

HUMANITARIAN ACTION AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

2020 Annual Report



Cover Photo: Mobina Khatun, one of 40 Rohingya women volunteers, working with UN-Women to mobilize their communities and raise awareness on COVID-19

Produced by UN Women's Women Peace and Security, Humanitarian Action and Disaster Risk Reduction Section

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FOREWORD

Photo: UN Women/Samar Hazboun



2020, marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action and the twentieth anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security, was intended to be a monumental year for gender equality. Instead, across every sphere, from health and livelihoods to protection, we saw the limited gains made towards gender equality at risk of being rolled back. In crisis and disaster contexts, women and girls bore the brunt of yet another calamity as gender-based violence rose exponentially, their livelihoods were disproportionately impacted, and their access to basic services and resources was further curtailed. At the same time, women – and often girls – took on more care burdens, led in the COVID-19 response as frontline workers, and organized themselves to meet their own needs as well as those of their communities. From across the world, our partner women’s organizations

in crisis and disaster settings shared deep concerns as resources were reallocated, the backlash against women’s rights grew, and restrictive lockdowns imposed limitations in their ability to deliver critical assistance. The case for placing women and girls at the center of prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, particularly in crisis settings, has never been stronger.

Escalating conflicts, protracted displacement crises, and the increasing frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters coupled with the pandemic left record numbers of people in need of humanitarian and disaster assistance. UN-Women stood alongside women and girls in crisis and disaster settings to mobilize and deliver gender-responsive action in partnership with the international community, national machineries, and civil society. Across regions, from Asia Pacific

to Latin America and the Caribbean, we documented the disproportionate impacts of multi-faceted crises on women and girls and utilized this evidence to advocate for efforts that responded to their unique needs and capacities. By partnering with 1,270 local women's organizations – a 70 percent increase compared to 2019 – in humanitarian settings, we harnessed our strong relationship with civil society to deliver for women and girls while driving the localization agenda forward. From the Adjumani refugee camp in Uganda to Beirut following the Port Explosions, and the Pacific countries preparing for another tropical cyclone whilst coping with impacts of COVID-19, UN-Women amplified the voices of women and women's rights organizations and facilitated their leadership in decision-making spaces.

UN-Women's humanitarian services improved the livelihood opportunities, protection, and self-reliance of more women and girls than ever before. Similarly, UN-Women's work through the Women's Resilience to Disaster flagship programme is strengthening the voice and agency of women and girls to withstand multiple hazards, recover from disasters, and increase their resilience to future disasters and threats contributing to sustainable, secure, and thriving communities. Across crisis-affected and high disaster and climate-risk countries and at the global level, humanitarian and disaster risk reduction actors drew upon UN-Women's gender expertise and guidance to deliver better for women and girls. It gives me great pride to present these and other significant results that my colleagues have jointly delivered in the face of tremendous challenges in this Annual Report.

It has also been our honour to receive the continued support of Member States who have been steadfast partners in our efforts to improve outcomes for women and girls in crisis and disaster contexts. In

2020, we strengthened our partnership with sister-agencies, including through new Memorandum of Understanding with UNHCR, a global partnership with UNFPA in implementing the Central Emergency Response Fund in close collaboration with UN OCHA, and continued close cooperation with UNDRR, UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA to support the gender-responsive implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

As crises and disasters become more multi-faceted with complex and inter-woven drivers, UN-Women's recently merged Peace and Security, Humanitarian Action and Disaster Risk Reduction Section allowed us a timely opportunity to consolidate efforts in these interlinking areas. This exercise has provided UN-Women with a foundation to extend more coherent support to women and girls before, during, and after crises arising from conflict, displacement, disasters, climate-change, and the COVID-19 pandemic. In parallel, we have been undertaking an extensive consultation process leading toward the development of UN-Women's new Humanitarian Strategy. I am confident that these institutional developments, alongside the proven contributions outlined in this and previous Humanitarian Action and Disaster Risk Reduction Annual Reports, has uniquely well-positioned UN-Women to accelerate gender equality in crisis and disaster settings. We look forward to continuing serving women and girls drawing on synergies at UN-Women, across the UN system, the international community, national partners, and civil society guided by the voices of those whom we seek to serve.



Paivi Kannisto

Chief

Women Peace and Security, Humanitarian Action and Disaster Risk Reduction Section

INTRODUCTION

In 2021, 235 million people were estimated to need humanitarian assistance in country contexts where displacement and vulnerability are fueled by conflict, climate change, disasters and more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic.¹ 82.4 million people were forcibly displaced globally with 2020 being the ninth year of uninterrupted rise in forced displacement worldwide.² The last decade saw the highest ever number

of people internally displaced by conflict and violence, with many locked in a state of protracted displacement that in some cases last for decades. Furthermore, in 2020 alone, 98.4 million people were affected by 389 disasters globally, costing USD 171.3 billion.³ Humanitarian contexts have become increasingly complex and protracted, often with multiple crises compounding needs.⁴



Photo: UN Women/Pablo Villota

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- 1 “Global Humanitarian Overview 2021.” ReliefWeb. UN OCHA, December 2020. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/global-humanitarian-overview-2021-enarfres>
 - 2 “Global Trends in Forced Displacement in 2020.” UNHCR, June 2021. <https://www.unhcr.org/flagship-reports/globaltrends/>
 - 3 “Disaster Year in Review 2020: Global Trends and Perspectives.” ReliefWeb. CRED, UNDRR, USAID, May 2021. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/cred-crunch-newsletter-issue-no-62-may-2021-disaster-year-review-2020-global-trends-and#:~:text=In%202020%2C%20389%20natural%20disasters,a%20strong%20EI%20Ni%3%B1o%20effect>
 - 4 Global Trends in Forced Displacement in 2020.” UNHCR, June 2021. <https://www.unhcr.org/flagship-reports/globaltrends/>
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Gender inequality is a key underlying risk increasing women's vulnerability to crises. Women and girls affected by crisis, be it conflict, displacement, disasters or climate change, face violence and exclusion due to pre-existing gender-based discrimination and disadvantages, directly affecting their ability to survive, receive life saving assistance and recover from crisis shocks. COVID-19 has further exacerbated gender-based inequalities and discrimination by heightening risks of violence, hindering already limited access to livelihood opportunities and productive resources, and reducing the space and opportunities for their leadership and voices.

Against this backdrop of exponential needs and tremendous challenges, UN-Women scaled up its efforts to support women and girls experiencing, and at-risk of, multi-faceted crises with the global pandemic and increasing climate-related disasters aggravating pre-existing humanitarian crises. UN-Women adapted to new realities imposed by the pandemic by: maintaining the focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian and disaster contexts as responses were rapidly ramped up; finding innovative ways to amplify the voices of women and girls; continuing to provide humanitarian services amid lockdowns; and addressing key barriers to delivering disaster preparedness and response in the context of the pandemic.

