Annual Report
2013

Sushasoner Jonny Procharavizan-SUPRO
SUPRO, a national network of grassroots civil society organisations, has been engaged in campaign and advocacy since 2000 to ensure social and economic justice, particularly for the deprived and marginalised communities. Through its expansive and extensive efforts, this network along with its members has catalysed significant changes in the country’s public policy.

The micro and macro policy and practice changes that our engagement helped bring about relates to the people’s right to education, food security, gender equality and information. Much of our proactive efforts is devoted to linking local rights campaigns to global civil society movement on aid, trade and climate justice. And still we have to walk further towards establishing a world we want, where all human rights are realised. I believe that the human rights based approach to development would provide capacity to marginalised groups to break free the vicious cycle of poverty, injustices and gender discrimination.

I am pleased to present our annual report of 2013, which reflects our effort of last one year to achieve pro-poor policy changes through collective actions and mobilisation. The report looks back to several significant accomplishments during the year and assesses their impact on issues and policies, affecting the poor and the marginalised communities.

The Annual Report 2013 also shares with you the challenges and learnings in the context of our work. The publication will present financial and non-financial information in one inclusive report. I hope it will provoke some thoughts on needed actions which we should take up and carry on. We would sincerely appreciate suggestions and comments that will help us improve our performance as a rights-based campaign organisation.

I would like to express my gratitude to all rights defenders for their participation, support and solidarity with our action, which greatly contributed to moving forward our campaign. My sincere thanks go to our National Council members, district committees, secretariat staff, civil society leaders and development partners, whose continuous support has made our every action possible.

Mustafizur Rahman Khan
Chairperson

SUPRO ANNUAL REPORT 2013

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Mustafizur Rahman Khan
Chairperson
Treasurer

Message from Treasurer

Mozibur Rahman

of our funding and strategic partners especially Oxfam. I also sincerely acknowledge the generous support and guidance and demand for stronger pro-poor policies and for transparency, believe our concerted effort will continue to strengthen the voice implementation of the organisation’s all action plans. I firmly

Thanks to all concerned for the successful and timely will play vital role in shaping our strategy and path.

Honesty and equity are the motto of SUPRO and increasing public cooperation of all concerned.

Despite many challenges, SUPRO has marked significant success in creating mass awareness especially on the issue of tax justice and decentralised budgetary process through its campaign programmes in 2013. We have been successful in throwing the issue of participatory budget into the public discourse domain, making it one of the central public policy agenda. Still we continue our effort to gear up the momentum of the issue, while also campaigning for establishing a pro-poor tax system.

SUPRO has also successfully catalysed a number of institutional and policy reforms at the national and local level. Through our activism we further link the local movement to the regional and global civil society movement.

It has been our great pleasure that two projects that we are implementing, one ‘Promoting Pro-Poor Policy Reforms and Public Services for All’ and the other ‘Promoting Tax Justice in Bangladesh’ have been able to bring attention of the policy makers, duty bearers, civil society organisations, development partners, media personnel, academia, activists insisting our network members, National Council Members, Executive Board members, District Campaign Committee(s), District Campaign Facilitator(s) and Secretariat Team for their outstanding support and contribution during the implementation of the activities of the 5-year strategic plan. I convey my sincere thanks and gratitude to all concerned policymakers, duty bearers, civil society organisations, development partners, media personnel, academia, activists insisting our network members.

Mojitul Rahman
Treasurer
Executive Summary

SUPRO envisions a democratic society that upholds the principles of universal human rights and adheres to the values of equity and justice. Sushashoner Jonny Procharavizan—SUPRO is a network of grassroots non-governmental as well as civil society organisations of Bangladesh. SUPRO envisions a democratic society that upholds the principles of universal human rights and adheres to the values of equity and justice. Its interventions are focused on economic, social and cultural rights of the people. It critically analyzes state and global development policies and other related instruments to examine their people centeredness and undertakes advocacy and campaign programmes for effecting changes in policy and practice and other related instruments to examine their people centeredness and undertakes advocacy and campaign programmes for effecting changes in policy and practice.

SUPRO envisions a truly democratic society based on human rights principles that adhere to equity and justice for all.

Mission Statement
SUPRO is committed to facilitate civil society organisations and citizen actors for collective actions to promote economic, social, cultural, political and environmental rights as well as to establish an accountable and transparent governance system at all levels.

Strategic Objectives
1. Strengthening the network of grassroots organisations and building their capacity to faithfully demand people’s right to development
2. Undertaking advocacy and mobilisation initiatives to raise the voice of the grassroots and facilitate micro-macro linkage to influence policy change for the poor and marginalised
3. Building critical awareness among the stakeholders to promote human rights and participatory governance to attain a more inclusive and egalitarian society
4. Developing alternative intellectual and policy discourse, challenging existing neo-liberal orthodoxy and the ideas, policies and programmes resulting from it
5. Building broader alliances of civil society organisations and building their capacity to fruitfully demand people’s right to development

Priority Areas
• Governance, human rights and right to information
• Ensuring essential services for all
• Food sovereignty, climate justice and rural livelihood
• Aid, debt, trade and role of IFIs
• Building capacities and perspectives of the grassroots NGOs

Strengths of SUPRO
• Non-partisan image
• Grassroots linkage and activism
• High level of mobilisation capacity
• Publications and information, education and communication (IEC) materials
• Good linkage with policy leaders
• Good media coverage
• Regional and international linkage and networking

Core Values
SUPRO is committed to values of equity, justice, democracy, participation and accountability.

