

EMPOWER: WOMEN FOR CLIMATE-RESILIENT SOCIETIES IN BANGLADESH

Photo: UN Women/Shararat Islam

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 project to accelerate gender-responsive and human rights-based climate actions in Bangladesh 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, developed a cohort of grass root women CSOs to lead the way to community-based adaptation initiatives and sparked commitments to ensure gender-responsive climate change adaptation and mitigation policies and actions in Bangladesh and in the wider Asia-Pacific region.

Under the first phase of the project, Bangladesh has made considerable progress in mainstreaming gender in climate, disaster and energy-related policies. For instance, with the support of UN Women and UNEP, the country reviewed and updated its Climate Change Gender Action Plan (ccGAP) and adopted a National Action Plan (NAP) on Renewable Energy and Women Entrepreneurship for Bangladesh.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project 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 Bangladesh





STATE OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN BANGLADESH



The Global Climate Risk Index ranks Bangladesh as the **7th 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.



Over the past 50 years, the average temperature in Bangladesh has **increased by approximately 0.5°C**. By 2050, the annual average temperature in Bangladesh is expected to rise by **1°C - 1.5°C**.



The impacts of climate change are unequally felt across Bangladesh. **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 project 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 leading to enhanced community resilience. Along with that, further support will be provided.

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:

- Prepare an integrated implementation plan to facilitate alignment and implementation of policies related to climate change, gender, renewable energy, and entrepreneurship.
- Strengthen the capacity and knowledge of relevant stakeholders in disaster risk reduction and climate change and foster collaboration to create a gender-responsive and climate-resilient society.
- Support inclusive and sustainable investments in renewable energy to advance women's economic empowerment.

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

Activities:

- Foster collaboration among national, sub-national, and local CSOs to advance their leadership and participation in gender-responsive climate adaptation and mitigation actions in the country and beyond.
- Establish women's leadership in locally led adaptation agenda by enabling community women leaders leading community identified low-cost adaptation schemes.

KEY RESULTS IN PHASE I



276

government officials and climate professionals increased their knowledge and skills of gender-responsive climate change adaptation and mitigation



59

women have built climate-resilient livelihoods using renewable energy



212

women farmers were capacitated on climate-resilient livelihoods through practicing low-cost locally-led adaptation schemes



269

women leaders from 63 CSOs were empowered to influence decision-making on climate change, renewable energy and disaster risk reduction



CLIMATE CHANGE GENDER ACTION PLAN (CCGAP) 2022

updated in partnership with Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT) under the leadership of the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEFCC)



Beneficiaries and partners of the EmPower project in Bangladesh
Photo: UN Women/Shararat Islam

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

Activities:

- Facilitate women's access to resources, including finance and climate-resilient technologies, and strengthen their capacity to establish and run renewable energy-based enterprises.
- Initiate and expand collaborations with banks, financial institutions and the private sector to secure and advance investments for inclusive renewable energy-based livelihoods.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
- Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority
- Department of Environment (DoE)
- Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA)
- Department of Women Affairs (DWA)
- Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources
- Ministry of Planning and Investment

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