national level). The Cha Sramik Union negotiates but the government has several committees to determine worker's policies and the owners have an employers federation. The employer's federations members are mainly various ministries of the government and the national labor unions. However, the committee is Labour Law Review Committee where Two members are from national labor unions, the government, and there, are influencers members.

So, the project we are going to do is empowering the female workers of the tea sector through the union. However, we have set some activities in two ways:

- Leadership development/ empowering female workers through leadership
- Collective bargaining

We will provide 16 training sessions on these two activities and we can provide training about 400 female workers in 4 valleys. After the situation analysis, we will be back to Balishira and Monozila and will call, and let the leader or the authority who works with tea labor know about our activities. So these are the local activities and we will also work on the national level also by meeting with them and preparing the position paper. Besides, we will call all the electronic media to inform them about the tea laborers and female tea laborers.

We actually could not empower our women or I can say the women's leadership could not take its position here. We have to work on it and firstly we need to make leadership among women workers; secondly, raising awareness among tea gardens female workers. Besides, the death rate of pregnant mothers is also increasing here and there is a lack of menstrual hygiene between them. As a result, most of them suffers from deadly disease like cancer and some of them die at very young age. So, in that case, we not only need to be aware of menstrual hygiene but also need to provide them with the necessary hygiene products like sanitary napkins. Emphasizing only women leadership is not viable unless they are not aware of their safety. There should be a

grouping among female workers so that they can share their issues easily. Because if she does not feel comfortable to share her issues to trade union leader then it is obvious that she won't open up to you. Another matter is the women from the tea garden do not travel alone. For example, although I want to my daughter does not want to go to Dhaka alone. So, in that case, we need to give such support to them so that they can empower themselves outside their comfort zone. I think Bangladesh provides enough security so if BILS takes care of these issues it won't take time to reach our target of empowering women.

Unions 'role/ perspective' from the tea pluckers

The symbol pluckers of the tea garden (the female workers) have very vague knowledge about the Union. Are we able to deliver the message of the union or able to bring the leadership qualities among them or are we able to give training at the root level? So at the field level is it possible to make it happen or not? Whenever we are working on the section, there are groups of 50 or 100 female workers and if I target 50 from a group, these 50 people will eventually share with other 100 female workers. I was in a workshop and got to know about it from there. From 100 people to it will spread another 300 female workers. So, the root level will be spread. However, I think if we can bring a solution here then it is maybe possible to bring forward to the female workers at tea gardens.

Skills and Competencies

Many of female workers have gained leadership ability but they can not raise their voices on their issues or they can not identify their problems. So, you can work in this area. However, two this can be done for them-

- Training for raising awareness
- Training on leadership (how they should talk, how they should lead is included here)

Outside the Unions, we do not have a chance to work. When we will give training in the valley you will select those who will attend the batch where we will provide training on leadership and raising awareness about their rights.

There can be two issues, one is inside the tea garden issues related to the women, another one is, wherever she is living that place related issues. Who will work on these issues? The male or the female representative should be working more on this? If the females need to work more think that we have brought 6 for every panchayat committee, are they really thinking about these

issues? If they can what are their strengths, and weaknesses? The support they should get from the valley committee or the Panchayat committee or the Central Union- is there any rules? What are their strengths, weakness, opportunity, and threats?

Did you gave any training to the selected women?

We did not give training properly but whoever was selected they get a book of guidelines (agreements with the owners) which is collective bargaining agreement and in every garden we provide ten of them their responsibility is to accomplish it and if they do not able to accomplish it then we intervene there.

Through Union Valley is actually working as a branch because without the valley there is no acquaintance. Here somewhere people are thinking about why they needed the Union as we have given separate offices for the valleys and everything is going smoothly with the valley as far as without the union. So , BILS has gone to the Valley through Union and when you surveyed the jury secretary called me but said that BILS is working with them even though I told him that BILS is working through the Union. So, now you can guess that there is an understanding gap. According to V77 Valley is not included in the BCSU, the committee with the 30 members. For example, if I am with the Chittagong Valley I should not think that BILS is only working with me rather I should consider it, I am the branch(CTG Valley) of the BCSU. As we have a committee with 30 members, if we do not use Valley word then you can identify it as a member of the BCSU and these 8 are not the members of the central committee, mainly the Union actually run by the 30 members. I have got this message that is why I am talking about it.

