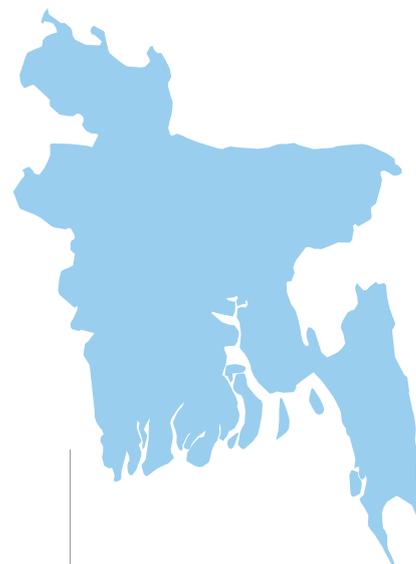
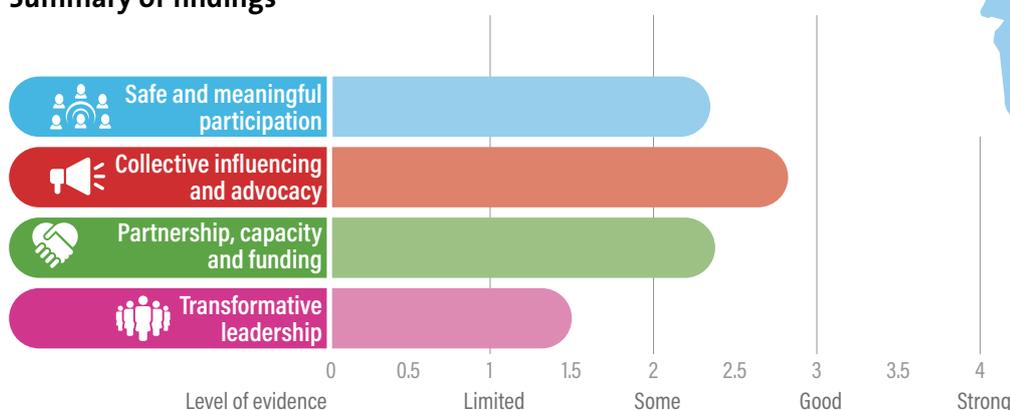


MEASURING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE COVID-19 RESPONSE IN BANGLADESH

Whilst there is evidence of progress of women's leadership in the COVID-19 response in Bangladesh, there is significant work to do to ensure women's rights organisations (WROs) are able to participate safely, collectively influence, and experiencing equitable partnerships, and are able to impact the overall direction of the response.



Summary of findings



SETTING THE SCENE

Our research found:



There are **important and strong examples** where WROs have participated and advocated. This is particularly at the community level and in local spaces through programme implementation.

'WROs are able to participate in decision-making at the community level, not as much at the national level'

(research participant)



However, there are **key opportunities** to strengthen the support provided to women and WROs to ensure their inclusion and leadership in key COVID-19 forums. WROs' participation, advocacy and partnership need to be elevated to key decision-making forums where influence and decision-making is concentrated.

'WROs were excluded because there was limited to no opportunity for them to work as leader[s] as well as contribute to the decision-making program, mainly because of the nature of the pandemic'

(research participant)



WOMEN'S INFLUENCE AND LEADERSHIP

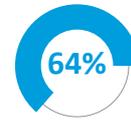
Experience



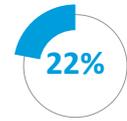
There is a **disparity of perceptions and experience** between WROs and other humanitarian actors. Women's rights organisations did not feel that the right organisations are receiving support to address gender based issues.

The appropriate organisations are receiving support to address gender-based issues

Strongly agree / agree



Other humanitarian actors



WROs

Advocacy



However, the research found that WROs do feel that donors have **amplified the voices** of WROs during COVID-19

Donors have amplified the voices of WROs during COVID-19



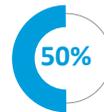
81% of WROs agree or strongly agree

Participation

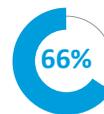


The **impact of identified barriers**, such as such as a lack of resources, access to opportunities and not being seen as having the critical skills or knowledge to contribute, **contributes to a lack of representation of women** in decision-making spaces. This can then be seen in the perception of how the needs of diverse women are being addressed.

The needs of diverse women have been addressed adequately during the COVID-19 response.



50% of WROs strongly agree / agree



66% of other humanitarian actors strongly agree / agree

Key steps for progressing women's leadership in COVID-19

Women and women's organisation's urgently need bolstered and ongoing support to increase their leadership and participation in the COVID-19 response



There are several key steps that partners and donors of WROs and other humanitarian actors could consider to better facilitate leadership of WROs in COVID-19 responses:

- ▶ **Actively invite** WROs to key coordination forums (such as clusters)
- ▶ Support WROs in **preparing for meetings**
- ▶ Ensure WROs activities and programmes are **appropriately funded**
- ▶ **Discuss openly** with partners the impacts of changes to funding, programme implementation, and no cost extensions on WROs
- ▶ Engage in **iterative conversations** about capacity support needed during different times in the response
- ▶ Provide support for WROs including women with disabilities and LGBTQI+ people to be present at **advocacy opportunities** at the national level
- ▶ Engage with WROs to **better understand** barriers to participation in forums and how partners, donors and other humanitarian actors can support their attendance