

Progress in Bangladesh country in 2022

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By 2026, more people in Bangladesh, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized from all gender and social groups and those from lagging districts benefit from sustainable livelihood and decent work opportunities resulting from responsible, inclusive, sustainable, green, and equitable economic development

There has been progress towards this outcome in 2022. In line with the gender-related priorities highlighted in the Eighth Five-Year Plan (2020–2025), the socioeconomic policies of the government are focusing more on addressing the lack of inclusive and equitable economic development among subpopulations. Women constitute 36 per cent of Bangladesh’s labour force, of which migrant workers, Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (CMSMEs), and tea garden workers are a critical but vulnerable subgroup. The Ministry of Expatriates’ Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEW&OE) has taken concrete steps to address the policy gaps for migrant workers with the development of a draft comprehensive National Reintegration Policy for Migrants with a clear focus on the needs and challenges of women migrant workers. There is an uptake on the policy commitment by MoEW&OE, at the Ministerial level, for increased legal assistance, health and psychosocial assistance, social protection, vocational training, and employment opportunities for returnee women migrant workers. UN Women, along with ILO and IOM, supported MoEW&OE to develop the National Reintegration Policy for Migrants through a participatory process that has resulted in a gender-responsive draft policy that incorporates the voices of women migrant workers which addresses the needs of migrant returnee women, including social stigma associated to women migrant workers and lack of livelihood opportunities for women. Another policy area that has seen improved attention, through strengthened capacity, is the social protection of tea garden workers and their families. There has been commitment from the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) to increase social protection support for tea garden workers and their families by strengthening their capacity on the application of gender-responsive planning and budgeting (GRPB). In the multi-stakeholder workshops on GRPB, participant’s advocacy on increased investment for most disadvantaged women workers and their family members in the tea garden communities was amplified, drawing the attention of policymakers as reflected in national and local media. For example, Ferdousi Begum, Deputy Secretary (Budget and Audit) at MoWCA, said “By 2025, we wish to support 100% of pregnant mothers in vulnerable communities, and we also have the safety nets for female tea garden workers in Sylhet, which is ongoing”. Gender equality issues have also been prioritized by the private sector as demonstrated by their commitment to the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) in 2022. Sixteen CMSMEs in Bangladesh became signatories to WEPs, which will ensure leadership commitment to providing sustainable livelihood opportunities for women. The commitment of the sixteen WEPs signatories will potentially impact over one thousand employees through gender responsive and sustainable and decent work opportunities. On the individual level, women tea garden workers have strengthened agency to stand up against injustice through collective solidarity to ensure decent work environments, supported by UN Women, in partnership with Oxfam Bangladesh. The “Gender Talks” were deemed as one of the most effective initiatives taken by the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) joint programme, according to the evaluation, noting that women tea garden workers participating in the “Gender Talk” sessions were more conscious and vocal about their rights, both in the work environment and within the family. The “Gender Talk” sessions were discussion forums to change social norms and gender stereotypes to contribute to a positive and respectful work environment through women’s solidarity, implemented as part of the UN SDG Joint Programme “Enhancing Social Protection for Female Tea Garden Workers and Their

Families in Sylhet Division, Bangladesh". With improved understanding of human rights and gender equality through the "Gender Talks", women were more aware and vocal about the rights. The Theory of Change (TOC) remains valid for this Outcome. The Government's leadership has played a critical role in driving the drafting of National Reintegration Policy development, through which there has been observed increased consideration for inclusive and participatory policy development. This participatory and consultative process can be considered as best practice in the policy formulation, which is owned and driven by the relevant ministry.