According to the labor law, Trade Union consisted of (20,25,30 bishisto committee) 35 min 34 sec. In our country, the head office of the Union in Bangladesh is at Srimangal and the members are from Chittagong to Sylhet. To benefit them we made 7 valleys to 7 branches from the headquarters but mainly committee with 30 members is the central committee. We should get notified centrally for example, they will send letters from the central and if they will let me know then I can tell them clearly.

The union will provide a letter where they will notify the BILS that they are conducting a program on this date and help out BILS through the people who get nominated. They are already getting out of control.

Status/level of Labor rights and women's rights

- There are lots of educated women who are also plucking tea. In that case, they are also deprived of their rights because of the failings of leadership. So, female workers are being deprived.
- They record less weight in the tea section and pay them less.
- Lack of hygiene and sanitation. If the leaders push them then sometimes they raise their voices for these issues otherwise they do not.
- They are not well aware of their own rights
- There are no considerations for pregnant workers. They do not get proper maternity leave during pregnancy and even after the delivery. They only get 4 months of maternity leave. Hence, the mothers usually attend the garden for 8 months means they take 2 months' leave before the delivery and take 2 months' leave after the delivery for the baby's wellbeing. I think mothers take this risk of working till 8 months only for the baby's protection. But eventually, by taking this risk, the mother also becomes weak.
- Lack of sanitation and menstrual hygiene
- Presence of harassment, violence
- Lack of education, knowledge, and skills
- Malnutrition
- Shelters are not safe enough

Status/level of disputes and their settlement at the community level (Valley/Panchayet)

Through this discussion, you may have seen that there are lots of issues and as far as I have visited 9/10 tea gardens initially and noticed that if there are 300 laborers then 200 of them are female. So regarding everything you have considered that the panchayat committee needs women's leadership. This is one of your biggest achievements and according to the last update the 6 women came into leadership and they came actually to intervene on these issues immediately. Do you think that they can solve these issues properly?

Why they can not?

- Because they are not well aware of their rights. They do not even know what is their role or what are their responsibilities. This is the reason they should be trained because when they are clear about their roles, and responsibilities they can let the other laborers know.

- Another reason is lack of training. If it is possible to give training to the panchayat committee members like NGOs. Then it can be fruitful as training will help to develop their leadership role. The Union will give this training and the training should be on the capacity build-up.
- Lack of cooperation from the male members of the panchayat committee.

You have been to CHA SROMIK UNION, what do you think- for the previous 5 years, they are serving as leaders. so what are their good qualities?

The good thing is they do know nothing. Their academic knowledge is very poor. Another good thing is they are early risers, proactive, and very sincere about their family.

In case of failure in leadership, are the valley committee or the CHA SROMIK UNION playing any role?

Cha Sromik Union has all the responsibilities, and liabilities.

In Bangladesh, the responsibility of the Cha Sromik Union is to set an agreement with the owner and owners are very influential as well they have also issues.

CHA SROMIK UNION is one of the Union of the subcontinent and the whole world respectfully knows about it. So now if you want to work for women then what types of activities you should do or ya have done or what types of activities you haven't done for them but you should have? As CHA SROMIK UNION, what are your weaknesses, lackings or to progress what do you need most?

- In CHA SROMIK UNION, in the case of male-led leadership, there is a lack of social security at least in land rights. (BHUMI ODHIKAR)
- But the good point is democracy has been established here and the good thing about us is that we value women from the very beginning. We cared about them that is why we have given them space for them in the PANCHAYET committee so that they can election which was not available before.
- Another point is we are talking about women in various forums. As a result, at least a minimum group of women are coming out.

On the other hand, our weaknesses are-

- So far we haven't been able to build up the bargaining capacity of women because of the shortage of financial assistance as well as lack of capacity. Here, the laborers give us

15laks of a protractor and before the election, this amount kept deposits in one place and all the expenses have been borne for the organization from there. After the election, we made 7 valleys where we give them back 7 and half taka of 15 taka monthly to manage his office and he will spend it for its maintenance. So, Unions do not have enough scope to spend on workshops, capacity building programs and eventually we are doing it with the support of BILS, and OXFAM. However, this is one of our weaknesses that we can not provide the supports they needed.

Is there any shortage/lack of competencies (abilities) and political divisions?

