

EMPOWER: WOMEN FOR CLIMATE-RESILIENT SOCIETIES IN CAMBODIA

Photo: UN Women/Ploy Phutpheng

BACKGROUND

From 2018 to 2022, UN Women and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) have worked together through the first phase of the EmPower: Women for Climate-Resilient Societies programme to accelerate gender-responsive and human rights-based climate actions in Cambodia and across Asia and the Pacific.

With support from the Government of Sweden, UN Women, UNEP and partners have successfully engineered alternative climate-resilient livelihoods for vulnerable communities, reduced emissions through renewable energy and sparked commitments to ensure gender-responsive climate change adaptation and mitigation policies and actions in Cambodia and in the wider Asia-Pacific region.

Under the first phase of the programme, Cambodia has made considerable progress in mainstreaming gender in climate, disaster and energy-related policies. For instance, UN Women and UNEP have contributed to update Cambodia's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) with stronger gender mainstreaming and associated gender targets.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Programme Title: EmPower: Women for Climate-Resilient Societies

Responsible Agencies:
UN Women and UN Environment Programme

Duration: 5 Years
(January 2023 –December 2027)

Geographical Coverage:
Asia-Pacific region with a focus on Cambodia





Photo: UN Women/Ploy Phutpheng

STATE OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN CAMBODIA



The Global Climate Risk Index ranks Cambodia as the **14th most affected** by extreme weather events, such as storms, floods and droughts. The frequency and intensity of these events are being exacerbated by climate change.



Forecasts predict **more extreme weather events**, potentially more severe than the 2011 flood and 2015-2016 drought.



Sea levels in the region could rise **up to over half a metre by 2090** under the high emissions scenario, which could cause permanent flooding of about 25,000 ha coastal Cambodia.



The impacts of climate change are unequally felt across Cambodia. **The most vulnerable communities** are at risk of injuries, displacement, food and water insecurity and loss of livelihoods, among others.



Women, in particular, experience greater challenges in coping and rebuilding after a crisis due to the **lack of access to information, resources, finance and technologies.**

Building on the first phase of EmPower, UNEP and UN Women are scaling up the work from 2023. Phase II will leverage a variety of tools, methodologies, and data to implement existing plans and policies for gender-responsive, human rights-based climate action. The programme will expand the scope for women and other marginalized and gender-diverse groups to shape decisions and build resilience, including through new access to finance, technology and renewable energy as a driver of better livelihoods.

For this, further support is needed to bolster the capacities of government counterparts and other related stakeholders to advance, implement and monitor gender-responsive climate policies and plans.

PROJECT STRATEGY

Impact: People in Asia-Pacific experience greater gender equality and the full enjoyment of their rights, including equal access to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, reducing their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.

Outcome 1: Asia-Pacific actors increase action on gender-responsive climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Activities:

- Provide technical support to the implementation and monitoring of the key climate change and disaster related policies and plan of actions.
- Strengthen national capacity to apply gender analysis and engage in the production and use of gender and environment statistics to inform capacity development, policy implementation, and monitoring of gender and climate-related outcomes.
- Raise awareness and undertake communications outreach on the interlinkages between gender, human rights, climate change, renewable energy, and DRR and amplify results and learnings among broader stakeholders.
- Organize policy dialogues/discussions and identify possible policy interventions (either in existing policies or to develop new policy) that stipulate budget or financing options for banks to scale up renewable energy investments and enterprise development aligned with the principle of leaving no one behind.
- Support banks in credit assessments for renewable energy-based enterprise development interventions, which helps in determining the investment/financing/credit facility potential.

KEY RESULTS IN PHASE I



108

government officials trained and increased knowledge on integrating gender in their work on climate change and disaster management



28

women-focused and civil society organizations empowered to influence decision-making on climate change, renewable energy and DRR



7

women have built climate-resilient livelihoods using renewable energy



GUIDELINE TO INTEGRATE GENDER IN INCLUSIVE DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN (2019-2023)

have been developed and adopted for implementation



NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (NDCS) (2020)

reviewed and updated through the leadership of the Government of Cambodia, with contributions from the programme enabling stronger references to gender and inclusion of associated gender targets.



Beneficiaries and partners of the EmPower project in Cambodia
 Photo: UN Women/Ploy Phutpheng

Outcome 2: Women in all their diversity and other marginalized groups are represented as key environmental actors in climate and DRR decision-making.

Activities:

- Support CSOs, especially women-led organisations, to strengthen the community of practice established in Phase I as the core groups for peer-to-peer learning on climate change and DRR and promote learning through national and regional forums in policy dialogue.
- Support joint advocacy among CSOs and gender advocates prioritising gender-responsive actions focusing on gender equality, climate change, renewable energy, DRR and its nexus with violence against women (VAW), including convening dialogues to amplify their voice in the key climate and disaster risk management related platforms and processes
- Provide technical and financial support to women-led organization to implement gender-responsive and inclusive adaptation schemes.
- Conduct capacity development to increase knowledge/awareness among CSOs on harmful social and gender norms, gender-based violence (GBV), and discrimination.
- Design feminist public awareness campaigns to address harmful social norms related to GBV/VAW and limited representation of women leadership in climate change and DRR.

Outcome 3: Women and other marginalized groups in Asia-Pacific engage in climate-resilient livelihoods.

Activities:

- Initiate discussions with banks and other financing institutions, develop a broad guideline to create/align a dedicated financing scheme with Leave No One Behind principles.
- Support women's and marginalised groups through technical assistance to access to renewable energy technology and finance.
- Raise awareness and engage with CSOs to promote climate-resilient livelihood and the use of renewable energy technology and equitable financial scheme.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Ministry of Women's Affairs
- Ministry of Environment
- National Committee for Disaster Management
- Ministry of Mine and Energy
- National Council for sustainable development
- National Committee for sub-national democratic development
- Agricultural and Rural Development Bank
- Women-led organizations

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