In 2020, UN-Women contributed to humanitarian and refugee coordination mechanisms in 47 country and regional contexts in a range of capacities including as members of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and leads of Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) working groups. UN-Women supported 571,007 crisis-affected women and girls and 90,520 men and boys with direct humanitarian services and enabled 1,270 local women's organizations to guide and implement humanitarian activities, improving gender-equitable outcomes and accountability to affected populations. UN-Women contributed to gender-responsive disaster risk reduction legislation, strategies, plans, and assessments in 41 countries, covering in the year 2020, an additional 107,481,057 people through new gender-responsive policies, plans and assessments.

A reflection of UN-Women's committed efforts to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian and disaster contexts, these results also underscore the need for greater investment in ensuring that not only are the needs of women and girls in all their diversity are met, but also that their capacities as agents of change are supported to catalyze sustainable impact.

Our Donors

UN-Women is grateful for the generosity of funding partners for enabling its work to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction.

Member States



Australia



Canada



European Union



Germany



Iceland



Japan



Norway



Spain



Sweden



United Kingdom

United Nations System

1. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
2. International Organization for Migration (IOM)
3. Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office (MPTFO)
4. Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)
5. UN Development Programme (UNDP)
6. UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

Private Sector

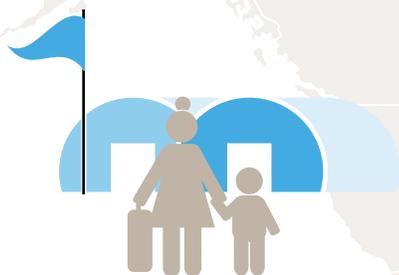
1. BHP Billiton Foundation
2. HP Inc

Other

1. Australia National Committee
2. Zonta International

2020 RESULTS 'AT A GLANCE'

UN-Women contributed to UN-led humanitarian responses as a **member of the Humanitarian Country Team** (or its equivalent) in **20 crisis-affected countries in 2020**.



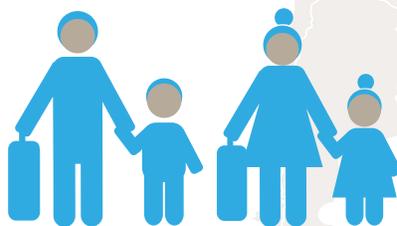
In **26 countries/regions**, UN-Women provided **GiHA capacity building** to humanitarian coordinating and/or implementing agencies and other actors (reaching over **3300 humanitarian workers in 2020**).

With private-sector partners, the **Second-Chance Education programme** improved livelihood opportunities of **12,000 women in Cameroon and Jordan**.

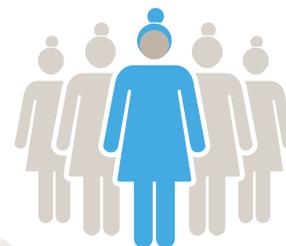
UN-Women enabled **1,270 local women's organizations** to guide and implement humanitarian activities, improving gender-equitable outcomes and accountability to affected populations.

In **21 countries**, UN-Women led or co-led a **Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group** extending gender expertise to the cluster system.

UN-Women supported **571,007 crisis-affected women and girls** and **90,520 men and boys** with direct humanitarian services including through **livelihoods support, cash assistance, and protection services**.



In **43 countries**, UN-Women was a member of the **GBV sub-cluster and/or the Protection cluster** and in **26 countries**, UN-Women actively engaged in and **extended gender expertise to the broader cluster system**.



In **38 countries**, UN-Women **built the self-reliance of crisis-affected women and girls** by addressing food insecurity, gender-based violence, and supporting women's livelihoods and leadership.

In **13 countries**, UN-Women targeted **women and girls with disabilities**.

UN-Women worked with

50 UN Funds, Programmes and Specialized Agencies

to mainstream gender into the **UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction** progress review.

UN-Women contributed to **gender-responsive disaster risk reduction legislation, strategies, plans, and assessments** in

41 countries, covering in the year 2020 an additional

107,481,057 people through new **gender-responsive policies, plans and assessments**.

In **28 countries** UN-Women helped institutionalize gender focal points in **national disaster platforms**.

UN-Women supported more than

500 women's organisations to influence and implement **disaster risk reduction and recovery activities** so as to

address the needs of women and girls and address gender-specific gaps in disaster risk reduction.

In **9 countries**,

UN-Women contributed to **assessing the gender specific losses and human impact of the COVID-19 crisis** working with the **UN system, the World Bank and the EU** to transform the successful Post Disaster Needs Assessment Methodology into a **gender-responsive COVID-19 Recovery Needs Assessment methodology**.



In **19 countries**, UN-Women provided **technical support** to identify and address gender specific disaster risk and integrate gender-responsive approaches in disaster risk reduction policy frameworks.

48,800 women and girls at risk of or impacted by disasters in

15 countries benefitted from UN-Women's initiatives to strengthen their disaster resilience through accessing **resilient livelihood, disaster compensation or social protection services**, and by receiving technical training.



In **11 countries**, UN-Women worked with **local women leaders** to increase **women leadership** and gender-responsiveness in disaster risk reduction and resilience processes.

UN-WOMEN'S KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Building Normative Frameworks and Evidence- Based Knowledge

With the drastic consequences wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic on persons living in crisis and disaster settings, the need for humanitarian and recovery assistance dramatically increased in 2020, while the importance of preventing future disasters including further expansion of the pandemic, through boosting resilience and strengthening prevention and preparedness systems, reached unprecedented levels. As humanitarian actors swiftly scaled up responses and disaster risk reduction practitioners strengthened prevention and preparedness governance, UN-Women harnessed its normative mandate to ensure that prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery was guided by existing normative frameworks which commit to the advancement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction.

At the global level,
in the immediate aftermath of the declaration of the pandemic, UN-Women developed the

IASC Gender Alert for COVID-19 on behalf of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Reference Group for Gender in Humanitarian Action, providing overarching gender analysis of the pandemic's impact on women and girls in crisis settings, as well as providing sector by sector guidance on how to respond to their needs. To further socialize the guidance, UN-Women partnered with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) and CARE International to conduct webinars for humanitarian workers. UN-Women also contributed to multiple iterations of the Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19 strongly advocating for greater and more systematic attention to be placed on the needs and priorities of women and girls.