As we have lackings of bargaining capacity so we are less proficient on this and 5 or 10 people are only good at it.

Yes, there are political divisions and it has been influential. We could have gone further but because of the political divisions this has been an obstacle to our progress. We the CHA SROMIK never were divided just because of political interference we have been divided since 2005. For example, in this district whoever the MP, Minister is under my zone he will be in charge of the Trade union. Whatever anyone is more capable or active if he is not in my zone then I will not count it. So this is the issue. This is why we are being hindered by political interference and the overall image of the union is also being tarnished.

Do You have any offices for Panachayet Committee like the Valley Committee or the CSUB Committee?

No, but we arranged an office for the Valley Committee by collective bargaining with the owners and they have agreed on it.

In the previous two years, what are your major achievements related to the women laborer? Was there any segment on women CS in the past two years?

The major achievement I think we have brought a day off for them, and now they can take a day off with the payment. Basic end 1 hour 2min 4 sec to 29second. Another achievement is today in BCSU, even if I want to I can not sit here forever. By-election whoever they want to as a representative only he will be selected. Before a laborer got 20 to 25 thousand taka but now after retiring they get 4 to 6 lakh taka.

As per the last election in 2018 was there any commitment to these activities? Did you achieve those commitments? If not what are the failures?

Yes.

Not yet. Our first commitment was about the land which we could not take it. We could not even take the gratuity, land, casual leave (we could not make the maternity leave 6 months long).

Are there any achievements of women laborers?

For every 40 women there is 1 shota 1h 4min 57sec for the female laborers. Although it hasn't been executed but officially it has been approved. So, this is one of the biggest achievements.

What are the reasons behind these failures?

There are two reasons. Firstly, the collective bargaining agreement. Usually, our signing is on 21-22 and the last one it held on 19-20, although it is held every 2 years but the last one took 4 years gap because of the time linker.

The owners actually follow a strategy for excuses. Whenever they sit for a meeting they arranged it in Dhaka and by 11/11.30 am when we reach there they never give us more than one and a half to two hours. And this meeting does not have any fixed schedule they usually provide a possible date for the meeting and sometimes they even change it. So maximum time we actually try to know the schedule each time. Our agreement is about 8 to 10 pages where we have 120 points. But the meeting for the agreement is always held for only one and a half hours which is not enough. In that meeting, there is no presence of the government representative. They only call this meeting just to show and sometimes they call for a meeting within 3/2 or within one month. Among 30 members we have nine females, they do attend the meeting by rotation and this rotation is also applicable for the males. About yesterday's meeting, there was no female because we left for Dhaka at 4 am and at that time any women could not join us. We usually pick 7 from the 7 valleys and rest of the three in total we 10 members have to attend the meeting and as far this process has been continued by rotation so we haven't given thought on it that when we pick the seven valleys, is there any female members will attend or not and there are also many hindrances of it like any husband won't allow his wife to travel alone with other 6 male members as well they won't give permission his wife to travel at 4 am. So the message needs clear out here as I have told you before that, women need to come outside or forward.

Yesterday we sit with the panchayat committee, and valley committee and present there (all the women members) they were telling us that after the election they (the leaders of the union) do not talk about us, even we do not know when the meeting held they do not let us know. They do not tell us about our activities or what should we do. IS it right?

In the center meeting, there is an open floor for the women, we ask them if they want to talk about any issues or not but they do not raise their voices they can not talk about themselves. BILS has given training, and workshops many times. For example, BILS has arranged a workshop targeting 25, we send letters to Panchayet that 3 members will participate at the workshop and one will be a woman. But if the panchayet committee can not attend with the female member then they can give a written complaint to the union.

It is not about filing a complaint. You may have sent a letter to them but the message actually could not get to them so the chain is inadequate.

Another matter is there is a lack of accountability at every level and if the initiatives or commitments I have taken are not implemented, there is no authority to check it.

What is your opinion about government monitoring?

They do monitor but I do not think that is fruitful for us, it's kind of just to show. For example, they wanted to visit a factory and they could not find a restroom but for that, he did not take any initiative. They only visit and provide a monthly report on this.

In the meeting, we told them about it that these matters should be and you need to participate actively in case of monitoring.

Do you have any opinion on BILS?

I won't tell BILS have lackings but I want to recommend, In case of conducting any program they should conduct it through the CHA SRAMIK UNION.

