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IN THE LOOP

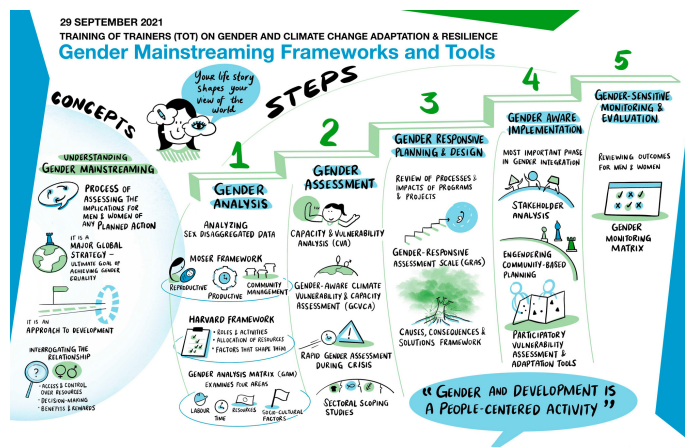
EmPower's Biannual Newsletter

EmPower is a regional programme on gender mainstreaming in climate change, renewable energy and disaster risk reduction in Asia jointly implemented by UN Women and UNEP.

Photo: UN Environment Programme/Reelmedia Film

Responding to CSOs needs to make an impact

As part of EmPower's work on women's leadership development and capacity-building for civil society organizations (CSOs), UN Women partnered with the Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Center for Women (ARROW) to develop a Training Manual on Gender and Climate Resilience. Using the materials from this manual, six online Trainings of Trainers (ToTs) were organised throughout 2021 in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Thailand, Nepal, and the Philippines. There were a total of 165 participants, 115 of whom were female, representing 110 CSOs. EmPower also published a complete ToT package in 7 languages to amplify the impact of its capacity-building work and promote more ToTs across the region.



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KEY UPDATES

- More CSOs and government officials trained on gender mainstreaming in climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Three additional assessments on the State of Gender Equality and Climate Change at the country level published
- Greater gender integration in climate-relevant policies promoted in COP26
- Climate and gender champions from Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Viet Nam featured in a new regional campaign
- E-course on gender equality and human rights in climate change and renewable energy officially launched
- Women entrepreneurs in pilot countries gained skills and access to affordable financing for the use of renewable energy in different types of livelihood and enterprise development programs

Responding to CSOs...(continued)

The training manual was based on a needs assessment conducted with CSOs from EmPower's pilot countries of Bangladesh, Cambodia and Viet Nam. It aimed to understand the capacity gaps experienced by this sector when it came to gender mainstreaming in climate change and disaster risk reduction plans, policies, and projects.

The report classifies the needs under five broad categories: technical knowledge needs in projects, leadership capacities, advocacy needs, organizational development needs, and resource mobilization needs. It also explores the barriers CSOs experience in gender mainstreaming beyond capacity gaps while examining

the support they require beyond technical capacity to strengthen their gender- mainstreaming advocacy work. The results of the assessment can be accessed [here](#).



How renewable energy powers equality and sustainable livelihoods in the region

Because EmPower advocates for the use of renewable energy as a means to provide more climate-resilient livelihoods to women impacted by climate change as well as Covid-19, it is important to ensure that there is also work being done on increasing access to skills and resources. In Cambodia, a dedicated credit line for women entrepreneurs was established by the Agriculture and Rural Development Bank, providing affordable financing to women setting up renewable energy-based micro-enterprises. Moul Phally, whose income was greatly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, gained access to loans, enabling her to set up a solar-powered drinking water facility which has become a more sustainable source of livelihood for her and her family.

In Bangladesh, installations of solar power systems have been completed in 4 sites. Women like Reti Khatun who are the primary providers of their family, now have access to solar energy for powering equipment used for goat farming activities. Meanwhile, in Viet Nam, women's groups and women entrepreneurs including those from ethnic minorities were trained to use renewable energy for different types of enterprises including climate-smart agriculture. Luon Thi Giang was able to build a solar drying system that is being used for mushroom

production. This has increased the income of her cooperative since it helped minimize the negative impacts of drastic changes in climate that have become increasingly common in her area.