At the regional and country levels,
UN-Women has systematically led the development of Rapid Gender Analysis, Impact Assessments⁵ (**23 COs/ROs**) and Programmatic/Policy Guidance⁶ (**12 COs/ROs**) on responding to COVID-19 in humanitarian contexts across countries affected humanitarian crisis. Often conducted in partnership with women-led organizations, INGOs, and Government Ministries, gender analysis, assessments,

5 Asia-Pacific RO, Arab-States RO, Latin-America and Caribbean RO, Europe and Central America RO (mixed), South Sudan, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Nepal, Pakistan, Mali, Jordan, Lebanon, oPt, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Myanmar, Philippines, Ukraine, Syria Regional, Iraq, and Haiti.

6 COVID-19 related policy/programme guidance covering humanitarian settings: ASRO, APRO, LAC RO, Egypt (mixed), Jordan, Libya, Yemen, Kenya, Mozambique, Iraq, Zimbabwe, Occupied Palestinian Territories.



Photo: UN Women/Joseph A. Meki

and guidance materials have been informing coordinated humanitarian responses; and guiding UN-Women's own strategic engagement in policy dialogue and partnership development with other UN agencies as part of the UN system wide approach and response to the pandemic in protracted crises. Furthermore, **13 UN-Women regional and country offices** developed localized guidance⁷, informing the humanitarian response to the pandemic with contextualized policy and programmatic guidance.

Separately, UN-Women's Independent Evaluation and Audit Services (IEAS) developed and distributed [a rapid assessment tool](#) to evaluate gender equality and women's empowerment results in humanitarian contexts. This was accompanied by a practical resource: 'Adapting to COVID-19: A checklist for gender responsive humanitarian programming' for evaluators to assess the gender-responsiveness of humanitarian interventions within the context of a global pandemic such as COVID-19.

7 Arab States Regional Office, Asia and Pacific Regional Office, Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office, Afghanistan, Egypt (mixed), Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Palestine, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.



SPOTLIGHT ON TURKEY

In Turkey, UN-Women provided gender analysis, guidance on Gender with Age Marker self-assessment tools, and capacity-building opportunities for strengthened integration of gender in the Turkey chapter of the Syrian Refugee Response plan. For instance, the Gender in Humanitarian Action workshop⁸ organized by UN-Women for 144 participants including from the Syrian Task Force sectors covered key subjects for addressing gender in refugee responses and highlighted country-specific practices. As a result of the gender technical advice and coordination efforts, 70 percent of sectors included gender analysis and gender and age disaggregated data in the 3RP for Turkey.

UN-Women also worked with the UN system, the World Bank, and the European Union to adapt the Post Disaster Needs Assessment Methodology to a gender responsive COVID-19 Recovery Needs Assessment (CRNA) methodology to assess the losses and human impact of the crisis. The CRNA was rolled out in 9 countries in 2020 with numerous assessments foreseen in 2021.

SPOTLIGHT ON SERBIA

In **Serbia**, UN-Women provided targeted gender-responsive disaster risk management support to the COVID-19 Recovery Needs Assessment (CRNA) including mainstreaming gender and gender analysis. As a result: i) gender-specific data was made available; ii) awareness was raised on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on women (drawing upon the findings of the Rapid Gender Analysis); iii) gender was mainstreamed into the recovery planning; and iv) the national Gender Machinery was supported to engage in the development and implementation of the CRNA.

In addition, UN-Women worked with partners to build the knowledge base on risk informed response and recovery from COVID-19 impacts.



SPOTLIGHT ON ASIA PACIFIC

For example, in the **Asia-Pacific** region, UN-Women and UNDRR hosted a virtual event resulting in release of an Action Brief: '[Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction and Response in the Context of COVID-19: The Asia-Pacific Region.](#)' and guidance on [Leave No One Behind in the COVID-19 Prevention, Response and Recovery](#). These resources explored the interlinkages between gender inequalities, disaster management, and COVID-19, as well as identifying key barriers and potential paths to inclusive and equal disaster management during the pandemic.

⁸ See the full Training Report here: <https://reliefweb.int/report/turkey/training-report-gender-and-refugee-response-training-series-april-2021>

Beyond the specific contributions to the COVID-19 response⁹ in humanitarian settings and disaster risk reduction, UN-Women continued its efforts to ensure that key humanitarian, disaster risk reduction and resilience normative processes integrated gender equality in 2020.

As the coordinator of the **Grand Bargain Friends of Gender Group**, UN-Women partnered with donors, INGOs, UN entities and local women's organizations and networks around joint advocacy and the formulation of policy recommendations on the future of the Grand Bargain (Grand Bargain 2.0) with a strong focus on localization, enhanced quality funding, and accountability for crisis affected populations.

- As part of its global advocacy on advancing gender responsive localization and quality funding for local women's organizations and networks, UN-Women partnered with UN OCHA and IFRC on a series of dialogues on promoting women's leadership in humanitarian settings and increasing the visibility of this.¹⁰
- In support of its global advocacy in the context of the Grand Bargain, UN-Women produced guidance notes on gender responsive localization, cash and voucher assistance, participation revolution and harmonized needs assessments¹¹ with the guidance note on localization being adopted by the Grand Bargain Workstream 2 on Localization.¹² These guidance notes informed UN-Women's global advocacy and strategic positioning

on the future of the Grand Bargain 2.0 as well as UN-Women's advocacy at country and regional level.



UN-Women and UNFPA conducted a study on [Funding for Gender in Humanitarian Action](#) identifying specific gaps in funding for gender in humanitarian settings and its impact on humanitarian outcomes for women and girls. The study found evidence that clearly indicates that the benefits of gender focused action are sizeable and justify more intensive funding for women and girls, delivering average returns of \$8 for every \$1 spent. However, it also crucially found that targeted programming for the needs of women and girls remain disproportionately underfunded, with only 39 percent of funding requests for targeted gender programming receiving the funds requested, compared to 69 percent for appeals overall.

9 "Report on the UN-Women global response to COVID-19." UN Women, February 2020. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/02/report-on-the-un-women-global-response-to-covid-19>

10 Topics covered include: Solutions for Supporting Local Women Responders in Humanitarian Action, Women on the Leadership Track: Opportunities, Challenges and Promising Practices, and Case Studies: Partnerships with Local Women-Led Organizations and Women's Leadership in the Time of COVID-19.