Target Audience
NGO and CSO Leaders
• Policymakers and political leaders
• Government officials

Topic Area
• Media professionals
• Women and children
• Students and youths
• Grassroots people
• Disadvantaged people
Organisational structure

National Council: SUPRO’s supreme body is the National Council (NC), which is composed of 24 members, of whom 14 are trusty board and founder members. The NC provides strategic guideline and direction to the whole networks and the Executive Board.

Executive Board: The Executive Board (EB) comprises nine members elected by the National Council for a 3-year period. EB oversees operations and policy direction through the secretariat team. EB has five portfolios: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, General Secretary, Treasurer and Member.

District Campaign Committee: SUPRO District Campaign Committee, DCC in short, is formed with the representation of 15 network members at the respective district. DCC is responsible for the implementation of all the campaigns at district level coordinated by the District Secretary, and with technical support from the SUPRO Secretariat.

Secretariat Team: The secretariat team, led by the organisation Director, is based in SUPRO head office in Dhaka. This team facilitates all the programmes and activities of the organisation at the national level under the guidance of the Executive Board. It also coordinates all the networking activities at the grassroots and provides technical support and guidance to the District Campaign Committees.

Business meeting: The organisation currently follows and practices five kinds of business meetings at different tiers: (i) national convention; (ii) annual general meeting; (iii) National Council meeting; (iv) Executive Board meeting; and (v) District Campaign Committee meeting. The national convention is held every two years attended by the district campaign leaders. The Convention provides policy directions for the annual general meeting and National Council meeting, attended by the NC members. The NC meeting is held twice a year while the Executive Board meeting is held four times a year.

Working Location

SUPRO with its national secretariat in Dhaka has expanded its activities to 45 districts of the country. It has reached to geographical pockets of poverty, such as low land in the greater Sylhet and other regions known as haor and baor, hill tracts, charlands, indigenous peoples’ areas and coastal belt. Following are the division-based spread of the network.

**Major Success in 2013: At a glance**

A total of 363 representatives (228 males, 125 females) from local government institutions from 11 districts have been trained and sensitised on participatory and descentralised budget formulation. Many of them have been playing affirmative role to include community participation in preparation of their local budget and supporting SUPRO’s campaign works.

Grassroots voice and pro-poor concerns regarding essential services delivery in primary education and health were brought to the attention of policymakers and duty bearers at the sub-national and national level through community research by using social audit tool.

A baseline survey was carried out on tax, tax gap analysis and tax system in Bangladesh, which is the first of its kind in Bangladesh and its report was published.

Jointly, newspaper brought out positive results by publishing 244 articles in the local newspapers in all the 45 districts of SUPRO’s working areas focussing public awareness on decentralisation of budget and essential public services in particular in health and education.

The combined pre and post budget advocacy at SUPRO’s 45 districts including national level has resulted effective dialogue among grassroot people, civil society organizations, duty bearers and policy makers in bridging grassroots concerns and aspiration in formulation of national budget.

Public hearings on the findings of tax survey at 40 districts created huge momentum for continuous dialogue and campaign for public awareness and policy reformulation in order to establish fair tax system in Bangladesh.
I. Governance, human rights and right to information

Establishing decentralised and strong local government system is prerequisite to the institutionalisation of democracy and good governance. In Bangladesh, the functions of the local government institutions lack clear definitions; functionaries are not sufficient in number, shortage of fund plague implementation of activities while the LGI functionaries lack autonomy in local-level planning and implementation.

On the other side, SUPRO wants to contribute to creating an informed citizenry, which is requisite to an accountable and transparent system of governance.

A. Campaign for participatory budget and governance accountability

SUPRO, in 2003, launched its campaign for decentralisation of budget to ensure accountability in the process of budget formulation. As part of the campaign, the demand was raised for separate budget for each district through consultation with the grassroots people, elected representatives and others concerned.

On the other hand, training and workshops have been organised for capacity building of the representatives of local government bodies, NGOs and CSOs and others on budget analysis, making recommendations and pushing their demands.

The government introduced district budget in 2013 through formulating budget for Tangail, following which SUPRO conducted an action research that showed that the budget was done in a top-down approach without consulting the grassroots.

Hence, SUPRO’s objectives under this theme are to do campaign and advocacy for:

- Making local government system more effective
- Enhancing capacity of the local government representatives and staff to ensure more responsive governance and public services
- Strengthening the capacity of the poor and marginalised to raise their voice and engage to push their demand of a better responsive local government

Workshops with local government representatives

SUPRO organised 11 workshops in 11 districts under this activity mainly with two objectives: One, to sensitise the elected representatives of the union parishads, municipalities and upazila parishads about ensuring grassroots participation in formulating the budget of these local government bodies, a provision clearly articulated in their manuals. The other objective is to build capacity of the LG representatives to lobby with the government for formulating district budget through proper consultation with the grassroots and LG bodies.

A total of 353 (228 male and 125 female) LG representatives, including municipality mayors and councilors, upazila parishad chairmen, UP chairmen and members, participated in the events. Following these workshops, the local government representatives at various forums and meetings formally and informally pursued with the policy leaders and bears the demand of decentralisation of budget involving the grassroots.

Action research on district budget preparation

SUPRO did an action research in Tangail on the implementation of an action plan for preparation of district budget. After the declaration of the district budget by the finance minister, SUPRO Tangail district committee organised a special campaign on it. As part of it, series of events including press conferences, consultation meetings on the concept of district budget, pre-budget discussions and sessions to draw demands and recommendations on the forthcoming national budget were held. The consultation meetings were organised in four tiers: Union, upazilla, municipality and district.