EmPower has also contributed to creating a strong demand for continuous knowledge exchange and more focused capacity-building efforts when it comes to establishing renewable energy as a viable solution against gender inequality and climate change. In 27 October 2021, UNEP and UNESCAP co-organised the regional event, Expert Exchange on Green Recovery through Women's Entrepreneurship in Renewable Energy, during the 11th International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development with the aim of sharing lessons learned on designing and implementing renewable energy-based enterprises led by women. The guidebook entitled Renewable Energy and Women Entrepreneurship Programmes is coming soon!



Photo: UN Environment Programme/Reelmedia Film

In Photo: The solar drying tent Hop Giang Cooperative uses for mushroom production under the EmPower programme

In Photo: Reti Khatun is pictured in her goat farm where solar energy is being used to pump clean water and generate electricity for lights and fans



Photo: UN Environment Programme/ Reelmedia Film

Pioneering approaches for rural women's climate resilience in Bangladesh

Under EmPower, UN Women Bangladesh in partnership with Practical Action have provided training for gender-responsive climate resilient agriculture to women farmers, women-led CSOs, and the most climate-vulnerable women in the country. It enhanced their knowledge and skills on climate-adaptive crop variety and techniques, marketing, agro-advisory and early warning information. There were 200 women farmers and 15 women-led CSOs trained on climate-smart vegetable production, while there were 12 women farmers trained on developing plant nurseries.

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the training had to take an innovative approach to reach the community-based women-led CSOs and women farmers by disseminating agro-advisory and preparedness information through mobile phones. A total of 22,000 text messages and 19,500 outbound dialling which is a form of voice messaging for those who cannot read, on the topics of agrometeorology and disaster preparedness were transmitted to 14 women-led CSOs and 1,474 women farmers in Satkhira and Kurigram.

The national helpline for agro-information was promoted in EmPower's project areas as well. It ensured access of women farmers to appropriate varieties of crops, necessary organic fertilizers, and suitable cultivation methods crucial to enhance

agricultural production. Women farmers and CSO leaders also became better prepared for cyclones and monsoon-induced flooding due to their increased access to disaster preparedness and early warning messages and information.

Working with key actors to raise women's voices for climate action in Cambodia

UN Women Cambodia, in partnership with ActionAid International Cambodia, supported the establishment of a women champions' network and promoted women's participation in climate actions at local and national level. The members of the Women Champion Network (WCN) were able to engage in various activities, including those that tackled the vulnerability of women with disabilities to climate change impacts, as well as the implementation of the second phase of the accountability strategy and the 3-year rolling investment plan and program for communes.

The WCN worked with local CSOs to raise awareness on Covid-19 and disaster risk reduction (DRR). They coordinated with local authorities to install drainage systems to prevent flooding, rehabilitated canals, and established a mangrove nursery. In KohKong province, the WCN played a significant role in coordinating

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Working with key actors... (continued)

efforts and advocating for the establishment of an eco-tourist site that would provide better livelihood opportunities for women in the area while preserving the endangered mangrove forest. More CSO partners and government officials were also trained on gender mainstreaming, climate change and DRR.

Moreover, UN Women Cambodia provided technical support to the National Committee of Disaster Management (NCDM) in developing and finalizing the Guidelines on Gender Mainstreaming and Inclusiveness in Disaster Risk Management. This was officially launched on 25 November 2021 during a hybrid event where the guidelines were recognized as an important tool in improving the work on disaster management of the Royal Government of Cambodia and in advocating for more funding and integration of gender issues in disaster management. According to Her Excellency, Khov Sang, Deputy Secretary General of NCDM, the guidelines have the potential to be used nationwide in the coming years.



