

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-NPL_D_1.1

By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, the most marginalized and poor, increasingly benefit from and contribute to inclusive, resilient, and sustainable socio-economic transformation at federal, provincial, and local levels (UNSDCF Outcome 1)

There has been notable progress on this outcome in the first year of SN 2023-27 implementation. Firstly, a total of 300 women led Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have started digital financial transactions benefitting their business to transact digitally. This has helped them to access digital financial services to expand their business. In addition, Merchant Management System, the digital payment system of Nepal Clearing House Limited has been engendered by introducing gender field in the system and making it mandatory for the banking institutions to enter gender details while passing information of merchants. To this end, UN Women provided with technical and financial support in partnership with UNCDF. This is strategic interventions to capture gender information of MSMEs using digital payment system and inform the larger policy instruments to close gender digital divide. Secondly, the agenda of gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) and the invisibility and barriers of unpaid care and domestic work has been captured in the guidance note of the 16 th National Periodic Plan as a result of UN Women’s ongoing advocacy and assessment of barriers of women to the economic transformation. It was also supplemented by the memorandum of women led MSMEs submitted to the government capturing the voices and representation of women from all provinces demanding the solutions and recommendations to women led business. This was facilitated by Federation of Women Entrepreneurs Association of Nepal with technical and financial support from UN Women. Thirdly, private sectors have started advocating for and promoting GEWE agenda in Nepal. In 2023, nine companies have applied for the Women’s Economic Empowerment Principles (WEPEs) signatories established by UN Women. Among them, three have been approved and published in WEPEs portal. This was facilitated by UN Women engaging key private sector actors including the Global Compact Nepal, Stock Exchange Nepal and International Finance Corporation to promote gender equality through Ring the Bell event 2023 on the theme ‘DigitAll: Innovation and Technology for Gender Equality’.

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-NPL_D_1.2

By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, children, and the most marginalized and poor, increasingly participate in and benefit from equitably improved quality social services at federal, provincial, and local levels. (UNSDCF Outcome 2)

There has been some progress on this outcome. A total of 330 women, girls and LGBTIQ+ persons have benefited from quality social services. Among them, 40 (Dalit- 29, Janajati 4 and Brahmin/Chhetri- 7 all women) gender-based violence (GBV) survivors were able to access range of services including health care, psychosocial support, shelter, police and justice services. Further, 34 women and individuals from excluded groups (22 female, 12 male including 32 Dalit and 2 Brahmin/Chhetri) were able to secure social security allowance/social assistance from LGUs including their legal identities. They were provided with briefing, guidance in filling up the application forms, and accompaniment support in approaching government offices. These services were provided by eight local referral mechanisms in Karnali and Sudurpaschim Provinces established with support from the storytelling imitative implemented by UN

Women. This capacity enhancement is quantitatively supported by the number of service providers trained and the mechanisms established, demonstrating a substantial improvement in coordinated, survivor-centered care. The formation of these referral mechanism led to more strategic discussions and effective policy dialogues. This is reflected in the qualitative improvement in policy approaches and the increased frequency of these discussions, indicating a behavioral change among local policy makers and stakeholders. Further, a total of 256 people (114 female, 79 male and 63 others) including living with HIV and LGBTIQ+ accessed psychosocial support through Blue Diamond Society, an implementing partner of UN Women. The counselling sessions included issues related to psychological and mental stress about their lives of sexual orientation, family pressure for marriage, social stigma, and sexual abuse from their own relatives. Further, 875 members (all women) of the self-help groups (SGHs) have started actively participating in decision-making processes at the local level including for improved social services and challenge gender discriminatory norms and harmful practices including Chhaup dai practices, and no longer tolerate sheds. This was evidenced by 16 community action plans (CAPs) developed and implemented by these SGHs established under the storytelling initiative of UN Women, implemented by JURI Nepal and Centre for Dalit Women Nepal. As a result of these CAPs and family and community sessions, community members were able to strengthen their understanding of GBV, HIV and LGBTIQ+ issues and gained awareness of available formal support services. A compelling example is Dhansara Badi (Storytelling project participant), who initially perceived household chores as exclusively her daughter's responsibility. Through persistent efforts, she successfully altered this long-held belief and began involving her son in household responsibilities. Overcoming entrenched practices and convincing her son to share the responsibilities proved to be a challenging endeavor. Nevertheless, Dhansara triumphed in persuading both herself and her son, promoting a willingness on his part to actively participate in sharing the household duties with his sister. Dhansara's change of perspective highlights the significant impact of the SHGs in challenging ingrained beliefs and encouraging positive transformation within the community.