SUPRO Coordinator Kazi Shafiqur Rahman, Tangail district secretary Monju Rani Pramanik and Tangail committee president Khandokar Nazimuddin, facilitated these meetings where local people raised their demands for the forthcoming 2013-14 budget.

Pre-budget discussions at grassroots and national level

Keeping the budget of fy2012-13 in view, SUPRO initiated a series of pre-budget discussions in all the 45 districts of its working area for collecting demands from the grassroot people and share it with the policymakers. A national level discussion followed the local level events.

The grassroots events were attended by 2,237 people (Male-1682, Female- 615) that included lawmakers, representatives, women, students, journalists, government officials, farmers, workers, CSOs and grassroots organisations participated in these meetings.

Of these campaign events the press conference SUPRO organised on April 26, 2013 at Tangail Press Club is worth mentioning. A concept paper on the campaign was presented at the event. SUPRO Chairperson, among others, attended the press conference.

Workshop with LGI representatives in Chapainawabganj

Pre-Budget discussion at National Level

Urban Rottno as the part of Action Research in Tangail
local government representatives, civil society representatives, journalists, SUPRO network members. The demands raised in these meetings were sent to the Ministry of Finance through the deputy commissioners.

The apex event of the pre-budget discussions was a national seminar held on May 11, 2013. A synthesis of the demands and recommendations derived at the local level discussion was put forward while highlighting the central demand of ensuring pro-poor and participatory district budget through structural reforms.

The national pre-budget discussion raised the following demands:
- Carry out structural reforms to ensure district budget through participatory way
- Increase allocation in essential services, allocate at least 20 per cent of total budget in education and 10 per cent in health
- Stop privatisation of health and education sectors
- Continue subsidy in agriculture and fuel, ensuring equitable distribution of subsidy to marginal farmers
- Ensure special allocation in the national budget for marginalised and disadvantaged groups and areas
- Ensure transparency and accountability of Social Safety Net programme

Post-budget discussion at grassroots and national level.
Following declaration of the 2013-14 national budget, the same way of pre-budget discussion SUPRO organized 45 discussion meetings at its’ 45 working districts with a view to appraise the reflection of people’s demands in the budget, 1842 people (Male-1342, Female- 500) including Members of Parliament-MPs, Government officials, researcher, teachers, students, local government representatives, journalists, civil society representatives and representatives of likeminded NGOs, SUPRO networking members and mass people actively participated and raised their demands again which were not added on the declared budget to be considered those in national budget. Participants in these meetings analysed how much of their demands and expectations was or was not reflected in the national budget.

The focus of the national level post-budget seminar was to analyse the extent to which the national budget reflected the demands and needs of the poor and where it failed to do so. A summary of demands that were put forward during the pre-budget discussions but not reflected in the national budget of 2012-13 were sent to the finance ministry:
- Ensure participatory and decentralised budget process
- Formulate a pragmatic budget and ensure its proper implementation
- Allocate more budget for essential services, including education, health, agriculture and social safety net programmes
- Increase direct tax base and reduce indirect tax base such as VAT

With a view to use the media to sensitize the policymakers, policy implementers and local people about the importance of decentralising of budget process, SUPRO awarded fellowships to journalists of local print media at district level. Under the fellowships 244 reports were published on the quality and extent of essential government services especially in education and health. The reports also helped make public aware of the activities of SUPRO in this regard.

Lobby meeting with lawmakers
Parliamentarians, one of the key role players in budgetary process, are important stakeholders in SUPRO’s campaign for pro-poor budget, which it started in 2003. Lawmakers, whenever invited, actively participated in the consultations, roundtables, lobby meetings and other events SUPRO has organised to push its agenda.
Highlights: Programme and Achievements

B. Campaign for Promoting Tax Justice in Bangladesh

VAT and different types of direct taxes are the important sources of a country for internally mobilising resources. Bangladesh’s tax system, like many other developing countries, is yet to be optimised to collect highest tax revenue while not taxing the ability of the poor on one hand and establishing strong monitoring over the tax evaders on the other. According to experts, Bangladesh has still far to go in this regard. The tax justice campaign, in which SUPRO is the pioneer in Bangladesh, aims at raising the voice of the citizen actors, civil society and the public to add pace to the government’s effort to get this tax system right. Through series of seminars, grassroots consultations, lobby with the policymakers the campaign also intends to focus on the existing gaps in the tax system and put forward recommendations for amending them. SUPRO and its partners and allies firmly believe that the joint effort between the government and the civil society Bangladesh will soon be able to establish an equitable, transparent, better accountable and efficient tax system that will fulfil the aspiration of the slogan ‘My tax for our welfare’. To promote tax justice campaign in the country SUPRO in this year undertook a pilot project ‘Promoting Tax Justice in Bangladesh’ with support from Oxfam. A baseline survey has been carried out under the project. Later on, public hearings were carried out to share the findings of the survey and record feedback on them.

Baseline survey on Tax, Tax Gap Analysis and Tax System in Bangladesh

Tax is the link between state and citizen and tax revenues are the lifeline of social contract. Taxation has profoundly beneficial effects in fostering better and more accountable government. Furthermore, it is a more sustainable way for governments to promote development as it essentially gives countries the freedom to pay for their own development by raising their own revenues. This fundamentally shifts focus of development financing from the aid effectiveness agenda to domestic resources mobilisation. Taxation plays an important role in shaping the distribution of benefits, as it is the basis for redistribution from those with the highest incomes to those most in need. In many cases, the lack of participatory systems in the design and evaluation of tax policies represents a missed opportunity for the state to promote good tax administration policies that enhances the prospects of efficiency and effectiveness of the revenue generation and redistribution.