Photo: UN Women/Rotvatey Sovann

Strengthening policy frameworks and climate financing in Viet Nam

The government of Viet Nam in collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat and UN Women Viet Nam, organized the first ASEAN Forum on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction to revisit the Ha Noi Recommendations which was adopted at the Asia-Pacific Conference on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction in 2016 in Ha Noi. More than 100 participants from ASEAN Member States, UN agencies, development partners and NGOs came together to review the current progress and challenges in the implementation of Ha Noi recommendations in the last 5 years.

These were enhanced to account for the current context and new commitments made by ASEAN Member States on integrating gender in the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response Work Programme 2021-2025. The revised Ha Noi recommendations for Action on Gender and DRR will continue to serve as a guiding document for ASEAN in promoting, developing, and implementing more gender-responsive DRR policies.

UN Women Viet Nam continued to strengthen the Network of Women Pioneering in Climate Change

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What the NDC commitments across Asia-Pacific are telling us

All 49 Asia-Pacific Member States have submitted their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, 46 of which evolved into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). By August 2021, 30 countries submitted updated NDCs, of which 6 were a second NDC submission. Several low-income countries exhibited high

climate ambition and are leading in gender mainstreaming in climate policy.

Gender mainstreaming is increasingly recognized as a means to raise ambition and improve the effectiveness of climate action. 42 percent of updated NDCs refer to gender as a cross-cutting issue and as part of adaptation, and to an extent, mitigation. Many countries have included SDG 5 for meeting climate outcomes in their NDCs and national climate policies and strategies. Apart

from this, 8 countries in the region received the highest possible score on gender mainstreaming in climate change policy.

However, the current NDC pledges of the Asia-Pacific Member States need to be drastically enhanced to achieve carbon neutrality in 2050-2060. Without region-wide carbon neutral pledges and further revised and more ambitious NDC targets before 2030 and after, carbon neutrality will not be within reach of the Asia-Pacific region by 2050. View our interactive NDC map [here](#).

Strengthening policy...(continued)

Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction. Members of the network who participated in the Gender and Climate Resilience ToT were able to develop activities for the promotion of gender equality in their project areas. Eight initiatives were selected to get funding support of around USD1,000 from EmPower and the Blue Water Fund of USAID for implementation in different provinces in Viet Nam.

During Gender Day at UNFCCC/COP26, the Network of Women Pioneering in Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction developed [key messages](#) and organized the Workshop on [Women's Participation in Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction](#) in collaboration with Viet Nam Women's Union to highlight women's role in climate change and DRR and provide recommendations to the government that will further recognize and promote women's participation and leadership in this area.

UPCOMING EVENTS

International Women's Day

We're celebrating International Women's Day with a virtual learning event called Sharing Power: Empathy and Empowerment for Climate Action on 7 March 2022 from 10:00-11:30 hours (GMT+7).

The 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women

[CSW 66](#) will be held from 14 to 25 March 2022. The Asia-Pacific Regional Consultation on the priority theme of the 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women: "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes" will be co-organised by UN Women, UN ESCAP, UNDRR, UNFPA, UNICEF, and UNEP on 9-10 February 2022 from 9:30 -12:30 (GMT+7).

Re-Envision Resilience Campaign

The regional campaign will raise awareness on the importance of women's leadership in climate action by highlighting the work that climate and gender champions are doing in Bangladesh, Cambodia, and Viet Nam, and calling for the prioritization of women and girls' needs in decision-making processes around climate-resilience building in the context of Covid-19.



NEW RESOURCES

Click the links below ▾

- The State of Gender Equality and Climate Change in Cambodia
- The State of Gender Equality and Climate Change in Nepal
- Accelerating Gender-responsive Action through Empowered CSOs
- Training of Trainers Package on Gender and Climate Resilience
- Basics of Mainstreaming Gender into Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policies
- Integrating Gender in Climate Change and Disaster-related Statistics in Asia and the Pacific: Example Indicators
- Can COP26 Become a Turning Point for Gender-Responsive Climate Action