BILS can conduct training on their rights, legal protection, bargaining capacity, and awareness about child abuse. Women do not get enough time for leadership they work all day long inside and outside the house. So, the male union members also should keep in mind that all household chores can not be given to women only. However, these things need to be considered.

ANNEX VI:

Transcript: Consultation with the PEC

So, the Panchayat committee is the representative of the laborers, and the selection of the committee members is also made by voting. We have written a document about our responsibilities. During election time, they provide a document where the responsibilities are described. In the document, it has been told that to maintain unity within the works, as per the worker's needs prove to them the required things. Our election also happens in group form and it is held under two or three political banners.

No, we do not have any policy as far as I know. When there is the election for the panchayat committee in each garden it has been provided that 3min 58 sec

In our Srimangals Union staff manager, here we have been charged 15taka per month and we sent them by the office. After that, if we think we are not able to do it then we take assistance of them to solve the issue. When managers do not allow us then we let them know about our issues.

Education

Person 1: No formal education, only can do 'tipshoi'. I joined in 2010 and it's been 13 years since I have been working here.

Person 2: class 4. I have been working here for 12 years and when I joined here I was 20 years old

Person 3: S.S.C. I joined the garden in 2001. I was about 12 years old

Person 4: no education. I joined in 1991 and I was maybe 17/18 years old then.

Person 5: Class 8: I joined in 2002. I was maybe 25/26 years old

Person 6: Class 7. I have been working here for 30 years

They chose us because they thought we are going to work for them, they believed in us, and among 387 they selected us as a leader. We are 15 leaders. They selected us because they believed we can help out the laborers in the garden, and they can let us know about the cha sromiks problem without any hesitation

The people cared (maya koreche) about us because we can get help from the manager. We visit every house and tell them about other panchayats that they could not perform well but if we get nominated we will perform well, for example, currently, there is no medicine in the hospital, medical; we will arrange about it, and we will arrange their house building, etc. by saying these we try to conscience them. We have not got any training even after the election. There is no legal or written document with the valley office or the management about how we are going to work. Everything is oral, maybe a document can come to us where we get to know what owe then depending on that we talk here. We have a secretary and he let us know what we need to discuss about it, if 15 members can not make it then it has to be done by 4 or 5. We have also a network with other gardens and the panchayat committee has contacts with the others if there's necessary they contact each other.

For the past 6 months, we have done as a panchayat committee-

For example, in our garden if a boy does studies.....14min 35 sec-15min 01 sec. We recruited 2 staff from the garden, we gave one 'deshar', one 'monthly shordar', (daily basis)shordar, and one shordarni (female). We have bargained for house building. Even if it's rainy or sunny we have always worked. We suffer a lot because of house building. We bargained for a period with Dada and after that gave us 20 pillar houses. Although the pillars house has not been finished yet. There are only 3 carpenters they finish one by one. Among 387 about 200 house has been made up but 187 are still left. Some of them live in their brother's house and from there they come to work. Our house-building crisis is actually since 2011/ 2012. Earlier we used to have 'choner ghor', everything has dilapidated.

For the past 5 years, we have been part of the panchayat committee. Elections are held every 3 years but the last election happened in 2018. When the government will arrange it through Union the next election will happen at that time.

For the past 5 years we accomplished such as we got 200 houses, we gave 5 tube wells, 5 sanitary latrines, we gave 5000 taka grants(Cha sromiker jibon man Unnayan) to 52 people where last year we gave it to 168 people from the Department of Social Services (Shomajsheba Odhidptor).

Our biggest failure is here in the hospital, there is no other medicine than paracetamol, there is no good doctor, and no ambulance for the emergency. Another failure is we could not make a

proper arrangement for the boshot-vita, we wanted boshot vita for 18 families to sir but among them, we only could give it to 3 families, and we could not give it to the rest of the 15 families. We are discussing it with the sir there's a possibility of getting it in recent times. If our MD or board manager does not give us any orders we can not do it. There is no chance that we can discuss this with the chairman of the garden, everything depends on the manager. For example, when we got permission from Dada then we come to talk with you. If we do not take his permission they will not give us today's attendance.