Bangladesh, as an emerging developing country, is committed to augmenting revenue and achieving fiscal discipline with a view to increasing self-reliance. In recent years, the Government of Bangladesh has initiated several administrative and policy reforms in the tax system. The performance is still unsatisfactory as compared to other countries at a similar stage of economic development in terms of tax-GDP ratio. In Bangladesh, the collection of tax revenue mainly depends on indirect tax sources rather than direct taxes. Tax system in Bangladesh is not pro-poor and tax burden mainly falls on general people. Though several policy reforms have been undertaken to strengthen the tax-GDP ratio, the participation of the people in policy reform process from all spheres of the society remains inadequate. To be specific, the voice from the grassroot has never been considered with importance to reformulate the tax system of Bangladesh.

Following the declaration of 2013-14 national budget, SUPRO organised a lobby meeting on June 22, 2013 at the Parliament building, where lawmakers from both the ruling and opposition alliances were present.

A paper was presented at the meeting, stating a number of pro-poor demands and recommendations especially on essential services in education, health and agriculture sectors.

Held at the Oath Room of Bangladesh National Parliament House, Deputy Speaker Retired Colonel Shawkat Ali was the chief guest at the meeting. Advocate Faizul Rabbi Mia, Chairman of Standing Committee on the Ministry of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs, AHN Ashiqur Rahman, Chairman of the Standing Committee on the Planning Ministry, AKN Maniful Islam, member of Standing Committee on the Ministry of Finance, Public Estimate Committee member Hafiz Uddin Ahmed, and lawmakers Monwar Hossain Chowdhury, AM Mohibuzz Uddin Kheilon, Alhaj M.A. Jabbar, Mir Shawkat Ali Badsha and Ihsafur Alam were present as special guests.

The lawmakers while appreciated SUPRO for its effort suggested that such meetings may become more fruitful if they are held before the budget is passed. They, however, assured about bringing upon SUPRO’s concerns in parliament during budget discussions.

SUPRO also organised a national seminar, attended by policy leaders, civil society actors and journalists among others, to share views regarding public participation in national budget cycle.

Budget Alliance Group (BAG)

For strengthening its advocacy for pro-poor participatory budget SUPRO, in 2010 took initiative to form a national platform, Budget Alliance Group, BAG in short. Currently BAG has 27 organisations as its members, all of which have participatory budget process in their campaign agenda. The alliance organises meetings and other events and mobilises its network members to push the demand for pro-poor budget. These initiative have proven fruitful as they have helped the demand for a people-centred budget heard stronger at the policymakers’ level.

In 2013, BAG organised three coordination meetings and a training workshop for its members on budget advocacy. Issues on which the 2-day training sessions were conducted include, among others, budgetary process of Bangladesh, loopholes in budget system and designing fruitful budget advocacy campaign.

Following the national budget 2013-14, SUPRO organised a planning workshop for BAG to push the demand of pro-poor and participatory budget, followed by a press conference. Demands raised in the press conference are as follows:

1. Formulate a pro-farmer agriculture policy through ensuring participation of all concerned
2. Disclose the draft budget at least three months before placing it in parliament
3. Initiate employment schemes for the landless and allocate separate budget to provide agricultural equipment to the landless farmers at cheap price
4. Form farmers’ cooperatives and provide them with training and knowledge on modern farming system
5. Eliminate discrimination in wage structure among different categories of workers at all sectors and ensure the national wage scale soon
6. Allocate sufficient budget to ensure better housing for the Dalit community
7. Allocate 20 per cent of the national budget for education sector
8. Ensure adequate budget for education of the disabled children and recruit at least one teacher with special education in every school
9. Allocate 10 per cent of the national budget for health sector
10. Allocate a separate budget for indigenous students and undertake income generating schemes for the indigenous people
11. Recruit health professionals in the vacant posts all over the country and ensure doctor : nurse : health assistant ratio at 1 : 3 : 5 in all hospitals

Quarterly meeting with BAG members and designing fruitful budget advocacy campaign.
Poor tax administration is also a major challenge for Bangladesh. Therefore, it is important to place greater emphasis on administrative reinforcement and policy reform to identify and remove the loopholes in the country’s tax system and make it adequately pro-poor.

To formulate policy suggestions towards an effective and justified tax system it is essential to know the good and non-so-good sides of the tax situation. It also requires greater understanding of citizens’ perception and opinion about tax, tax system and tax justice.

The general finding of the baseline survey in general is that people have a basic understanding of tax. But because of the bureaucratic tangles inherent in the tax system and also for fear of harassment people in general feel disinclined to pay tax. The survey finds that while people with institutional education are aware about indirect taxes like Value Added Tax (VAT), the poor or those without institutional education have little idea about such taxes. Also a majority of the respondents doubt whether all the money they pay VAT end up in the government treasury. The survey finds that greater understanding of citizens’ perception and non-so-good sides of the tax situation. It also requires transparency to ensure proper collection of VAT at the base, which will help attract people pay income tax and other direct taxes because of bureaucracity.