11 "Guidance notes on how to promote gender equality through the Grand Bargain commitments." IASC. Grand Bargain Friends of Gender Group, May 2020. <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-official-website/friends-gender-guidance-notes-how-promote-gender-equality-through>

12 "Guidance notes on Localisation." IASC. Grand Bargain Workstream on Localization, May 2020. <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain-official-website/guidance-notes-localisation-may-2020>



'WHO HOLDS THE MICROPHONE?'
CRISIS-AFFECTED WOMEN'S VOICES
ON GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE
CHANGES IN HUMANITARIAN SETTINGS:
EXPERIENCES FROM BANGLADESH,
COLOMBIA, JORDAN AND UGANDA



Aiming to improve gender-mainstreaming within humanitarian work around the Grand Bargain's workstreams on participation and localization, a UN-Women led research study '[Who Holds the Microphone?](#)' engaged with crisis-affected populations in four humanitarian settings in Bangladesh, Colombia, Jordan, and Uganda to demonstrate that engaging with diverse women (and women's organizations) in their own terms, responding to their priorities and adapting to their ways of working constitute key drivers of gender-transformative change. Using a participatory methodology that includes participatory videos and video clips alongside key informant interviews and focus group discussions, the study looked at experiences of gender-transformative change, effective localization, and meaningful participation for women and girls affected by crisis, and provides entry points and recommendations for Grand Bargain signatories to move towards gender-transformative humanitarian action.

UN-Women also worked in 41 countries to increase awareness and expertise of disaster risk reduction policy makers on the gender dimensions of disasters and gender-responsive approaches. In parallel, UN-Women boosted the technical expertise of more than 500 women's organizations and organized roundtables and meetings between women organizations and National Disaster

Management Offices so that women's needs and capacities are addressed and leveraged in disaster risk reduction plans, strategies, policies and budgets worldwide. As a result, in 2020 new legislation, strategies and plans covered an additional 107,481,057 people with gender-responsive approaches. In 28 countries supported by UN-Women, gender focal points made sure that gender issues are understood and considered in national disaster platforms.



Photo: UN Women/ Mohammed Hasan

In **Bangladesh**, UN-Women, collaborated with UNDP, UNOPS, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, to ensure the National Plan for Disaster Management (NPDM) 2021-25 is gender responsive and disability inclusive. UN-Women's leadership and support resulted in strategies to secure women's voice, participation, and empowerment in disaster risk management processes.

In **Colombia**, UN-Women supported the National Unit for Disaster Risk Management (UNGRD) through the “Women leaders and defenders from Chocó: Humanitarian Agents and Cartographers” project. UN-Women helped strengthen local women leaders’ capacities in political advocacy during the development of Territorial Development Plans, local DRM Plans¹³, and an Emergency Action Plan for Disaster Risk. This included gender-responsive humanitarian response and disaster risk management training, which enabled participants to identify priority strategies to prevent and mitigate the disproportionate impacts of hazards on women.



Photo: UN Women/Colombia



To provide consolidated access to resources, tools, research, and expertise on the gender dimensions of disasters and threats such as climate change and COVID-19, UN-Women launched an initial version of the **Women’s Resilience to Disasters (WRD) Knowledge Hub** on International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2020. The WRD Knowledge Hub is a one-stop shop for all gender-related disaster and resilience knowledge and provides a platform for women’s organisations to amplify their messages and demands around gender-responsive resilience. In addition, the **Women’s Resilience to Disasters Policy Tracker** was launched to track gender-responsive and inclusive policy progress on disaster risk reduction a climate change adaptation in all UN Member States. The Policy Tracker also highlights good practice to support replication of successfully engendered disaster risk reduction and resilience strategies, plans, policies, laws, and legislation. The WRD Knowledge Hub is an integral part of the Women’s Resilience to Disaster programme.

UN-Women initiated its Women’s Resilience to Disasters (WRD) Programme

in 2020. The WRD programme proposes a comprehensive package to strengthen women’s resilience to disasters and threats, including climate change and COVID-19. Its goal is to render the lives and livelihoods of women and girls resilient to disasters and threats, contributing to sustainable, secure, and thriving communities. The WRD programme provides a comprehensive package for building women’s resilience and is delivered through global, regional, and country components. It focuses on i) **building the enabling environment** and ensuring prevention, preparedness, and recovery policy frameworks, systems, processes, tools, and practice are gender responsive; and ii) **targeted action** to ensure women and girls are prepared to withstand multiple hazards, recover from disasters, and increase their resilience to future risks.



13 More info: <https://colombia.unwomen.org/es/noticias-y-eventos/articulos/2019/12/que-hacemos-choco>

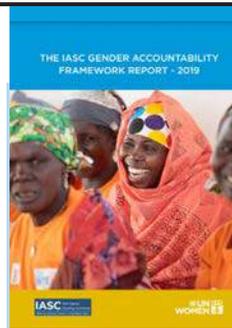
Bringing Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls to Coordination Mechanisms

GLOBAL LEVEL

In 2020, UN-Women exercised its leadership in advancing gender in humanitarian action and in disaster risk reduction across a growing array of coordination spaces. Against a backdrop of increased needs and challenges arising from the global pandemic, UN-Women was able to utilize its coordination mandate in an effective and efficient manner by strategically collaborating with key partners and bodies to enhance and accelerate gender mainstreaming, including in new mechanisms established for the COVID-19 humanitarian response.

UN-Women remained an active member of the **IASC's Gender in Humanitarian Action Reference Group**, including by serving as the Gender Desk which developed the annual IASC Gender Accountability Framework Report. In this capacity, UN-Women monitored adherence to gender commitments in 30 crisis-contexts through the 2019 IASC Gender Accountability Framework Report marking the second monitoring cycle of the IASC's 2017 Gender Policy. The Framework and the corresponding Report serve as the primary accountability mechanism by which the adherence of the IASC – at the global and country levels – to its own gender policy. The [IASC Gender in Humanitarian Action Evaluation's](#) recognition of the UN-Women-led Gender Accountability Framework as a success factor, and its call for better use of UN-Women's mandate within the IASC attested to UN-Women's proven capacity to support the humanitarian system.

As part of its global advocacy on advancing gender responsive localization and quality



[The 2019 IASC Gender Accountability Framework Report](#)

developed by UN-Women showed some progress alongside other

inconsistencies in the application of the 2017 Gender Policy. At the global level, gender was designated as a strategic priority for the allocation of the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund funding by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the first thematic evaluation by the IASC internal evaluation mechanism—the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation—was set as delivery on the gender policy. Both initiatives signifying commitment of the IASC management to address gender in humanitarian action.

At the field level, the analysis showed consistent levels in the overall use of gender analysis in planning documents. However, while attention to protection and sexual and reproductive health has improved, this did not extend to other priority areas including women's livelihoods. Notably, the Report also provided evidence that the provision of gender capacity and facilitation of women's voices contribute to better results.

funding for local women's organizations and networks, UN-Women also partnered with UNOCHA and IFRC on a series of dialogues with focus on promoting women's leadership in humanitarian settings.