Housebuilding, medicine, drinking water, sanitary latrine, ration from the garden, payment, working instrument (da), women gets chopi 25min 46sec for plucking leaves, these are our rights as a worker. We get to know about these rights from the document that came from the Srimongol. Our representatives for example Ratan, Rambhojon, Komol, Mita, we get these papers from them. In our garden, there is a student degree holder but there is no scope to work outside because we do not have money. We can not afford 7/10 lakh taka for taking a job outside the garden. We do not have our own land. Everything is handled by the Union leaders, they let us know everything and they are the life saviors.

If someone has issues in the garden then I go to her to talk about the issue if I can not do it alone, along with me another women member goes with me. If there is something serious issue then we talk to the manager. For example, if someone is having a headache or stomach pain or she can not pluck they tell me about their issues, I asked boro babu then to manager.

Here we don't do regular meetings for the panchayat committee. For example, there are two or three of the five villages. So, 10 or 15 people from the five villages. If there is an accident or any fight in any village then the villagers contact us and after that, we give a solution to them. In case we can not give a solution then we tell the staff manager to solve the issue.

So, the panchayat committee monitors the living issues as well as the garden issues. For monitoring these issues they do not provide any training or any rules or any written document, even there is no meeting for it.

We try to maintain peace in the garden, even if there is a fight between the two families we try to solve it so that there is no chaos. If it is not possible to do it by us then we have Union member and manager or the chairman they solves it. For example, if there is a fight between two families or a random fight on the road so in that case, they let the closest person know about it, if he can

not finish or manage to solve it then he let the panchayat committee know about the issue willingly but he does not inform us as a panchayat committee mandatory. We do not have any panchayat committee office. We do everything through a verbal agreement. There used to be meetings for the panchayat committee but now these are not followed strictly because we have seen when we go to the manager for a purpose many times but it didn't work that way so after a certain period the process ultimately loosens up.

We do everything jointly, the 6 female members do not take any decisions or do not lead individually, among the 15 members they are also included. So all the decisions are taken jointly. We do not do anything without everyone's consent on a matter. In the garden, if there's any problem they let us know first. For example, if anyone gets 20 tk less payment and they let us know at first we will discuss it with 3 or 4 members to know the reason, and if it's a big issue then all the 15 members will discuss it. Here 200 female workers pluck and if they face any problem or get sick we give her any car to go for medical and as here we do not have many medicines we will go to the boro manager and he will tell us to give her 4/5000 taka for the treatment and he will pay us later.

Among 300 workers 218 are female laborers and when they work there they walk for almost 1 hour to go there. There is no toilet and the working time is 9 am to 6 pm. If there's an urgency of the toilet they have to do it in the open place. We have told them about the drinking water but they only gave promises of settling it by today or tomorrow. Eventually, they never arrange for it. For 387 families there are not 387 boshot vita. For example, in one yard we the two or three brothers work but we do not have individual boshot vita. The company gave only 8/16 space for one as there is no way to buy land or other option we manage anyhow in that space and live there. We have job security in the tea garden but if do something very serious then there's a possibility of losing jobs. There is no violence here but our main problem is house building, water, latrine, and medicine. There is no arrangement of sitting with the management once a month, as a leader there is no extra formal responsibilities as everyone gets paid the same amount so there is no scope to look after the laborers.

Our management is one of our major weaknesses or lackings because the management is not giving us the proper rights that we deserve. They only said they will give us today or tomorrow but we never gets it. For example, they (management) tells that not only they give us attendance but also they give us medicines, house, electricity bills, etc but eventually they only give 500 at

most. Last time they showed the prime minister a written document that they provide us 400 plus taka but we actually get less because they deduct an amount for the reshon, rent, and latrine charge. If two persons work from my family if I get a house then why not my wife? Husband and wife both get a house but they only give one even, they charged from both for rent. They only show a large amount that they give us but eventually, they give us a small portion. When we recruit the manager (Babu) he used to be ours but after recruiting he is with the management.

Our strength is that 387 workers hear us whatever we say they follow our instructions, if we say all activities will be closed in the garden then they won't come for it, if we say we will call for a protest then they all will join. Our weaknesses are those that we could not work for them where they needed us. We do not face any threats.

Our expectation is that our children can work here after studying in the garden, our children get the job, and may they be well financially. Our children are studying so hard but can not get a job in the garden. We do not have much access outside the garden. We made this garden with our children so we want them to get a job here. However, there are no proper medical services and pregnant women also get only four months of maternity leave these needs to be taken care of.