

IN THE LOOP

EmPower's Biannual Newsletter
June 2022

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: UNEP/Bangladesh

Recognizing women's leadership in climate action on World Environment Day

EmPower has spotlighted the powerful stories of eight women and one male ally who have shown leadership in climate action in the [Re-Envisioning Resilience Virtual Photobook](#), which was launched on the occasion of **World Environment Day** (5th June).

The photobook showcases these women climate champions' efforts for advancing gender equality in climate action in their homes and communities across Bangladesh, Cambodia and Viet Nam.



To quote one of the women featured in the book:

"We need to continue expanding the network of people who care about gender equality and climate change issues and spread that message more widely."

- Doan Vu Thao Ly, Viet Nam -

KEY RESULTS ACHIEVED

- **40 women-led enterprises** have adopted renewable energy technologies in their businesses and the project support to access financing and build these climate resilient livelihoods has economically empowered **425 women** in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Viet Nam.
- So far **1.592 people** have gained knowledge on the nexus of human rights, gender equality, climate change and renewable energy through a self-paced e-course using the learnings and experiences from EmPower. You can take the course [here](#)
- Additionally, **74 policy makers** from Asia came together in an online workshop to increase their understanding of how to develop more gender-responsive climate policies. Read up on it [here](#)
- The Chair of the Renewable Energy Sub-Sector Network of the ASEAN Energy Cooperation has decided to **adopt the Roadmap** on Accelerating ASEAN Renewable Energy Deployment through Gender-Responsive Energy Policy.

Progress on Outcome Indicators

Outcome Indicators	Target	Achieved
# of gender-responsive climate change and DRR actions and policies implemented, or documents adopted at the national or regional level	10 policies	11 policies
# of countries benefit from knowledge and evidence to enhance gender responsive climate resilience and DRR in Asia and the Pacific	10 countries	14 countries
# of women facing indirect economic benefits from project's RE interventions	800 women	2000 women
# of women facing direct economic benefits from project's RE interventions	200 women	425 women
# of climate resilient interventions are implemented	5 climate resilient interventions	38 climate resilient interventions

After 5 years of project implementation EmPower has in many ways exceeded expectations

A change assessment is underway that will report in detail on the longlasting socio-economic benefits and impacts of the project interventions

Enhancing practical knowledge to mainstreaming gender in climate change policies in Asia-Pacific

UN CC:Learn and EmPower joined forces once again to organize a two-day moderated [“E-Workshop on Gender Equality and Human Rights in Climate Action and Renewable Energy”](#).

The workshop took place on 6th and 7th April 2022 and attracted 74 regional policymakers to discuss how women’s access to renewable energy can positively affect gender equality, human rights, and climate action.

On Day 1, starting from existing climate policies from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Viet Nam, Sri Lanka and Indonesia, participants discussed with country experts what gender mainstreaming looks like in practice, enhancing experience-sharing across the Asia-Pacific region. Day 2 provided an opportunity for deep-dives into designing gender-responsive activities in the sectors of renewable energy, forestry and agriculture.

How solar energy is helping tackle gender inequality



Photo: UNEP/Vietnam

As part of the lead up to Stockholm +50, projects and initiatives that have positively impacted the environment and people’s lives were looked back at. In this context, EmPower was highlighted as a project that puts gender equality at the heart of climate action.

The article underlined EmPower's premise that increasing women’s access to renewable energy technology should go hand in hand with more accessible financing.

It went on to give examples of some of the project's beneficiaries, such as Mang Oun (pictured above). She provides for her family of five by growing and selling vegetables. Having access to loans has allowed her to set up a solar pump for irrigation. This has made her source of livelihood more climate-resilient, but also ensured that it would be more sustainable, efficient, and profitable in the long run.

Read the full [article](#) published on the Stockholm +50 website.