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-BGD_D_1.2

By 2026, ecosystems are healthier, and all people, in particular the most vulnerable and marginalized in both rural and urban settings, benefit from and contribute to, in a gender responsive manner, a cleaner environment, an enriched natural resource base, low carbon development, and are more resilient to climate change, shocks and disasters

UN Women's contribution to the climate change and disaster resilience aspect of this United Nations Cooperation Framework outcome is on track. Bangladesh, the ninth most disaster-prone country (World Risk Report 2022), is recognized for its remarkable progress in improving the lives of women and girls. Though women's mortality rate from disasters has reduced drastically in the last 20 years, the disaster management architecture and system did not cater to women's needs and priorities during and after disasters due to the systemic gender inequalities. However, since the first-ever gender-responsive Standing Orders on Disaster (2019) and National Plan for Disaster Management (2021-2025), a momentum to advance gender equality in disaster management has begun. Most vulnerable and marginalized groups, which include women and girls, are now better prepared in terms of knowledge and financial resources to prevent, cope with, and adapt to climatic odds and disaster risks. In 2022, efforts have been reinforced by the Government of Bangladesh, development partners (local, national and international) and community people to engage all members of communities in disaster risk reduction at all levels in order to benefit from the disaster and climate-related policies and programmes regardless of sex and age. Joining these efforts and building on past interventions, UN Women has been able to further the cause of gender mainstreaming resilience, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction agenda of the country through policy advice and technical consultations, policy advocacy, and direct support to the most at-risk women. The gender-responsive resilience agenda is advancing as evidenced by the updated final draft of Climate Change Gender Action Plan of the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), the final draft of Revised Disaster Risk Management Strategy of the Department of Women Affairs (DWA), and the draft gender guidelines for Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT), all of which UN Women has provided technical advisory support. It has been observed while working closely with the duty bearers (local and national level government officials, public representatives) that their mindset has been positively shifted on gender equality issues at scale e.g. recognition of the importance of the issue, taking special measures to address the issue, allocating more resources to change the lives of women and girls which would eventually create enabling environment for women and girls to lead and influence disaster risk reduction and climate change actions in coming days. With UN Women's support, the most vulnerable women and girls from the north and the north-eastern parts of Bangladesh now have improved capacity to respond to and recover from floods occurring in that area with varied intensity almost every year and benefit from the coordinated humanitarian response. Some 11,117 women and girls from Jamalpur, Kurigram, Netrokona, Sunamganj, and Sylhet, the most flood-affected districts, were supported and reached through 16 multi-purpose women's shelters (MPWS) constructed by Christian Aid with support from UN Women. The MPWSs provided interim shelter with bathing space and a safe drinking water source while also enhancing their flood preparedness knowledge and skills. In addition, 760 women from Kurigram and Jamalpur Districts, who were most affected by the flash flood in June 2022, received BDT 4,500 each to recover from the devastating impacts of the flood. Started in late 2022, the handover of the MPWSs to the local

government will be completed in early 2023. The local government will continue offering diverse services to women and girls through these shelters even after the emergency response project is over, for instance, awareness-raising sessions for community members are being continued by the local government and NGOs in the aftermath of the flood disaster. UNICEF and FAO have also indicated interest to support these shelters through their ongoing programmes with the local government. In the reporting year, UN Women continued to strengthen government machinery to fulfill their gender commitments in the country's humanitarian coordination mechanism. The gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) Working Group, co-chaired by the Department of Women Affairs and UN Women, made further strides to strengthen multi-stakeholder and multi-level coordination to address gender priorities. This has been pursued by engaging the grass-roots women-led organizations to reinforce government and non-government organizations' collaboration in humanitarian actions; creating a pool of gender experts within the humanitarian community; producing post-disaster gender analysis; and strategizing with other cluster and working groups in practicing the leave no one behind principles. The Theory of Change that if an enabling environment which advances women's leadership and resilience to national disasters and crisis exists, women and girls will be empowered to exercise their rights across the humanitarian-development continuum remains valid for this Outcome.

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-BGD_D_1.3

By 2026, more people, especially the most vulnerable, benefit from more equitable, non-discriminatory, gender-responsive, participatory, accountable governance and justice, in a peaceful and tolerant society governed by the rule of law.