UN-Women successfully worked to increase gender equality and women's leadership in the UN systems' work on disaster risk reduction and resilience. This included providing knowledge, tools and guidance

on helping engender the work of the 50 UN entities, which implement the UN Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience.

UN-Women participated in the **UN Inter-Agency Focal Points Group on Disaster Risk Reduction**, and advocated for the gender-responsive implementation of the Sendai Framework. With UN-Women's support, the **2020 UN Plan of Action** progress report identified gaps where further integration of gender considerations across the UN system's DRR work is needed. The sixth recommendation of the UN Senior Leadership Group (UN SLG) on DRR adopted in July 2020 called for: (i) a joint study led by UN-Women, UNDRR, and UNFPA on the status of gender equality, women's empowerment and leadership in DRR; (ii) a mapping of gender-inclusive DRR activities implemented by UN entities; and (iii) a mapping of the gender-inclusiveness of the UN agencies corporate results frameworks and programming. The study was initiated in 2020.¹⁴

UN-Women is a member of the **Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI)**, which is a global partnership composed of 20 organisations working towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by providing countries with capacity development services to help them reduce climate and disaster risk. Over the past decade, the CADRI Partnership has been active in supporting capacity development in disaster risk reduction (DRR), including preparedness for response, in 35 countries.

In 2020, through a broad consultative process, the CADRI members joined forces to develop a digital tool to support governments in their



*Photo: UN Women/
Joseph A Meki*

commitments to identify integrated solutions to manage multidimensional disaster and climate change risks through a rights-based approach. UN-Women's consistent technical support to mainstream gender into the CADRI tool has ensured that the new CADRI assessment tool is gender-responsive and is expected to make a critical contribution to advancing women leadership and gender-responsiveness in national disaster risk reduction contexts.

During preparatory processes for the Global Platform on DRR, UN-Women also ensured that women leadership and gender equality are recognized key principles for the **Global Platform for DRR** to be held in Indonesia in May 2022.

UN-Women continued to serve as a core member of the UN team on the UN Common Guidance on Resilience¹⁵ securing the recognition of gender perspectives and the importance of women's agency and leadership for building resilience in the guidance. The UN Resilience Guidance aims to strengthen coherence in UN resilience-building efforts at country level in support of Governments' sustainable development objectives.

¹⁴ The study was undertaken between April and June 2021, and coordinated by a Core Team from UNFPA, UNDRR, and UN-Women, with a wider Task Team of 25 UN entities who agreed to act as a reference group. The study makes a series of key findings and nine recommendations to build gender equality, women's empowerment, and leadership in disaster risk reduction for the UN system.

¹⁵ "UN Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies." SparkBlue. United Nations, 2020.

REGIONAL AND COUNTRY LEVELS

UN-Women's growing role in leading and contributing to key coordination and decision-making bodies in the humanitarian space attest to strengthened capacity to enable greater system-wide collaboration and cooperation in advancing GEEWG in the humanitarian space. In 2020, UN-Women contributed to humanitarian and refugee coordination mechanisms in 47 country and regional contexts in a range of capacities including as members of the HCT and leads of GiHA working groups. UN-Women was a member of the Humanitarian Country Team (or its equivalent) in 29 countries. In 21 countries/regions, UN-Women led or co-led a Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group which extended gender expertise at the technical level to clusters and supported humanitarian actors to better mainstream gender in their interventions. In 26 countries, UN-Women was a member of a cluster linked to the humanitarian coordination system. In 7 countries, UN-Women led or co-led another cluster or sub-cluster linked to the humanitarian coordination system (including GBV sub-clusters) and in 43 countries, UN-Women was a member of the GBV sub-cluster and/or Protection cluster.

Across these coordination roles, UN-Women provided valuable gender expertise enabling the humanitarian planning cycle to pay more attention to GEEWG throughout its course. For instance, in 21 countries, UN-Women developed gender analysis that directly contributed to Humanitarian Needs Overviews and Humanitarian Response Plans and in 10 countries, UN-Women contributed similarly to Refugee Response Plans. To further accelerate efforts to mainstream gender in humanitarian interventions, UN-Women provided GiHA capacity building to humanitarian coordinating and/or implementing agencies and other actors reaching over 3,300 humanitarian workers across 26 country and regional offices.

2020 UN-WOMEN CONTRIBUTED TO HUMANITARIAN AND REFUGEE COORDINATION MECHANISMS

IN

47

country and regional contexts in a range of capacities



29



countries as a member of the Humanitarian Country Team (or its equivalent)

21



countries/regions, led or co-led a Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group

26



countries as a member of a cluster linked to the humanitarian coordination system

7



countries, led or co-led another cluster or sub-cluster linked to the humanitarian coordination system

43



was a member of the GBV sub-cluster and/or Protection cluster

21



developed gender analysis that contributed to Humanitarian Needs Overviews and Humanitarian Response Plans

26



countries and regional offices by training 3300 humanitarian workers on gender in humanitarian action

Specifically, for the coordinated humanitarian and crisis response to COVID-19, UN-Women provided gender expertise to Humanitarian Country Teams and Clusters in 18 countries. Working swiftly and collaboratively with

other humanitarian and recovery actors, 19 UN-Women country office helped develop Rapid Gender Analysis, Impact and COVID-19 Recovery Needs Assessments.

SPOTLIGHT ON LEBANON

In Lebanon, UN-Women played a lead role in maintaining attention to gender priorities across the multi-faceted crises affecting the country. In close partnership with WHO, UN-Women significantly increased attention on gender equality and women's rights issues within the UN's COVID-19 response. At the onset of the pandemic, UN-Women seconded a Gender Specialist to WHO to lead the mainstreaming of protection and gender into the COVID-19 response, resulting in 40 per cent of the activities in Lebanon's COVID-19 planning framework addressing gender issues and all (100%) of planning and reporting documents integrating gender analysis and reporting. It also contributed to significant attention on issues of increased 'violence against women' and action to address this by national authorities. UN-Women also supported the humanitarian response to the Beirut Port Explosion through the secondment of two Gender Advisors to UNOCHA for the entire duration of the Flash Appeal (one for the period August-September, and a second from October to December). This resulted in 100% of all documents (assessments, plans and reporting) including gender data, analysis, and priorities. The partnership between UN OCHA and UN-Women also led to the production of ['Gender and Inclusion Tip Sheets'](#) for sectors, and ['Gender Review'](#) of the humanitarian response to the port explosions. In the immediate aftermath of the explosion, UN-Women also convened a 'Feminist Network' to issue a unified ['Charter of Demands'](#) and developed a ['Rapid Gender Analysis'](#) which subsequently informed the efforts of humanitarian actors. UN-Women also provided PSEA trainings for partners across the humanitarian landscape, resulting in the training of over 400 personnel (across 12 trainings) in 2020.