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-NPL_D_1.3

By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, children, and the most marginalised and poor, increasingly benefit from and contribute to building an inclusive, sustainable, climate-resilient and green society and reduced impacts of disasters at federal, provincial, and local levels. (UNSDCF Outcome 3)

In the reporting period, some progress was made towards promoting an inclusive, sustainable, climate-resilient, and green society, particularly benefiting women, youth, children, and the marginalized. The government of Nepal has made strong commitment and efforts towards strengthening gender equality in climate action. This was evidenced by the appointment of Ms. Binita Guragain as the new Gender Focal Point for UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the federal Ministry of Forest and Environment. Ms. Binita was able to strengthen her expertise on gender responsive right-based climate action through her participation in the cross-country learning workshop on "Enhancing capacity from design to action – gender responsive rights-based climate action, organized by UN Women Center for Excellence in Korea. One of the UN Women personnel from Nepal Country Office also facilitated a session on "gender-responsiveness in climate action". A total of 13 women (five government officials and eight CSO members) enhanced their skills through various international trainings in gender-responsive climate action and disaster risk reduction with financial and technical support from UN Women. Two participants from Women Humanitarian and Disaster Risk Reduction Platform and Women Friendly Disaster Management Group are now conducting the Rapid Gender Assessment (RGA) in the earthquake affected districts namely, Jajarkot and West Rukum, to assess differential needs and concerns of diverse women for recovery phase. These members received training on women's participation and leadership in crisis response and RGA with funding support from UN Women. UN Women has also established a partnership with Feminist Dalit Organization to distribute relief package in the same districts. Women and excluded people in Bajhang district are now accessing information related to post disaster services provided by the

local government and service providers. Additionally, the household work burden on these women was reduced with the use of fuel-saving and improved cooking devices provided by UN Women. Further, they also reported notable reduction of indoor air pollution otherwise caused by the traditional cooking stoves, ultimately contributing to their health condition. A total of 250 women affected by earthquake in Bajhang district received relief items including solar radio and fuel-saving cooking devices. This was facilitated by Women for Human Rights, a single women's group, with funding support from UN Women.

OUTCOME XM-DAC-41146-NPL_D_1.4

By 2027, more people, especially women, youth, and the most marginalized and poor increasingly participate in and benefit from coordinated, inclusive, accessible, participatory, transparent, and gender-responsive governance, access to justice and human rights at federal, provincial, and local levels.

Women and the most marginalized and poor increasingly participate in and benefit from coordinated, inclusive, accessible, participatory, transparent, and gender-responsive governance, access to justice and human rights at federal, provincial, and local levels. A total of 481 individuals (354 females, 127 males) accessed justice through 11 Judicial Committees, and informal justice mechanisms supported by UN Women in 11 Local Government Units (LGUs). This was further strengthened by the assistance of four legal aid lawyers. Among them, A total of 77 women (diverse ethnic groups) supported by 11 Grassroots Women's Organizations (GWOs) successfully accessed justice services, indicating the organizations' effective engagement in governance. These GWOs also conducted 23 advocacy programs involving 537 people (420 females, 117 males), addressing topics like strengthening GWOs-LGUs coordination for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) and facilitating access to justice. Furthermore, 25 community awareness events were organized by these GWOs, reaching 665 community members (620 females, 45 males) to combat discriminatory practices. UN Women's financial and technical support were crucial in these advocacy efforts. Further, three key policies - Mediation Procedure, Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion Policy, and Judicial Committee Procedural Law - were officially endorsed by two LGUs (Gauriganga Municipality, and Bhajani Municipality), highlighting an enhanced commitment to gender-sensitive justice processes. This was facilitated by Legal Aid and Consultancy Centre under the project on access to justice with funding and technical assistance from UN Women. Additionally, the first amendment to the Nepal Citizenship Act, 2006, came into effect, addressing key citizenship issues and paving the way for previously denied citizens to obtain citizenship through UN Women's advocacy efforts in close collaboration with key development partners and civil society organizations. Six LGUs allocated a total of NPR 13,00,000 (USD 9,848) for GWOs to conduct community awareness, showcasing increased collaboration between LGUs and GWOs. This was a result of UN Women's support to capacity building efforts in gender-responsive justice and human rights advocacy, reflective dialogues, sharing platforms, and video-making skills. The first-ever CEDAW shadow report was submitted by the Muslim Women's Group through the National Muslim Women Welfare Society (NMWWS), highlighting the status of Muslim women in Nepal and related key issues faced by this group and demanding accountability from duty bearers to address such issues. To facilitate this process, NMWWS received technical and financial from UN Women. Nepal's first same-sex marriage was registered at the local government, marking a milestone in marriage equality advocacy. This followed UN Women's recommendation on same-sex marriage equality and represents a significant achievement in civil rights. The federal Ministry of Women, Children and Senior Citizen finalized and submitted Nepal's Seventh Period Report to CEDAW in July 2023. This was achieved with continuous technical and financial support from UN Women, indicating strong collaboration and commitment to eliminating discrimination against women.