3. Because they pay tax, respondents also demanded decentralisation of tax administration, ensuring violence-free schooling for girl children. Dr Meher Afroz Chumki MP said her government was highly committed to the importance of technical and vocational education for the country’s tax system and identified the gaps in the tax policy. In 2010 SUPRO carried out an analysis of the country’s tax and tax system were raised from the public particularly the poor communities and female among them, participated in the events. Public hearings could not be held in rest five districts of SUPRO working area due to political unrest.

Following recommendations and demands regarding the country’s tax and tax system were raised from the participants in the public hearings:

1. Reduce or eliminate VAT on essentials such as rice, fish, edible oil and meat, while retain and increase if necessary, VAT on non-essential goods such as TV, fridge and motorbike
2. Reduce land and union tax and make its collection process easier
3. Provide access to quality health and education services free of cost
4. Raise awareness about tax/VAT system among the public particularly the poor communities and introduce information about taxes in school textbooks
5. Impose higher tax on the wealthy citizens
6. Consult the marginalised communities, among others, while formulating tax policies and laws
7. Decentralise tax administration, ensure good governance and transparency in tax administration and introduce digital tax system at every stage
8. Raise awareness among the citizens about the benefits of paying tax and involve civil society organisations in the campaign
9. Encourage the elected bodies of the local government to tax for which they are authorised
10. Stop whitening of black money and arrange tax fair at the grassroots
11. Reward the citizens who pay high amount of tax

**Action research**

In 2010 SUPRO carried out an analysis of the country’s tax system and identified the gaps in the tax policy. In 2013 it started a project titled ‘Promoting Tax Justice in Bangladesh’. Four districts have been selected as project field. A key objective of the project is to develop a pro-poor tax model for Bangladesh. For this an action research on fair taxation has been carried out. Under the research a comparison of the level of knowledge and views about tax was made between the poor people where the project had already started and the project had just started its operation. Focus group discussions and key informant interviews methods have been followed. Target groups for the research are marginal farmers, agriculture labourers, rural women, small entrepreneurs, nickel wholesalers, unemployed youths, students, grassroots campaigners, tax administrators at district, upazila and union and local government representatives such as upazila chairmen and municipality mayors.

1. The knowledge about commodity tax such as VAT and how this tax is collected is feeble among the respondents from lower economic strata, such as agricultural labourers, day labourers and marginal farmers. Around 80 per cent of respondents from these occupations have little or no information on this. They are not aware that they pay VAT when they buy a commodity on which VAT is applicable.
2. Institutional education is positively related to the level of knowledge about tax. This means the more institutionally educated a person is the better and clearer is his/her knowledge on the tax system.
different kinds of tax actually reach the government treasury. They view that much more transparency and accountability have to be maintained regarding keeping account of the tax collection and its utilisation.

9. Respondents in general regard paying tax as a matter of honour.

II. Ensuring essential services for all

Developing human capabilities and reducing the level of poverty essentially require provision of quality basic human services or essential services for all. Bangladesh has the constitutional obligation to provide all these services to its citizens. Greater citizen actions are needed to ensure relevant policies and practices in order to make these services available particularly to the poor and the marginalised. Through its study campaign and mobilisation over the years, SUPRO has been successful in sensitising its stakeholders about increase in allocation in budget for essential public services. Supported by Oxfam, the campaign in this regard entails the following.

a. To continue strengthen our advocacy and campaign to influence decision makers to implement policies to stop tax dodging. We are encouraged by initial successes in this regard, such as the recent decision of the French Parliament (and further endorsed by the European Parliament) to enforce country by country reporting by French and European banks; the introduction of a Financial Transaction Tax as a result of global campaign in 11 European countries; the successful campaign of a French activists to get 18 out of 22 departments to declare their territories tax haven free and similar campaigns for tax haven free cities in the Nordic countries.

b. To enhance our efforts to mobilize citizens and create strong social movements locally and globally to force governments and multinationals end tax dodging. The evidence based campaigns to expose the pillage of developing countries by multinationals in individual countries (such as the campaign of Zambian citizens against Glencore); the successful campaign for “Justicia Fiscal” in the Dominican Republic for an increase in education budget raised by fair tax.

c. The new Global Alliance for Tax Justice can serve as a platform to coordinate and create global synergy for advocacy and campaigns and citizen mobilization for tax justice.

Functioning SMC, PTA

Under the government policy, school management committees (SMC) and parents-teachers associations (PTA) have to properly function for smooth running of primary schools. SUPRO took initiative to monitor the functioning of SMC and PTA in 90 government primary schools in 45 districts. It helped regularly organise the meetings of the SMCs and PTAs, as a result of which 125 meetings were held in 2013. The regular meetings strengthened the SMCs and the PTAs, adding pace and better discipline to the running of the schools.

Highlights: Programme and Achievements

World Social Forum

World Social Forum, an international gathering of civil society organisations with the motto ‘Another world is possible’, was held in Tunisia in 2013. SUPRO joined the event as a member of Tax Justice Network, an international platform doing advocacy for pro-poor tax policies. At the event SUPRO became a member of Global Alliance for Tax Justice, which is a campaign body grown from Tax Justice Network.

SUPRO’s General Secretary Md. Arifur Rahman in World Social Forum at Tunisia

General Secretary of SUPRO, Md. Arifur Rahman, participated in the event that year held in March 26-30, 2013. Discussions at the event were divided in different sessions focusing on key contemporary development issues. At a special session on tax justice Rahman shared SUPRO’s progress and lessons it has learned through its tax justice advocacy. The session was hosted and moderated by Oxfam and Tax Justice Network Africa in which numbers of NGO and CSOs under the Global Alliance for Tax Justice took part. A declaration on tax justice was drawn from the session.