Photo: UN Women / Dar Al Mussawir

SPOTLIGHT

UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific swiftly mobilized the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group to co-create the first [regional analysis](#) on emerging gender impacts of the pandemic, which was not only incorporated into COVID-19 response plans in the region such as Afghanistan and the Philippines, but was also translated for use in other regions, helping set a global agenda on gender and COVID-19. This resulted in a set of [key recommendations](#) for humanitarian leadership, donors and governments enabling a more gender-responsive approach to COVID-19 response in the region, which were replicated by other GiHA groups. For instance, the [Closing the Funding Gap for Women-Focused Organizations \(WFOs\) Responding to COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific](#) underscored the importance of ensuring targeted funding towards WFOs to reach the “last mile” and leave no one behind in the recovery from the pandemic. The Regional Office, together with Translators without Borders (on behalf of the Risk Communication and Community Engagement Working Group on COVID-19 Preparedness and Response in Asia and the Pacific), also led the development of [COVID-19: How to include marginalized and vulnerable people in risk communication and community engagement](#) (RCCE) to illustrate vulnerabilities of different social groups to COVID-19, and how to address them in RCCE efforts and plans



Working across the nexus in many settings, these resources provided humanitarian and disaster risk reduction actors with an assessment of the priority needs and gaps experienced by women and girls, to inform COVID-19 response and recovery.

SPOTLIGHT

UN-Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia provided overall support on humanitarian response, recovery and resilience efforts related to the COVID-19 pandemic to ten countries in the ECA region (representing the three subregions of the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia) through the development of a rapid survey assessment tool to assess the gendered impacts of COVID-19 on the lives and livelihoods of men and women. Countries/territories have used the rapid gender assessment survey findings to inform, guide, and support national response planning (including Socio-Economic Response Plans) and address the pandemic's gendered impact.

SPOTLIGHT - WORKING ACROSS THE NEXUS

UN-Women in Haiti actively participated in the COVID-19 coordination process to ensure the integration of gender and to highlight women's specific needs through the Economic Social Impact Assessment for COVID-19. A rapid gender assessment in the context of the pandemic, was able to provide data and evidence on the impact and the differentiated needs of women and men. The assessment highlighted gender and socioeconomic inequalities, enabling the development of gender-responsive response and recovery, and including a wide range of key stakeholders at national, regional, and local level. A strategic guidance note to UNCT was developed to promote gender-responsive COVID-19 response and recovery, leveraging the UN-Women-led Gender Theme Group's work in Haiti.

SPOTLIGHT

UN-Women Regional Office for Arab States leveraged its coordination mandate to support the adoption of new gender-responsive monitoring approaches across the UN system. Partnering with FAO, UN-Women Regional Office developed a gender-sensitive resilience index to generate stronger evidence on the short and long-term factors critical for strengthening women's resilience to shocks and stressors. The tool also promotes accountability for performance on women's rights and gender equality within the UN and beyond. Piloted with humanitarian partners in Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, the State of Palestine and Yemen, this monitoring approach helped to ensure women's needs were met within resilience programming during 2020. Initial findings from [Iraq](#), [Yemen](#), [Palestine](#), and [Turkey](#) suggest that UN Women's gender-sensitive resilience index will provide clear indications on the types of investments and combination of strategies needed to strengthen women's resilience during COVID-19 and beyond.

Operational Activities to Catalyze Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls

Alongside normative and coordination efforts to advance GEEWG in humanitarian and disaster contexts, UN-Women strategically implemented impactful and catalytic programmatic interventions. In 2020, these activities were swiftly adapted in the context of the pandemic to ensure the greatest levels of support possible to crisis-affected and at-risk women and girls.

Programmatic interventions under UN-Women's portfolio in humanitarian and refugee settings, **LEAP (Leadership, Empowerment, Access and Protection)** was adapted to the new global context in over 23 countries. UN-Women's priority interventions included: scaled up activities focusing on the prevention of violence against women and girls; policy engagement along the humanitarian development nexus on issues related to women's livelihoods and protection in crisis contexts; technical support for cash and voucher assistance; as well as advancing women's leadership in shaping humanitarian and policy responses to COVID-19, including community protection mechanisms, livelihoods and GBV related interventions.

Overall, UN-Women supported 571,007 crisis-affected women and girls and 90,520 men and boys with direct humanitarian services. This included direct support to crisis-affected women and girls as part of the Rohingya response in Myanmar and Bangladesh, affected populations in the Syrian refugee

crisis in Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey, the Venezuela response in Colombia, and other complex emergencies such as the Lake Chad Basin crisis in Nigeria, Cameroon, and Niger. In 38 countries, UN-Women built the self-reliance of crisis-affected women and girls by addressing food insecurity, gender-based violence, and supporting women's livelihoods and leadership. In 13 countries, UN-Women's humanitarian work specifically targeted women and girls with disabilities. UN-Women enabled 1,270 local women's organizations to guide and implement humanitarian activities, improving gender-equitable outcomes and the humanitarian community's accountability to affected populations.

With private-sector partners, the **Second-Chance Education** programme improved the livelihood opportunities of crisis-affected and at-risk women. An e-portal under UN-Women's 'Second Chance Education' programme – which contributes to the LEAP model – was launched in 2020. **42,100** women have been reached by the SCE programme, undertaking foundational life skills courses and digital skills training, with half having progressed through to courses in small business skills (12,956), employment/ vocational (4,092), or back to formal education learning (4,197) pathways. In total, **11,677** women have graduated and started earning an income, a majority through starting their own small businesses (9,948). Access to internet connectivity and lack of digital literacy skills remain a challenge, but **7,869** of the women have been learning partly or fully through the SCE e-portal or partner platform. This included the improvement of livelihood opportunities for 12,000 women from refugee and host communities in Cameroon and Jordan.



UN-WOMEN SUPPORTED

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90,520 men and boys with direct humanitarian services



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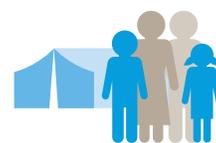
UN-Women's field work in disaster risk reduction focused on expanding the **Women's Resilience to Disasters (WRD)** approach by promoting gender equality and women's leadership in disaster risk reduction through targeted action and facilitating gender responsive DRR systems, processes, plans, strategies and budgets.

