



The Asia Pacific Women Empowerment Programme

Pledge number:	M1907048
Donor name:	Kuwait Red Crescent Society
Pledge amount in donor currency:	USD 1,000,000
Country of operation:	Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Viet Nam
Reporting period:	31 March 2019 – 31 December 2021 (extension requested)
Pledge start date:	31 March 2019
Pledge planned end date:	31 December 2021 (extension requested)

1. Table of Contents

2. Contents

1.	Table of Contents	2
3.	Acronyms and Abbreviations	3
4.	Introduction	3
4.1.	Afghanistan.....	3
4.2.	Bangladesh	4
4.3.	Pakistan	4
4.4.	Viet Nam.....	4
5.	Programme Purpose, Objectives and Scope	5
5.1.	Programme.....	5
5.2.	Country Projects.....	6
5.3.	Summary of country projects.....	7
6.	Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Scope	9
6.1.	Evaluation purpose.....	9
6.2.	Evaluation scope.....	9
6.3.	Evaluation objectives.....	9
6.4.	Evaluations reviewed	10
7.	Evaluation Methodology.....	11
8.	Findings	11
8.1.	Efficiency	11
8.1.1.	Activities	12
8.1.2.	Intervention quality	13
8.1.3.	Collaboration and coordination.....	14
8.2.	Effectiveness.....	15
8.2.1.	Programme and project achievement	16
8.2.2.	Indicators	19
8.2.3.	People reached	21
8.2.4.	Community engagement and accountability (CEA)	22
8.3.	Relevance	23
8.3.1.	Meeting needs	23
8.3.2.	Project design	25
8.3.3.	Impact and outcomes	26
8.3.4.	Thematic activities.....	27
8.4.	Sustainability	28
8.4.1.	Sustainable mechanisms/practices.....	28
8.4.2.	Mechanisms/practices that increase capacity.....	31
8.4.3.	Challenges and lessons learned	32
9.	Conclusion	33
10.	Recommendations.....	33
10.1.	Programme design and structure.....	33
10.2.	Human resources	34
10.3.	Internal and external collaborations	35
10.4.	Sustainability	35
11.	References	36
12.	Appendix	36
12.1.	Appendix A: Figures.....	36
12.1.1.	Afghanistan charts and graphs	36
12.1.2.	Bangladesh charts and graphs	38
12.1.3.	Viet Nam charts and graphs	42
12.1.4.	Pakistan charts and graphs	43
12.2.	Evaluation Matrix	45
12.3.	Data Analysis Plan	46
12.4.	Detailed recommendations by country.....	47

3. Acronyms and Abbreviations

WEP	Women Empowerment Programme
ARCS	Afghan Red Crescent Society
BDRCS	Bangladesh Red Crescent Society
CBO	Community-based organization
FSP	Financial service provider
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IGA	Income-generating activities
KAP	Knowledge, attitudes and practices
KII	Key informant interviews
KRCS	Kuwait Red Crescent Society
LLW	Lessons learned workshop
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-governmental organizations
PMU	Provincial management unit
PRCS	Pakistan Red Crescent Society
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
VNRC	Vietnam Red Cross Society

4. Introduction

Many women in the Asia Pacific region were overlooked due to lack of access to basic services and economic opportunities. Despite increased global commitment to address gender inequality, protection risks and the specific needs of women and girls in disaster and peacetime are often not adequately considered. In some countries, especially in the rural context, women and girls are not allowed to make decisions about their household's income and traditionally in some cultures, women are forbidden to leave their homes. As such, due to poverty, they have limited decision-making roles within their households and communities. This marginalization often leads to discrimination, exploitation, child marriage, sexual and physical abuses including violence especially during conflict, protracted crises and disasters (IFRC Asia Pacific WEP Interim Report, 2021).

The Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies – which are auxiliaries to their respective public authorities – found ways to addressing the cyclical inequality brought about by poverty and lack of equitable access to education among women. In this regard, National Societies of four countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Viet Nam) carried out projects that aimed to build capacity and resilience to strengthen the household economic security of marginalized women by enabling them to start income generation activities, attend skills training, and access markets for sustainable income. Inter-linked to this are measures aimed at empowering the women through awareness, education and advocacy on protection, women's rights and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV). These initiatives were contextual, locally owned and led by women [and supported by men] from the target communities in order to uplift their lives, livings and socio-economic conditions.

4.1. Afghanistan

Afghanistan's high unemployment and poverty rate are caused by a lack of income opportunities, making its people highly vulnerable to disasters (IFRC Afghanistan Country Report, 2022). Continuous conflict, insecurity and political instability are major concerns. The war displaced many women, who must care for their families despite

a lack of income. In 2018 and beyond, the civilian population, particularly women and children, continued to bear the brunt of the armed conflict, loss of life, threats and intimidation through sexual violence because their husbands and children were killed. These women lack shelter, resources, income and access to education and health.