The prevailing International Tax rules practice are more and more undermining the ability of government in the Global South and the North to compel corporations and wealthy individuals to pay their fair share of Taxes. Multinationals and wealthy individuals continue to dodge taxes with impunity; ordinary people carry a disproportionately heavy burden of taxes. As a result, governments lack resources to provide citizens with adequate social services. They are implementing austerity measures which are aggravating poverty and inequality everywhere. The poor are being made to pay for a crisis they are not responsible for. Social and economic justice now and feature sustainability are possible only.

• When Tax dodging by multinationals and wealthy individuals are stopped
• When race to the bottom tax competition between countries is ended and replaced by multilateral tax cooperation
• When governments raise revenue through redistributive and progressive taxation and are held accountable for the provision of adequate social service to their citizens.

Continuing the tradition of the World social forum which, at the WSP in Port Allegre in 2002 issued a “Universal Declaration on the right to tax justice to as a component part of social justice”, we demand the following to promote tax justice across the world.

a. Country by country reporting by multinationals
b. Automatic information exchange between jurisdictions
c. Public register of beneficial ownership
d. Look for alternatives to transfer pricing rules by the OECD
e. End to tax haven secrecy – the major facilitator of tax dodging
f. Rigorous regulation of the finance sector including the imposition of a Financial Transaction Tax (FTT)
g. Legitimate international governance mechanism to facilitate multilateral cooperation in tax matters.

To promote the Tax justice agenda we commit ourselves;

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c. The new Global Alliance for Tax Justice can serve as a platform to coordinate and create global synergy for advocacy and campaigns and citizen mobilization for tax justice.

Meeting with SMC/PTA members in Feni

Group work in training on social Audit tools at National level

Supporting image: Meeting with SMC/PTA members in Feni
Highlights: Programme and Achievements

Social Audit on health and education

Social audit is a tool used to measure the status of the government services for citizens. SUPRO, in 2013, revised the method of its social audit through a 2-day workshop in March. The revision was carried out on the basis of experience and learning from the social audits it carried out in the earlier years.

In 2013 SUPRO carried out social audit in 23 districts on the quality of essential services in health and education sectors. For this training sessions on the revised method of its social audit were conducted in 22 of the districts where the audit was carried out. Owing to prevailing political disturbance training could not be arranged in one district. SUPRO’s district campaigners, civil society and NGO representatives, journalists and youths participated in the training.

Survey questionnaires and focus group discussions were applied for the audit. Respondents in the health audit include civil surgeons, resident medical officers of sadar hospitals, physicians, nurses and other hospital staff, patients and community people. In education audit respondents include district Primary Education Officer(s), Upazila Education Officer(s), Assistant Upazila Education Officer(s), school management committee(s) members, teachers, students, parents and community people. A total of 100 respondents were taken for each audit. The findings of the audit later were shared in public hearings in all the 23 districts.

The objectives of the hearings were to inform people about the situation of the government services, and draw demands and recommendations from the audience present at the hearings. The recommendations are as follows.

1. Ensure strong monitoring of all services and departments in health and education sectors
2. Increase allocation for education and health services in the national budget
3. Endure separate allocation for midday meal in the national budget
4. Ensure teachers-student ratio at 1:30 in government primary schools
5. Introduce pre-primary education in every primary school
6. Ensure quality maternal health services including healthcare during pregnancy in all community clinics
7. Equip local level government health centres, clinics and hospitals with modern equipment

Display of citizen charter on health at government health facilities

A part of the country’s law regarding right to information, citizen charter on health is should be displayed at Union Health Centre(s), Upazila Health Complex(s) and district hospitals. After social audit was conducted in 23 districts, SUPRO took initiative to display the citizen charter in health facilities and was successful in 20 districts. Thus citizen charter has been displayed in a total of 60 health facilities through this initiative.

Mass Mobilisation

International Literacy Day

In 2013 SUPRO organised education fairs in 42 districts marking International Literacy Day observed on September 8, to raise grassroots voice demanding increase in budget allocation to ensure quality primary education and achieve 100 per cent enrolment by 2015, the Millennium Development Goal-2. Observing the day a human chain was also organised in the capital.

SUPRO's demands to ensure quality education are as follows:

- Ensure measures to achieve 100 per cent literacy by 2015
- Recognise education as a fundamental right and not a basic need
- Minimum 20 per cent (6 per cent from GDP) allocation of the national budget should go to education
- Ensure implementation of the National Education Policy 2010
- Separate the budget of military education, information and technology related education and religious education from the education budget
- Stop commercialisation of education

World Health Day

SUPRO observed the World Health Day, 2013 highlighting the slogan ‘Health is my right. Ensure equal accessibility in health service for all’ in 45 districts. Events carried out include human chains, processions, discussions, seminars and cultural events. The demands of the day include:

- Ensure poor people’s access to quality healthcare services
- Increase allocation to healthcare in 2013-14 budget
- Stop commercialisation of healthcare services
- Ensure adequate staff at public hospitals
- Ensure quality health services in both rural and urban facilities
- Ensure adequate and quality medical equipment in public healthcare facilities
- Formulate health policy and have it endorsed by the public
- Ensure adequate supply of quality medicines in public hospitals and in open market at affordable price
- Stop commercialisation of essential services like health education, water and energy
- Ensure measures for increasing local production of quality medicines and discourage import
III. Food sovereignty, climate justice and rural livelihood

The recent food crisis has adequately proved the current regime of liberalised agricultural policy cannot be a solution to meeting such crisis as it vests too much power in a few profit-mongering trans-national corporations, jeopardising the life and livelihood of millions. Bangladesh, one of the worst victims of such policies where rights of farmers are denied making the issue of food Sovereignty a distant dream. Moreover, global climate change has adversely affected the livelihood of the country’s small farmers, millions of whom, living in the coastal areas, are particularly affected as they suffer serious crop damage more often than they did in the past in the face of increase in natural disasters. It results in serious food shortage that again points to the global justice on climate change.