Through the WRD policy component, UN-Women worked in 41 countries to increase awareness and expertise of disaster risk reduction policy makers on the gender dimensions of disasters and gender-responsive approaches. In parallel, UN-Women boosted the technical expertise of more than 500 women's organizations, and organized roundtables and meetings between women organizations and National Disaster Management Offices so that women's needs and capacities are addressed and leveraged in disaster risk reduction plans, strategies, policies and budgets worldwide. As a result, in 2020 new legislation, strategies and plans covered an additional 107,481,057 people with gender-responsive approaches. To enhance gender-responsive disaster planning, in 28 countries supported by UN-Women, gender focal points made sure that gender issues are understood and considered in national disaster platforms. In 19 countries, UN-Women provided technical support to identify and address gender specific disaster risk and integrate gender-responsive approaches in disaster risk reduction policy frameworks.

To close gender gaps in disasters, 48,800 women and girls at risk of or impacted by disasters in 15 countries benefitted from UN-Women's initiatives to strengthen their disaster resilience through accessing resilient livelihood, disaster compensation or social protection services, and by receiving technical training to increase women's participation and leadership in disaster risk reduction. In 11 countries, UN-Women worked with local

women leaders to increase women leadership and gender-responsiveness in disaster risk reduction and resilience processes. In 9 countries, UN-Women contributed to assessing the gender specific losses and human impact of the COVID-19 crisis working with the UN system, the World Bank and the EU to transform the successful Post Disaster Needs Assessment Methodology into a gender-responsive COVID-19 Recovery Needs Assessment methodology to ensure that the recovery process would equally benefit women and girls.

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Women's leadership and empowerment in humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction

UN-Women scaled up its partnerships with local women's organizations and networks. These partnerships drew on ongoing collaboration, promising practices of collaboration and investments under the LEAP framework and the Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund. Across crisis settings, UN-Women provided technical and financial support to local women's groups, organizations and networks facilitating their leadership and meaningful engagement in coordinated response efforts.



In **Myanmar**, UN-Women mobilized, empowered and equipped women-led organizations — especially Rohingya women-graduates from the Rakhine Gender Leadership Program to create community awareness and knowledge on prevention and response to COVID-19.



In **Kenya**, leadership and conflict management training provided by UN-Women benefitted approximately 600 women of whom 69% became members of Peace Committees in Kalobeyi. In parallel, UN-Women strategically engaged 2,806 male community and religious leaders to change social norms and attitudes, through awareness on gender equality and prevention of harmful cultural practices. As a result, men in Kalobeyi and Dadaab have encouraged women's representation in community structures.



Through UN-Women's sustained efforts in **Uganda**, in 2020, 50.7 percent (Adjumani) and 46 percent (Yumbe) of refugee welfare committee leaders comprised of women; up from 10% in 2017. Additionally, 19,853 women and girls directly accessed UN-Women supported services and 3,732 men and boys

accessed MHPSS, legal aid services, English lessons and trainings on gender equality and social norms. In **Malawi**, UN-Women sensitized around 100 camp leaders (62% women) with the potential to reach 47,000 refugees and displaced people from Dzaleka Refugee camp on COVID-19 prevention in a gender-responsive manner including steps to prevent gender-based violence within the camp.



In **Viet Nam**, UN-Women supported capacity development for the *Viet Nam NGOs network on Climate Change* on gender, disaster risk reduction and climate change. A key outcome was the first women-led CSO network in the area, promoting gender-responsive climate action. The network has already carried out research, developed a tool, and organised a workshop to raise awareness on women's contribution to climate change mitigation and identify policy recommendations.



The UN-Women **Caribbean MCO** (Multi Country Office) was able to complete five Gender Inequality of Risk and Cost of Action Studies for **Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Guyana, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname**, through the EnGenDER Project. These studies highlighted the importance of gender-responsive climate change adaptation and illustrated the differentiated impacts of climate change on women, men, boys, girls, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQIA+ communities in vulnerable sectors such as tourism and agriculture. 77 senior technical officers from key priority sectors benefited from two capacity building sessions which were focused on strengthening “*Resilience in the Age of COVID-19.*”



In **Mexico**, through the *Avancemos por la Igualdad* (API) initiative (in alliance with Danone/Bonafont and the municipalities of Juchitán, Oaxaca), 240 women entrepreneurs from three municipalities strengthened their

resilience capacities through comprehensive risk management workshops. 47 infographics were produced and disseminated on key rights (to information, to a life free of violence, to health, to employment and work) and the importance of integrating gender perspectives into community resilience and comprehensive risk management. Key communities were also provided with tools through participatory virtual workshops to support development of community risk prevention plans.

In Lake Chad Basin region, as a sister programme of WRD, the Women's Resilience in Lake Chad Basin programme has been implemented, to provide a comprehensive package for women's and girls' resilience that focuses on rendering prevention, preparedness and response systems/plans gender-responsive addressing gender gaps, inequalities and discrimination in the region. In **Nigeria and Cameroon**, 5,227 women and 688 men were reached through a variety of activities, such as capacity building (leadership, advocacy, risk mitigation and climate change adaptation, protection, GBV prevention and response), emergency and livelihoods kits distributions, dialogues on gender norms, human rights, GBV, access to land as well as cash for work opportunities.

In **Iraq**, UN-Women partnered with the Directorate of Combating Violence Against Women to strengthen remote GBV service delivery in northern governorates with large internally displaced populations. Support to family protection teams and Directorate staff ensured the continuity of essential protection services for women and girls, including displaced survivors of violence.

Prevention of and Protection from Gender-Based Violence

UN-Women and partners specifically drew attention to the “shadow pandemic” of **violence against women** – a risk that continues to be greater in humanitarian settings. In 23 crisis-affected countries¹⁶, UN-Women focused on preventive efforts, joint advocacy, policy support and analysis through partnerships with government institutions, other UN agencies and local women's organizations to mitigate the rise in violence against women including in humanitarian and disaster settings. UN-Women also invested in GBV prevention work with focus on addressing gender norms, discriminatory practices and the role of men and boys as well as community leaders in crisis contexts and recovery. For example, in Cameroon, CAR, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, UN-Women strengthened the capacity of service providers and national partners to continue provision of integrated services to women and girls who are survivors of violence. In Iraq, capacity strengthening initiatives of service providers have been coordinated jointly with UNFPA.

In **Uganda**, UN-Women's three-pronged approach included: increased access to GBV services using integrated and survivor-centered service delivery; strengthened capacity of community-based mechanisms; and reduced GBV risks by increasing access to multi-purpose cash transfers, and livelihoods. In **Somalia**, in collaboration with the Ministry of Women Development, Family Affairs and Human Rights (MOWFAHR), UN-Women established two new Safe Hubs in the IDPs camps in Baidoa to provide psychosocial trauma counselling for SGBV survivors.