The progress against this outcome remains on track in 2022. Bangladesh has demonstrated its commitment to improving the lives of women and girls by prioritizing gender equality in the national development plans, including in the country's Eighth Five Year Plan (2020–2025) (8 th FYP). Against this backdrop, the Bangladesh government remains steadfast in its commitments to global normative agendas, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) concluding observations and the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000) on Women Peace and Security (WPS). The strengthened national women's machinery and relevant national institutions are able to roll out and implement national strategies that focus on enhancing the lives of women and girls, and promote good governance, peace, and social cohesion. The implementation of the country's first-ever National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security (NAP WPS) (2019 – 2022) has been extended until 2025 to enable the government to re-align its priorities at the tail-end of a global pandemic and its ensuing socioeconomic impacts. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reiterated the importance of the WPS agenda in Bangladesh to build a peaceful and cohesive society. The revision of the National Action Plan (2013) of the National Women Development Policy 2011 (2011) has further refined the plan's priorities. The revised NAP will bolster the implementation of commitments set in the 8 th FYP and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as it maps the key actions of government stakeholders – a testament to the government's national and global commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) priorities. The government's acknowledgment of civil society, especially women-led organizations, as critical partners in implementing national GEWE priorities demonstrates the impact of the country's robust women's movement in advancing the actions of GEWE. The NAP WPS implementation framework, through an Inter-Ministerial Coordination Group (IMCG) led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), officially included leading women-led organizations Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS) and Bangladesh Mahila Parishad (BMP), both valued UN Women partners, as the two civil society members of the IMCG. The inclusion of civil society in the IMCG safeguards their representation in the implementation of the NAP. The Women Peace Cafacute; (WPC) – a university-based platform for young women and men to promote civic engagement and peaceful societies – co-created by UN Women in partnership with Centre for Peace and Justice (CPJ), Brac University – demonstrated its sustainability as a replicable model as it sustains beyond the UN Women supported intervention under the "Empowered Women, Peaceful Communities" programme,

which ended in March 2022. The new WPC in Asian University for Women in Chattogram, Bangladesh, established after the project, is a fully student-led initiative by young women who participated in UN Women-supported training and events. The institutionalization of the WPC model in Brac University as an official university club ensures that the initiative can thrive through the support of the university authorities. Overall, from 2018 to 2022, the WPC model garnered around 400 members; trained over 1,000 students on social entrepreneurship, peace and social cohesion, gender, leadership, and digital literacy; awarded 18 student-led initiatives with seed funds for innovative social entrepreneurship; and reached nearly two million people through robust social media engagement. The strengthened leadership capacity of young female students, and their male allies, has manifested in their ability to continue engaging in and sustaining WPC activities beyond any external intervention. This is demonstrated by anecdotal evidence that several WPC members trained on digital literacy in 2021 became trainers themselves in 2022, replicating a contextualized version of the digital literacy training coordinated by the UN Women Asia-Pacific Regional Office. One of the key outcomes of UN Women's intervention has been the extensive social media engagement, including online advocacy, campaigns, webinars, and events, that has fostered a growing band of youth empowered with knowledge and skills on navigating the difficulties of the virtual space. In their own words, WPC members elaborate on how their lives have changed through engagement with the WPC model: "I have been involved with the Project "HARMONY" as an anchor and content writer for around four months. From this journey, I have learned so many things to raise my voice as a woman[…]. I have also learned how to prevent and take steps against cyberbullying, hate speech, etc. […...] Besides all this, I have achieved some skills such as leadership, decision-taking, gender equality, communication, network build-up, etc. At last, all these works and dedication help me to become the best version of me as a youth leader and peace builder." - Lamiatun Nisa Protibha, Women Peace Ambassador initiative " HARMONY ", Women Peace Café Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University . UN Women's contribution to the above results was primarily through technical support to the government (Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and Ministry of Foreign Affairs), as well as fostering strong partnerships with key government stakeholders (members of the IMCG, Bangladesh Armed Forces Division and its training wing for UN Peacekeepers), women-led organizations (BNPS), academia (Brac University), development partners (Governments of Australia, Canada, and Japan) and the UN system in Bangladesh (through the UN Country Team Prevention of Violent Extremism Working Group). UN Women enhanced engagement with Members of Parliament on WPS issues, which has opened opportunities for further conversations on their role in promoting peace and social cohesion within their constituencies in anticipation of the national elections in 2024. Engagement with the media, especially through civil society-led initiatives with influential news media (print, television) has opened avenues for further advocacy on the WPS agenda and the role women play in building peaceful and resilient societies. Key partners have also acknowledged UN Women's interventions. The Secretary, Maritime Affairs Unit, of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rear Admiral (Retd.) Md. Khurshed Alam acknowledged and thanked UN Women for its role and contribution to advancing the WPS agenda. H.E. Ito Naoki, Ambassador of Japan in Bangladesh , said, "I was very impressed by young female leaders from respective universities from Rangpur, Mymensingh, and Dhaka, who empowered vulnerable communities at a grass-roots level in partnership with CPJ, Brac University, and UN Women". Although the Theory of Change (TOC) remains valid for this outcome, challenges remain. With the threat of a looming global recession amidst an ongoing global pandemic and conflicts in Ukraine and Afghanistan, much-needed development assistance has been diverted away from Bangladesh. This has affected UN Women's WPS programme in Bangladesh, with the loss of anticipated funding affecting the planned interventions. To mitigate this, the office is developing a robust resource mobilization strategy, as well as engaging with the UN Women Asia-Pacific Regional Office to contribute to the regional framework for Governance and Peace and Security, which would enable further funding opportunities for the Bangladesh office. The programme partners are also seeking resource mobilization opportunities, including partnerships with other UN Women programmes, such as the humanitarian response or climate change programmes that will enable cross-thematic engagement.