The Afghanistan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) is the only humanitarian organization with a nationwide presence and high acceptance at the community level. After establishing the Afghanistan Red Crescent Society (ARCS), the Marastoon programme was integrated into its structure. The Marastoon was established back in 1931 to provide humanitarian support to destitute women from the community. Currently, there are five Marastoons across the country serving vulnerable families with shelter, food, complementary services, school education, vocational trainings and medication from ARCS (IFRC Afghanistan Country Report, 2022). The WEP country project implemented in five provinces, Kabul, Heart, Nangarhar and Kandahar, Balkh Marastoon and Bamyanas was incorporated into the Marastoon programme.

4.2. Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, women comprise half of the total population and their empowerment is closely related to the country's sustainable economic development and prosperity (IFRC Bangladesh Country Report, 2022). Rural marginalized women in particular face many challenges. Patriarchal social norms highly restrict their mobility and participation and they have fewer opportunities for education after adolescence. They have limited access to and ownership of land and productive assets. Their knowledge and information about market access are poor and due to policy restrictions, they do not have much access to capital, which further constrains market opportunities. Unequal and unpaid care responsibilities limit their income-generating opportunities and makes it harder for them to play a role in the wider community. Domestic violence, early marriage and low level of participation in decision-making processes, even at the local government level, have been perpetuating the cycle of discrimination and marginalization (DFID and Oxfam Report, 2017).

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) has experience in implementing livelihoods and women empowerment projects in Bangladesh since 2008, integrating them in recovery, community development and community-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) programming (IFRC Bangladesh Country Report, 2022). BDRCS has also developed necessary policies and guidelines in these areas.

4.3. Pakistan

Pakistan's population has high rates of vulnerability, marked by poor human development, exposure to natural hazards, a large informal economy and a significant gender gap (Khalid, Meng, & Khalid, 2021). The informal economy is the source of 73 per cent of all employment in the country, with 78 per cent of all working women engaged in this sector (UN Women, 2021). Disparity is evident in the gendered pay gap, with 77 per cent of women earning less than the minimum wage compared to 42 per cent of men in 2014 (UN Women, 2021). Tharparkar district and the selected project sites within it, is a region prone to drought due to low rainfall, poor irrigation systems and resources to address its arid agriculture. For a region whose population's livelihoods rely on agriculture and livestock, these realities can have a devastating effect on their standards of living.

4.4. Viet Nam

Women play an important role in Viet Nam. They are instrumental in developing and sustaining households, the rural and urban economy and society (UN Women et. al., 2012). Despite having a fast-growing economy, pockets of poverty remain, affecting women disproportionately. According to the World Bank, 56% of men have a monthly income compared to 37% of women, and it is estimated that women in the informal economy earn only 50% of that of men even though they have the same age, working time, education level and location (WB). According to

[the 2010 National Study on Domestic Violence](#) in Viet Nam, 58.3% of married women experienced at least one type of domestic violence at some point in their life, and 34% experienced physical or sexual violence (UN Women, 2021).

5. Programme Purpose, Objectives and Scope

5.1. Programme

As part of the **Kuwait Red Crescent Society's (KRCS)** initiative to enhance the resilience of marginalized women in the Asia Pacific, a fund of USD 1 million was established to support a 24-month Women Empowerment Programme (WEP) in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Viet Nam. The funds were channelled via the **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC)** to leverage the capacities, skills and comparative advantages of National Societies to deliver lasting impact to targeted communities of marginalized women.

The Women Empowerment Programme was realized in line with the Manila Call for Action in 2018. The programme is implemented in partnership with KRCS, with the goal to build resilience and improved livelihoods of marginalized and underprivileged women in the target communities of Asia Pacific, covering the countries of **Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh** and **Viet Nam** respectively.

Programme overview of the WEP:

Title of the Programme	The Women Empowerment Programme: Enhancing the Resilience of Marginalized Women in Asia Pacific
Target Countries and Reach	13,000 women will be targeted across Vietnam, Afghanistan, Pakistan & Bangladesh
Donor	Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS)
Total Funding	1 Million USD
Duration	24 Months
Start/end date	July 2019 – June 2021 (Dec 2021)

The outcomes of the programme were to:

1. Increase the target beneficiary's income through providing vocational skills
2. Improve living standards and safety of the target beneficiaries
3. Strengthen women's empowerment and protection through the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence prevention and response community-based mechanisms

The programme outputs were:

1. Improved household income of women through vocational skills training programmes
2. Improved access to educational opportunities of women at the community level
3. Improved support services for the safety of marginalized women
4. Increased coordination at the community and national level to reduce the risk of sexual and gender-based violence before, during and after disasters and crises.

Part of the contribution from KRCS was also intended to seed a Women Empowerment Fund (WEF). This initiative has the potential to scale up empowerment projects for underprivileged women affected by natural or human-made disasters. The WEP planned to benefit 13,000 women while indirectly reaching communities through income-generating activities that improved marginalized, underprivileged women's vocational skills and living

standards. Overall, the target was exceeded with 15,582 people directly reached across the programme, while 33,987 were indirectly reached (refer to [section 8.2.3](#) for information on people reached).