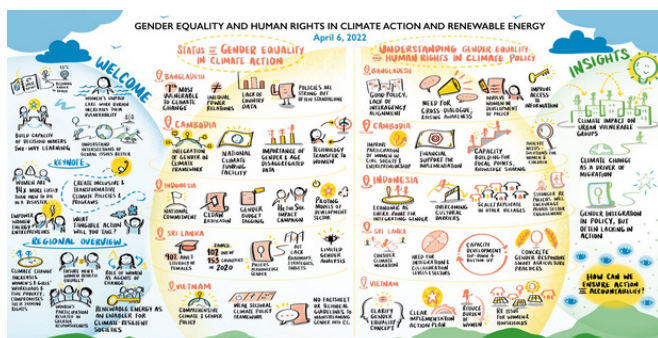


Photo: UNEP /Cambodia



Award for innovative, sustainable and global women's policy projects



The EmPower team is humbled that the project has been awarded with the award for innovative, sustainable and global women's policy projects by UN Women Germany and the City of Bonn. It was accepted by Dagmar Schumacher, Director of UN Women's Brussels office, at the University Club Bonn on 23 March.

"The EmPower project is helping to empower women to address climate change and implement climate change and disaster risk reduction measures in Asia and the Pacific," said Maria Holtsberg, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Risk Advisor UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, who presented the project and achievements.

For more than 20 years, UN Women Germany and the City of Bonn have jointly awarded innovative, sustainable and global women's policy projects. The prize is initiated and financed by the Apfelbaum Foundation. The prize money this year was 20,000 euros. More information [here](#)

Virtual mission to Bangladesh

The Swedish State Secretary for International Development Cooperation, Jenny Ohlsson, and the Swedish Ambassador to Bangladesh, Anne Van Leeuwen, made a virtual visit to EmPower's activities in Bangladesh on May 3rd, to get a closer look at the work being carried out in the field.

One of the most touching moments was when Reti Khatun shared her story and explained how she is applying the knowledge she gained through the EmPower Project to transfer it to other women in her communities and how solar energy is supporting them in tackling climate change and addressing the impact of Covid-19.

Watch her amazing testimony in this [video](#)



Photo: UNEP/Bangladesh

EmPower presented as a success story at UN global working group

On May 31, UNEP was invited to take part in the 2-hour virtual workshop of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) on Gender Equality and how gender-transformative approaches helps address the climate crisis and achieve progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Following the plenary session, UNEP presented on women's resilience to climate change through EmPower in Asia.

ASEAN's commitment to accelerating renewable energy through including a gender perspective

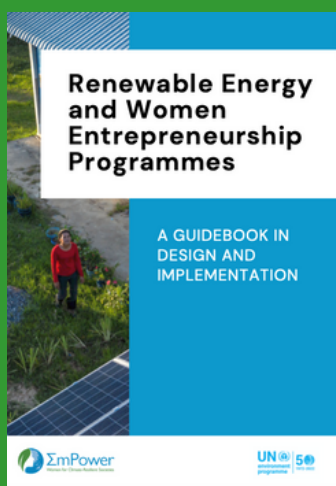
A Roadmap on Accelerating ASEAN Renewable Energy Deployment through Gender-Responsive Energy Policy is being developed by [The ASEAN Centre for Energy \(ACE\)](#) in collaboration with UNEP.

Workshops and focal group discussions have informed the roadmap, bringing together focal points from the ASEAN Regional Energy Policy and Planning and Renewable Energy Sub-Sectoral Networks.

Coming soon...

- **3 Gender Equality and Climate Change Assessment Reports for Bangladesh, ASEAN and South Asia & Hindu Kush Himalayan region** present evidence of the interlinkages between gender equality and climate change in their specific country and regional context.
- The **Scalability and Sustainability Study of the work on women's entrepreneurship in renewable energy** provides an up-to-date regional analysis of the gendered impacts in key climate change adaptation and mitigation sectors. It will support other institutions to use the approach developed by EmPower and inform its Phase II.
- **Showcasing EmPower's key results over the years** through a Results Journey Video and Storytelling Virtual Microsite, by highlighting how UNEP and UN Women have collaborated with partners to make this unique journey possible.
- An independent and ambitious **Final Evaluation** is currently being undertaken. Its main findings so far include that EmPower has tapped into a highly relevant global knowledge gap. Overall the evaluation has found that the project has delivered on all stated outputs and is moving toward impact level results. The **Final Evaluation Report** will be available in July.

Key methodologies and learnings available on women's entrepreneurship in renewable energy



Renewable Energy and Women Entrepreneurship Programmes. A guidebook in design and implementation

The purpose of this guidebook is to provide practitioners and donors with a step-by-step methodology to design and implement renewable energy based women enterprise projects, using the hands-on experiences and learnings from various projects including from UNEP's EmPower project.