By 2026, women, girls and gender diverse people benefit from an environment in which they are empowered to exercise their rights, agency and decision-making power over all aspects of their lives and are free from all forms of discrimination, violence and harmful norms and practices

Progress towards the outcome is on track in 2022. There has been a notable shift in the legal and policy environment that allows women to exercise their rights, agency, and decision-making. The Government of Bangladesh demonstrated its commitment to improving the lives of women and girls by prioritizing gender equality in the country's Eighth Five Year Plan (2020-2025) (8th FYP). Against this backdrop, substantive contribution has been made towards the achievement of the outcome through leveraging UN Women's triple mandate, contributing to the reformation of discriminatory law; generating data and evidence; developing a roadmap for accelerating SDG-5 financing and strengthening UN system accountability to advancing the gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (GEWE) agenda. The Evidence (Amendment) Bill 2022 has been passed in 2022 by the National Parliament of Bangladesh, which repealed the discriminatory clauses (Section 155(4)) of the Evidence Act 1872. The amended Bill prohibits questioning of a rape survivor's character during cross-examinations in a trial and incorporates the admissibility of digital evidence critical for empowering GBV survivors. As a result of continuous advocacy initiatives of the Rape Law Reform (RLR) Coalition with the government and informed by action research (Between 'Virtue' and 'Immorality': Why Character Evidence Must Be Prohibited in Rape Cases), the repeal will help to eliminate the practice of re-traumatization of a rape survivor labeled as 'the second rape'. UN Women contributed to this discriminatory law reform by supporting civil-society organizations (CSOs) for evidence-driven advocacy to influence the legal reformation. UN Women supported the RLR Coalition, led by its partner organization, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), with seventeen CSO members. The RLR Coalition advocated with the government for major reforms needed in rape laws by identifying patterns, loopholes, and improvements needed to ensure a non-discriminatory, accountable, and transparent judicial process. The repeal of the Evidence Act is a result of the RLR coalition's coordinated advocacy initiatives under its 10-Point Demand on Rape Law Reform . The Theory of Change remains relevant and will continue to be used by UN Women for the achievement of this outcome. This achievement will protect the right and dignity of a rape survivor in getting justice and will strengthen the advocacy demands of CSOs towards discriminatory law reformation. The 8th FYP, for the first time, recognizes the importance of women's unpaid care work and includes SDG 5.4.1 indicator in its results and reporting framework, to measure the proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work. The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) furthered this priority and made a strong commitment at the Generation Equality Forum in Paris in June 2021, to work closely with Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) to address the unpaid care work issue. To this end, UN Women, together with ILO is supporting the government to develop a national programme on unpaid care work, based on the findings from Time Use Survey published in 2022. The data from the Time Use Survey is critical in translating the government's commitment into action; it allows for estimating the burden of women's unpaid work and to develop analysis to better design and adopt necessary laws, policies, programme to promote women's empowerment within the households, workplace, and society. The first ever Time Use Survey was completed and published by BBS, supported by UN Women as part of its global programme "Women Count". The Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) is an important instrument to mobilize public and private resources for accelerating the achievement of SDGs by 2030. The UN - namely UNDP, UNCDF, ILO, UN Women, and Resident Coordinator Office - is supporting the Government of Bangladesh to develop the INFF. As part of this, the UN jointly with the Economic Relations Division (ERD) of the Ministry of Finance, developed the first-ever national financing roadmap for SDGs. UN Women contributed by developing the gender analysis for the INFF that reveals an allocation of USD 54 billion is required until 2030 to address the commitments made under SDG-5. A detailed financing framework is developed with ERD, to identify the funding required to address all SDGs targets in Bangladesh. The UN responds to the 8 th FYP (2020-2025) Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) priorities by placing 'Gender Equality and Elimination of Gender-based Violence', as a strategic and cross-cutting priority in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022-2026.

