

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-LKA_D_1.1

By 2027, the people of Sri Lanka live in a society which is more cohesive and strengthened by transformative and rights-based processes and mechanisms which support peaceful coexistence and human rights for all.

The support provided by the UN Women's programmes in 2023 emerged as a pivotal factor in ensuring the uninterrupted operations of all State-owned shelters and safe houses in the country and facilitating the provision of vital services to survivors of violence against women and girls (VAWG). The project shouldered all operational costs associated with maintaining the shelters, except for transport expenses allocated separately by the Government's National Budget. An estimated LKR 6 million worth of provisions were provided monthly (excluding the one-time provision of equipment). This consistent and considerable investment has ensured the well-being of VAWG survivors, in the midst of an economic crisis where services to vulnerable populations – such as survivors of VAWG, women with disabilities – were heavily scaled down or completely defunded. This occurred as the government curtailed its public expenditure as it attempted to enact broad macroeconomic reforms to address the economic crisis. Hence, this programming was instrumental for the continued operations of shelters and safe houses within the country, providing a lifeline to VAWG survivors fleeing abusive circumstances. (See this link for supporting documents) The outcomes of the women entrepreneurs' empowerment component are evident in the transformative changes observed at both individual and community levels. The completion of training programmes and the subsequent successful pitching of business plans by 542 entrepreneurs have unlocked a pathway to more resilient and diversified livelihoods. These entrepreneurs are now positioned to access assets valued at LKR 110 million, fostering business expansion and diversification. Beyond traditional business skills, the project's focus on digital marketing training has contributed to an enhanced digital literacy landscape. Early observations suggest an increased awareness and utilization of digital tools among both beneficiaries and government officials. This digital proficiency is anticipated to facilitate more efficient business practices and communication channels, creating a lasting impact on the entrepreneurs' ability to adapt to the evolving business environment. Additionally, the 3 distributions of relief packages to each entrepreneur, each valued at LKR 44,000, have not only provided immediate relief to 600 households but have also served as a catalyst for the continued growth and expansion of businesses, which would otherwise have collapsed. Beneficiaries have reported a positive impact on household food security and stress reduction, allowing them to allocate more time and energy to their businesses. This dual impact on individual well-being and business development underscores the project's success in the approach adopted to support women hit hardest by the crisis. Please see this link for list of women entrepreneurs supported by the project; this link for the entrepreneurship related training modules; this link for pre- and post-training evaluation data from the digital literacy training; and this link for provision of relief supplies to the entrepreneurs.

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-LKA_D_2.1

By 2027, women and girls enjoy and are empowered to exercise their full rights, representation, and agency over all aspects of their lives, and live free from discrimination and violence.

UN Women's programming results for 2023 represent a shift towards institutionalizing gender-sensitive

policies and practices, fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders, and ensuring sustained commitment to gender equality in Sri Lanka. The adoption and initiation of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (NAP WPS) in Sri Lanka in February 2023 signifies a transformative shift in gender-related policies and practices. Following the significant advocacy, technical advisory and support from UN Women over a period of 4 years, the NAP WPS is now not only adopted but has begun efforts towards implementation, with a structured governance framework in place. UN Women's contribution towards preventing violence against women through women's economic empowerment has brought about transformative outcomes for women entrepreneurs in Mannar District. The project evaluation findings of increased production, sales, earnings, and profitability demonstrate tangible economic improvements for the beneficiaries. The ability of 60% of respondents to make a 100% contribution to household expenses and save a significant portion of their earnings illustrates this. Their economic empowerment is also reflected in the qualitative change reported by beneficiaries, who express better control over their finances and increased confidence. The perception of safety from violence, both within and outside the home, among 60% to 70% of survey respondents is a critical outcome, showcasing the project's broader impact on creating safer environments for women. Moreover, the unanimous view that women who participated in the programme are more respected by their family members and the community is indicative of a positive societal shift. The high level of agreement (over 90%) among survey respondents regarding the project's positive impact on their knowledge, awareness, and day-to-day business activities underscores a comprehensive improvement in business acumen and skills.