¹⁶ Including Palestine, Jordan, Cameroon, CAR, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Colombia, Afghanistan, Ecuador, Haiti, Sierra Leone, Lebanon, Niger, Somalia, Iraq, Brazil, Egypt, Bangladesh, South Sudan, Somalia, Mali, Libya.



Jannatul Mouwa, Executive Director of Best Initiative National Development Unification, Bangladesh
Jannatul and her team provided emergency support to women, elderly people, and adolescent girls after cyclone Amphan ravaged coasts of India and Bangladesh during the pandemic. Photo: UN-Women Bangladesh



In **Bangladesh**, UN-Women implemented a cash assistance project comprising cash grant support along with COVID-19 prevention-related awareness raising messages to approximately 2,322 households of women-headed families, persons with disabilities, the elderly, sex workers and transgenders. During the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, along with the aftermath of cyclone Amphan, and month-long monsoon flooding, the most marginalized groups in the disaster-prone areas lost their livelihoods and sources of income with significant impacts for food security and access to services and infrastructure including shelter. The outcome of this cash-based assistance supported recovery from the double-disaster for targeted women and households from the five most affected districts in Bangladesh.

Livelihoods for women in humanitarian and disaster contexts:

UN-Women's interventions to enhance the livelihoods of crisis-affected women through vocational trainings, financial literacy sessions, and provision of start-up kits have contributed to higher levels of economic security and stronger protection from risky coping mechanisms. In **Uganda**, 10,126 women increased their incomes and savings following their engagement with the Village Savings and Loan Associations, business management and financial literacy trainings, participation in cash-for-work activities and livelihoods support provided by UN-Women. In **Turkey**, UN-Women collaborated with CSOs to support women refugees' production of 252,000 protective face masks through the SADA Women's Cooperative, operated by Afghan, Syrian and Turkish women. Through vocational training for 694 women in Kalobeyei and Dadaab, 69.5% of the beneficiaries increased their incomes and savings in **Kenya** with support from UN-Women. ICT training also broadened the employment opportunities of 88.5% of participants. In **Cameroon**, UN-Women and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF), offered vocational training and start up kits to 1500 refugee and IDP women and girls enabling them to start their own businesses. In **Burundi**, 4000 displaced and repatriated women and girls increased their agricultural production, modernized their economic activities and benefited from socioeconomic opportunities through UN-Women led income generative initiatives. At the onset of the pandemic, when most services were restricted, UN-Women **Jordan** continued its direct cash assistance by leveraging an innovative blockchain cash-disbursement system in partnership with WFP, reaching 400 Syrian refugees in camps and 350 vulnerable



Jordanian and Syrian refugee women in host communities on a weekly basis. As a result, UN Women was one of the agencies in Jordan that seamlessly and remotely ensured cash continued to reach the refugee women involved in its cash-for-work programmes at the Oases women's empowerment centers in the camps.



In **Bangladesh**, 2700 women living in the most disaster-prone areas have disaster preparedness knowledge to effectively respond to and cope with shocks and stresses. These women received training on livelihood skills and more than 800 women received grants to support more resilient livelihoods. Their leadership, negotiation, and advocacy skills were enhanced through training to actively engage in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation actions in their community.

Partnerships to Accelerate Progress

To enhance accountability towards gender equality across all UN-led humanitarian and disaster-risk reduction efforts, and for the delivery of humanitarian services and outreach to crisis affected communities, UN-Women partners with other UN agencies including **UN OCHA, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, WFP, UNDRR** national and local government authorities as well as local civil society organizations with focus on local women's organizations and networks. UN-Women's partnerships with local civil society organizations in crisis settings are directed by the principles of Grand Bargain localization and participation revolution.

As part of its engagement in COVID-19 response activities, UN-Women scaled



Photo: UN Women/Pablo Villota



Photo: UN Women/Sheldon Casimir.

up its partnerships with local women's organizations and networks (in relation to COVID-19 prevention related activities and awareness raising in local communities). These partnerships drew on ongoing collaboration, promising practices of collaboration and investments under the LEAP framework and the Women Peace and Humanitarian Fund. For instance, in **Palestine, Libya, Jordan, Central African Republic, DRC, Colombia, Brazil, Lebanon, Nepal, Bangladesh and Myanmar**, UN-Women provided technical and financial support to local women's groups, organizations and networks facilitating their leadership and meaningful engagement in coordinated response efforts including through to develop 'Charter of Demands'

to shape COVID-19 responses in camp and non-camp settings. In Myanmar, UN-Women has been mobilizing, empowering and equipping women-led organizations — especially Rohingya women-graduates from the Rakhine Gender Leadership Program to create community awareness and knowledge on prevention and response to COVID-19.

At global level, the **Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF)**¹⁷ – for which UN-Women serves as the Secretariat – launched a new COVID-19 Emergency Response Window to support women's organizations at the frontline of the pandemic with institutional funding. As a follow up to the call for proposals, 42 projects were approved covering

¹⁷ For more on the Women's, Peace and Humanitarian Fund, please review the 2020 WPHF Annual Report here: <https://wphfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/WPHF-2020-Annual-Report.pdf>



18 countries. 97.5% of beneficiaries are women led and/or women rights organizations. For example, in **North Darfur, Sudan**, the Sahari Organization Development received funding to facilitate cash transfers to 400 female households and mobilize women's groups to disseminate COVID-19 messages in local communities. Overall, across the multiple funding windows managed by the WPHF, a total of USD 19,935,166 was invested in 293 civil society organizations reaching 1.1 million direct beneficiaries (62 percent women) to re-energize action and stimulate financing for women's participation, leadership and empowerment in humanitarian response and peace and security settings.

The Second Chance Education (SCE) Program's partnership with HP exemplifies UN-Women's innovative collaboration with private sector actors. This partnership enabled the provision of electricity, internet access, and equipment for all five Second Chance Education centers in Cameroon. In the context of COVID-19, the provision of solar energy through this partnership provide key in guaranteeing

social distancing in the centers through the distribution of trainings into two shifts.

Through **CERF** global grant modality (USD 25 million), the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), UN-Women is also strengthening its partnership with UNFPA on issues related to protection, prevention of GBV through social norm programming in crisis affected communities, service delivery for GBV survivors and women and girls at risk in 6 countries: **Cameroon, Colombia, Myanmar, Bangladesh/Cox's Bazar, Occupied Palestinian Territory and Ethiopia**. UN-Women and UNFPA has joined forces in strengthening institutional capacities of local women led and women's rights organizations and networks. The objective is to increase and improve the quality of women's organizations' engagement in humanitarian planning mechanisms and decision-making processes as well as programmatic interventions and quality of services to GBV survivors and women and girls at risk. This will provide a framework for future collaboration and scale up with UNFPA on GBV in emergencies in partnership with women-led organizations.





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