The UN has strengthened accountability to advancing GEWE through improved gender mainstreaming across their joint programmes. Seven out of nine operational UN joint programmes, have visibly mainstreamed gender with sex-disaggregated and gender-sensitive indicators and data and gender analysis, as identified in the Gender Scorecard Annual reporting 2022. The UN Country Team (UNCT) also invested in strengthening staff and personnel capacity with tools like UNCT Gender Equality Marker (GEM) to effectively track and analyze system-wide gender expenditure. The lessons from the training will be taken forward through a roadmap, that consists of regular dialogue and a quality assurance process meant to strengthen gender-related programmatic efforts, financial investments, and results on GEWE.

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-BGD_D_1.5

By 2026 more women and girls are empowered by gender responsive enabling environment, to exercise their agency and decision-making with improved access to protection, education, and socio-economic opportunities.

There has been progress against this outcome in 2022. Coordinated efforts of humanitarian actors, and dedicated support to women and girls's access to services, in the Rohingya Refugee camps and host communities, have improved despite continued challenges of restrictive, patriarchal gender norms, and government restrictions. In 2022, UN Women supported Multi-Purpose Women's Centres (MPWCs), partners' centres, and outreach interventions continued to ensure women and girls's access to essential gender-responsive services and referrals, livelihoods assistance, and life-saving information. More than 132,164 Rohingya refugees (35,549 men, 24,230 adolescent boys, 44,022 women, 28,363 adolescent girls, and 1,505 persons with disabilities) have increased awareness of intimate partner violence, protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), human trafficking, prevention of child marriage, polygamy, domestic violence, and gender-based violence as a result of participating in awareness-raising sessions organized by UN Women's Gender Field Officers (GFOs); Rohingya community volunteers; and at eight MPWCs (5 in camps and 3 in host communities) managed by UN Women's partners - ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB), BRAC, and Oxfam. In 2022, 935 women (264 Rohingya, 671 host community) of Teknaf, Ukhiya, and Cox's Bazar Sadar participated in Second Chance Education (SCE) activities, including literacy, numeracy, and basic computer skills. In total, 72 women and girls successfully graduated from the SCE programme. UN Women's support enabled around 2,400 women from camps and host communities to develop livelihoods skills and engage in income generation activities (IGAs), contributing to enhanced quality of life and economic empowerment. Specifically, these women improved their skills on handicrafts (including batik, block printing and embroidery), and online marketing. Among them, 384 host community women went on to produce and sell their handmade products in the local markets, leveraging the trainings and market linkages supported by UN Women's partnerships with DanChurchAid (DCA), RDRS Bangladesh, Women Entrepreneur Association of Bangladesh (WEAB) and Oxfam. UN Women contributed directly to these results through capacity building opportunities, activities and services provided by its responsible parties through the MPWCs in the camps and host community. In support of the localization agenda, UN Women has further bolstered its empowerment of Rohingya refugees, through dedicated support to partner organizations, GFOs, and community based Rohingya volunteers. UN Women's five GFOs and 60 volunteers played a critical role throughout the year in supporting women's access to essential services by facilitating case referrals to gender-based violence (GBV), protection, health, shelter, and WASH, among others. In total, the GFOs and volunteers received 5,386 cases and referred all cases to relevant service providers. The role of Rohingya and host community women in promoting social cohesion, mitigating GBV cases was further strengthened through UN Women's support of 'Maitree Apas' (women leaders engaged in promoting social cohesion) to lobby and lead dialogues with local government officials, Assistant Camp in Charges, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA), and Majhis (community leaders) on women's rights issues. This took place through UN Women's partnership with Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), which continued to build up capacities of Rohingya and host community women and women leaders, training and coaching 19 women's groups (11 groups in host communities and 8