In 2013, SUPRO raised its concern on climate justice at various meetings, seminars and workshops organised by development partners and civil society organisations. Members of its network individually and collectively organised events on climate change risks with technical support from SUPRO secretariat team.

SUPRO, being an active member of Dariddro Birodi Mancha (Anti-Poverty Platform) formed in 2009, has been engaged in number of initiatives of this year. APP is a voice of 31 civil society organisations and networks for advocacy that promotes poor-friendly agriculture and food policies with the MDG regarding ending of poverty and hunger in perspective. SUPRO also works in the area of Food Sovereignty.

SUPRO is also a member of Campaign for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods (CSRL), an alliance of 250 local-national-international development and civil society organisations. CSRL is engaged in a social movement for sustainable rural livelihoods with special focus on agriculture, climate change and trade, which complements SUPRO’s mission and vision. In 2013 SUPRO attended CSRL’s annual general meeting and a training programme on campaign and advocacy tools. At the training SUPRO participants presented an idea to bring forth the women food hero, which was highly appreciated and taken up by CSRL. Currently, CSRL is working to implement the idea.

IV. Aid, debt, trade and role of IFIs

The status of Bangladesh, as it lies in the periphery of the global capitalism, endows the global north and multilateral agencies with an immense authority to shape its economy and policy. All its major economic policies have been formulated in line with the strategic framework of these global agencies, namely the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank, World Trade Organization and the like, with little knowledge or consent of the people. For Bangladesh, unlike many other peripheral countries, the other side of the scenario is that after a long spell of people’s movement, civilian government’s rule has remained established since 1941. Nevertheless, the successive parliaments in many occasions were able to formulate policies crucial for the country’s development or play effective role in enforcing policies, decisions or laws beneficial for its citizens. The global north and multilateral bodies imposing trade, aid and debt policies favouring the trans-national corporations, deter the government from formulating policies, laws or initiatives that will truly serve the nation’s interest, particularly benefiting the poor and marginalised communities. Under this strategic theme, SUPRO and its member organisations intends to campaign for debt cancellation and give critical response on the policies and programmes of the IFIs to growth pressure for its conditional and unconditional aid and debt cancellation through involving national and global actors.

The ninth ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) was held at Denpasar, Bali in Indonesia on December 3-6, 2013. All the member countries participated in the meeting. Apart from the government officials, representatives from different civil society organisations, NGOs, human rights groups and political organisations also attended the conference. The objective of the participation of the citizen actors was to raise a voice against that of the WTO. The civil society actors gathered at the conference to protest at the imperialist policies of the world’s leading agency for trade

V. Building capacities and perspectives of the grassroots NGOs

The strength of SUPRO as a network of grassroots NGOs lies in the development of capacities and perspectives of its partners. Fruitful advocacy, mobilisation and campaign require not only sharpening of their advocacy and campaign edge but also enhancing their internal management. It involves reviving and developing several institutional policies to make these organisations more accountable and transparent to its immediate stakeholders. SUPRO intends to contribute to this venture through various activities.

SUPRO National Convention

On March 2, 2013 SUPRO organised its national convention coining the slogan ‘Ensure good governance, ensure basic rights in education and health’. The event was held at the LCED Auditorium in the Dhaka city.
Highlights: Programme and Achievements

SUPRO National Convention at LGED Auditorium, Agargaon, Dhaka

Tripura also participated in the session SUPRO National Convention. Chairperson Mustafizur Rahman Khan presided over.

Dr Mizan, while praising SUPRO’s effort in pushing citizen rights issues, said, ‘All kinds of discrimination that currently plague the education sector must be resolved’. Asmita Charles viewed that as an alliance of grassroots organisations, SUPRO has already proved its strength. Professor AzzyRoy observed that in order to ensure good governance policy makers and implementers should be held adequately accountable.

Good governance will not be ensured until fair politics can make its way into the country’s political arena.

The second session was on health titled ‘Health for All: Commitment and reality’ presided over by Mohsin Ali, SUPRO National Council member. The keynote paper was presented by National Council member Mahbub Chandra Dutta. Dr Sadeka Halim, Mohammad Jahangir, educationist and General Secretary of BCTUA, and Donosanto Kemro founder Dr Zahirulah Chowdhury spoke as key discussants.

Dr Sadeka Halim observed that despite different limitations of the education policy, its implementation is going on with a steady pace. She also said the Right To Information (RTI) Act is helpful for students if they can utilise it properly. The situation of women education is much better in Bangladesh than in many other developing countries, she also observed.

Dr Zahirulah Chowdhury castigated the current pervasive practice of private tuition, saying that it must stop if the education policy, its implementation is going on with a steady pace.

Muhammad Jahangir emphasized the importance of technical and vocational education for the purpose of creating skilled manpower.