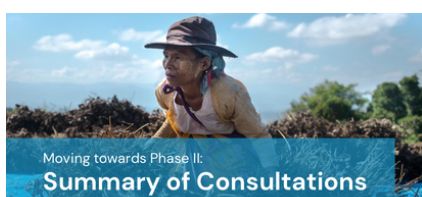
Gender-Responsive Renewable Energy Programmes

This report takes stock of the ongoing experiences related to gender-responsive renewable energy programmes as well as the consolidated wealth of knowledge and lessons learned in this field. Although a number of gender-inclusive renewable energy-based programmes do exist and are documented individually, they are scattered across regions.

EmPower Phase II is in the making...

UNEP and UN Women would like to use the knowledge, evidence and change made to scale up for stronger impact in the countries and at regional level in Asia Pacific where UNEP and UN Women build on the strong partnerships established since 2018.

The design of an EmPower Phase II (2023-2027) is currently being developed informed by national and regional stakeholders feedback and the Final Evaluation recommendations.



Overview

Asia Pacific is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change, according to the Global Climate Risk Index, one of the ten countries most affected by extreme weather events in the region. Climate change has also had significant impacts for women and the most marginalized communities. A key developmental challenge and goal for transformation is to ensure that all people, including women, have the skills to cope with and respond to climate impacts.

The **EmPower Action on Climate-Resilient Sustainable Growth** is a flagship initiative implemented by UN Women and UNEP, with the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). It aims to strengthen the integration of gender equality and human rights in climate change and disaster risk reduction in the region by enhancing national and regional capacities to address climate change and disaster risk reduction in the last three years.

Over the last three years, the initiative has supported more gender-responsive policies in addition to supporting key policy areas, strengthening collective leadership of governments, financial institutions, women entrepreneurs, regional organizations and civil society.

In the context of establishing the positive momentum brought by the project, a series of consultations were undertaken to identify key opportunities and priorities on gender equality, human rights, and climate change. The consultations were conducted in a participatory manner, involving governments, civil society, academia, and UN agencies to share experiences and insights on the current situation and opportunities for the consultation, collaboration and regional work shop. Consultations took place from November-December of 2022. All participants were also invited to share additional information as a basis.



Process

The virtual workshops were designed to facilitate collaborative engagement and mutual participation by showcasing the objectives of the project, identifying all major stakeholders, and all the main areas of the proposed project and identifying key for collective discussion. Guiding questions were shared during the workshop as follows:

- 1) Do you think the proposed project design is relevant to the regional context and issues?
 - a) What are the areas to focus on that need more attention?
 - b) What are the areas where good progress has already been made?
- 2) Recommended partners and stakeholders.
- 3) What are the good examples of national initiatives to build on and link to?
- 4) Do you see any link in the course of implementation?



UPCOMING EVENTS

Workshop of the Sub-regional Report on the State of Gender and Climate Change for South Asia and HKH Region

The launch of the State of Gender and Climate Change Report for South Asia serves as an opportunity to engage stakeholders to present findings of the study and recommendations.

Launch of the Roadmap on Accelerating ASEAN Renewable Energy Deployment through Gender-Responsive Energy Policy

Currently under development with ACE.

Additional deliverables are:

Policy Brief (regional perspectives) on Gender Equality in Renewable Energy Policy in the ASEAN region by 22nd July; Adoption of the roadmap; opinion articles promoting the Roadmap by 15th August.

Partnership conference EmPower Phase II

The project team plans to gather key donors and partners to present the idea of the EmPower Phase II along with the findings from the Final Evaluation of the first phase of the project.

Side Event at COP27

Co-organization of side events during COP27 to share lessons learned and outcomes of EmPower.

NEW RESOURCES

Click the links below ▾

- [Asia-Pacific's Progress towards Gender-Responsive NDCs](#)
- [RE-Envision Resilience Virtual Photobook](#)
- [Renewable Energy: Powering Equality for a Green Recovery: videos and infographics](#)
- [E-course: Gender Equality and Human Rights in Climate Action and Renewable Energy](#)
- [E-Workshop on Gender Equality and Human Rights in Climate Action and Renewable Energy](#)