in the camps) comprising 380 women leaders, including 57 Maitree Apas , to lead and engage in humanitarian actions. With their strengthened skills and capacity to support community women and girls, Maitree Apas were able to receive 118 complaints (56 from camps and 62 from host communities), which they were then able to refer to MoWCA and Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST). Through their referral support and mediation, over 75% of complaints were addressed and solved. Taken together, the activities of UN Women's GFOs and volunteers as well as the partner agency, ASK, reached roughly 7,400 women and adolescent girls from both the host communities and camps. As Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group (GiHA WG) co-chair (with UNHCR), UN Women played a key role in ensuring a coherent and coordinated response to gender equality and women's empowerment issues across the Rohingya refugee response sectors, mobilizing the GiHA WG to secure technical advisory support to the Gender with Age Marker (GAM) review process, spearheading joint analyses, and coordinating with the GBV-Sub Sector to ensure common messages, advocacy and campaigning in the context of International Women's Day and 16 Days of Activism. The GiHA WG continued to function as a critical platform, actively engaging and training 1,024 members of the humanitarian community in 2022 to implement gender mainstreaming in their activities. UN Women's coordination and technical advisory support to the GiHA WG directly contributed to ensuring gender considerations are addressed across all 2023 Joint Response Plan (JRP) proposals, and to strengthened capacities of humanitarian actors on gender mainstreaming on the integration of gender perspectives in program design, with 170 humanitarian actors representing all 11 sectors of the refugee response trained by UN Women personnel on the application of the GAM. Awareness of critical gender equality issues in the workplace across the Rohingya refugee response was enhanced through the UN Women led "Rapid Survey on Gender Equality in the Workplace" capturing the perceptions and experiences of personnel involved in the humanitarian response. This survey was coordinated by a UN Women led Task Force comprising key GiHA member agencies, UNHCR, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Save the Children, the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (GNWP), the Young Women Leaders (YWL) Network, Start Fund Bangladesh, and Islamic Relief Bangladesh. The GiHA WG members, especially the GiHA WG JRP GAM Peer Review Team members, the Gender Equality at Workplace Rapid Assessment Task Team, and 16 Days of Activism Organization Committee members, co-chaired by UN Women, played a critical role in achieving these results. The Theory of Change of this outcome remains relevant. As demonstrated above, significant results have been achieved through the various interventions supported by UN Women under this outcome, enhancing women's access to opportunities, essential services and support, and engagement and awareness raising related to women's concerns and interests, participation and leadership in the Rohingya refugee response. Through UN Women's contributions, the number of women and adolescent girls benefitting from livelihoods training and income generating support; graduating from the SCE program increased further in 2022; and a significant number of GBV incidents were solved and/or referred through the efforts of GFOs, volunteers, and community women leaders and with the relevant sectors' support. As a lesson learned, UN Women will enhance collection of segregated data for person with disabilities benefitting from its programmatic interventions, as a step toward ensuring that the needs and concerns of persons with disabilities factor into program activities and support. One of the main challenges identified and shared by UN Women's partner, ASK, remains the lack of support for women's leadership within the community, including from their husbands and family. The lack of dedicated interventions to engage men and boys, including husbands and sons, to raise their awareness of gender equality issues, is a major cause for concern for Maitree Apas . To address this, designing future programming on women's leadership with targeted interventions focused on engaging men and boys is recommended.