Meher Afroz Chumki MP attended the closing session as the chief guest whereas Transparency International Bangladesh Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman was the special guest. The session was presided over by SUPRO Vice-chair Ahmed Swapam Mahmud. Una Chowdhury, former SUPRO director, shared her experience while she worked in the organisation.

Meher Afroz Chumki MP said her government was highly successful in expanding primary education as well as ensuring violence-free schooling for girl children. Dr Iftekharuzzaman observed that good governance will be ensured only when tolerance, rule of law and political understanding, all these three can be wed together.

At the closing session SUPRO general secretary Md Anwar Rahman announced the ‘Convention Declaration’ that essentially reflected the spirit of the War of Liberation, constitution of Bangladesh and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Grassroots Consultation and Planning Workshop

A daylong consultation workshop was organised on July 27, 2013 at the YWCA meeting room in Dhaka to introduce ‘Promoting Pro-Poor Policy Reform and Public Services for All- Phase II’ and ‘Promoting Tax Justice in Bangladesh’ project to network campaigners. A detailed activity plan was also prepared at the workshop to implement the project. The participants were 45 district secretaries, 23 district campaign facilitators and all the secretariat staff.

The Executive Board (EB) is comprised of 9 members elected by the National Council members for 3 years period. The EB reviews the progress of activities and provide policy guidelines for future direction. Six meetings of the Executive Board were held in 2013.

Executive Board Meeting

The Executive Board (EB) is comprised of 9 members elected by the National Council members for 3 years period. The EB reviews the progress of activities and provide policy guidelines for future direction. Six meetings of the Executive Board were held in 2013. All Board members participated in the meetings and reviewed SUPRO’s activities and gave future directions.

Website Update and IT Support

Regular activity updates were published on SUPRO website during the reporting period. Detailed reports of the events with photos have also been uploaded soon after the events. Report and photo updates of relevant activities and events of member organisations have also been regularly uploaded.

Resource Centre Development

Books, campaign materials and newspapers have been collected and bought to develop SUPRO resource centre to help secretariat staff and other people involved with the network to prepare different reports and materials.
A daylong consultation workshop was organised on 27 July 2013 at the YWCA meeting room in Dhaka to introduce ‘Promoting Pro-Poor Policy Reform and Human Rights.

Iftekharuzzaman observed that good governance will be ensured only when tolerance, rule of law and political will are reflected in the spirit of the War of Liberation, constitution of Bangladesh and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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Vice-chair Ahmed Swapan Mahmud. Uma Chowdhury, Bangladesh Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman was the chief guest while Transparency International Bangladesh produced different materials to aid its campaign with informed views and opinions of its stakeholders to influence policy makers and duty bearers. SUPRO Probaho, a quarterly Bangla newsletter is published.

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SUPRO Secretariat

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<tr>
<th>SL</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Phone/ Cell</th>
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<td>Helena Akter</td>
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District Campaign Focal Organisations

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<th>SL.</th>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Faridpur</td>
<td>Paripurn development</td>
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<td>Jamalpur</td>
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Ad. Golam Md. Selim Md. Anisur Rahman Siton

Chasi Nirunnobbi Sarker Nazmun Nahar Sweety

Captain (Retd) Azimul Haque, Bir Protik Sajit Kumar Ghosh

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Annex of Annual Report 2013

SUSHASONER JONNY PROCHARAVIZAN - SUPRO

SUPRO ANNUAL REPORT 2013

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Audit report

HLB  
Toha Khan Zaman & Co.  
Chartered Accountants

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS’ REPORT

Sushason Jonny Procharavizan (SUPRO)  
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Mohammadpur  
Dhaka-1207

Report on the Financial Statements:  
We have audited the accompanying Financial Statements of Sushason Jonny Procharavizan  
(SUPRO), which comprise the Statement of Financial Position, Balance Sheet, as at 31 December 2013, and the Statements of Comprehensive Income (Income and Expenditure Accounts), and Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and explanatory information.

Management’s Responsibility for the Financial Statements:  
Management is responsible for the preparation and presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Bangladesh Financial Reporting Standards (BFRS) and for such internal control as management determines necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor’s Responsibility:  
Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Bangladesh Standards on Auditing (BAS). Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditors’ judgment, including the assessment of the risk of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity’s preparation and presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity’s internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence that we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.
Opinion:
In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects the financial position of Sushasoner Jonny Procharavijan (SUPRO) as at 31 December 2013, and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the Bangladesh Financial Reporting Standards (BFRS) and complies with applicable laws and regulations.

We also report that:

a. We have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purposes of our audit and made due verification thereof.

b. In our opinion, the organization as required by law has kept proper books of accounts, so far as it appeared from our examination of those books.

c. The financial statements dealt with by the report are in agreement with the books of accounts.

Dated, Dhaka
10 February 2014

(Toha Khan Zaman & Co.)
Chartered Accountants
### Audit report

**Toha Khan Zaman & Co.**

*Chartered Accountants*

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<td><strong>Statement of Comprehensive Income</strong></td>
<td>Full financial breakdown for the year ending 31 December 2013.</td>
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<td><strong>Balance Sheet</strong></td>
<td>Detailed financial position as of 31 December 2013.</td>
</tr>
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*Signed in terms of our engagement report of even date annexed.*

*Date:* 2014

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*Authorized Signature*

---

*Executive Signature*

---

*Qualified Signature*

---

*Secretary's Signature*

---

*Director's Signature*

---

*Compliance Auditor's Signature*
Audit report

Toha Khan Zaman & Co.
Chartered Accountants