5.2. Country Projects

In **Afghanistan**, the Women Empowerment Project (WEP) was implemented to enable the protection and socio-economic integration of widows and underprivileged women in Afghanistan. The project's overall goal was to improve the socio-economic situation of the most vulnerable and destitute women and girls in the Marastoons and communities to become self-sufficient, thus contributing to their social inclusion. The goal was to be met through two outcomes:

- Women and girls are equipped with skills to be economically independent and resilient.
- Women have increased awareness on protection and women rights through sessions, education and advocacy on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

The WEP country project implemented in five provinces, Kabul, Heart, Nangarhar and Kandahar, Balkh Marastoon and Bamyanwas was incorporated into the Marastoon programme.

In **Bangladesh**, the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (EERW) project aimed to build the community's resilience and livelihoods of the targeted underprivileged women. This would enable the women to become economically productive and empowered through established livelihoods and the prevention of SGBV. There are two outcomes for the project:

- Underprivileged women equipped with skills, strengthened their livelihoods income have access to basic needs-help improved household resilience.
- Strengthened women's empowerment and protection through SGBV prevention activities.

The EERW project in Bangladesh took place in Kachukata Union of Sadar Upazila of Nilphamari.

In **Pakistan**, the Women Economic Empowerment through Livelihood Improvement (WEELI) project took on the same goal as the WEP programme: to build resilience and improve the livelihood of marginalized and underprivileged women in the target communities. Three project outcomes contributed to this goal:

- Increased income through livelihood support interventions.
- Improved living standards and safety of the targeted beneficiaries
- Strengthened women's empowerment and protection through education and advocacy on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) prevention and response community-based mechanisms.

Pakistan's Women Economic Empowerment through Livelihood Improvement (WEELI)/Women Empowerment Programme (WEP) also had outputs and output level indicators. As the indicators are too numerous, only the outputs are outlined:

- Livelihood support, including skills development are delivered.
- Education and awareness sessions on gender prevention and protection among marginalized women.
- Coordination at community and national level to reduce the risk of sexual and gender-based violence before, during and after disasters and crises supported.

The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) with its network of staff and volunteers, was well placed to implement the Women Economic Empowerment Through Livelihood Improvement (WEELI) project as part of WEP. The project was implemented in ten communities across three talukas and five Union Councils of Tharparkar district. Out of the selected ten communities, PRCS already had a well-established rapport in five because of a past project to install solar water pumps with the Canadian Red Cross (CRC).

Viet Nam did not have a specific project goal outlined in the country evaluation TOR and report, under the Women's Empowerment Toward Community Safety and Resilience of Underprivileged Women in Vietnam project. However, two project objectives were highlighted in the project documentation:

- Support in the implementation of sustainable livelihood development for vulnerable women with the aim to improve their household economic security.

- Build capacity and strengthen the ability to protect women against violence and abuse through community outreach such as awareness sessions, advocacy and information dissemination through IEC materials.

Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC) capitulated on its grassroots network of staff and volunteers to implement the Women's Empowerment Toward Community Safety and Resilience of Underprivileged Women in Vietnam project under the WEP. The Women's Empowerment project was designed to improve livelihoods, raise awareness of gender equality, and SGBV among disadvantaged women and strengthen their resilience. It was implemented in four communes of two districts in two provinces: Tan Thanh, Hung Le in Giong Trom district, Ben Tre province; and Phuoc Hoa and Phuoc Thang in Tuy Phuoc district, Binh Dinh province.

5.3. Summary of country projects

Project characteristics	Afghanistan	Bangladesh	Pakistan	Viet Nam
Title of project	Women Empowerment Project (WEP), enabling protection and socio-economic integration of widows and underprivileged women in Afghanistan	Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (EERW) Programme in Bangladesh	Women Economic Empowerment through Livelihood Improvement (WEELI)/Women Empowerment Programme (WEP) in Pakistan	Women's Empowerment Toward Community Safety and Resilience of Underprivileged Women in Vietnam project
Duration of project (months)	18 months	27	24	25
Start date	1-Oct-19	1-Oct-19	1-Oct-19	1-Sep-19
End date	31-Mar-21	31-Dec-21	30-Jun-21	30-Jun-21
Project sites:	5 provinces, Kabul, Heart, Nangarhar and Kandahar, Balkh Marastoon and Bamyan	Kachukata Union of Sadar Upazila of Nilphamari	6 villages in Sobhyar UC and Mithario Bhatt UC, in the Talukas of Diplo and Mithi, Tharparkar district	4 communes of 2 districts in 2 provinces: Tan Thanh, Hung Le in Giong Trom district, Ben Tre province; and Phuoc Hoa and Phuoc Thang in Tuy Phuoc district, Binh Dinh province
National Society	Afghan Red Crescent Society	Bangladesh Red Crescent Society	Pakistan Red Crescent Society	Viet Nam Red Cross
Project goal	To build resilience and improved livelihoods of marginalised and underprivileged women in the target communities.	To build resilience and increase the livelihood options amongst marginalized and underprivileged women to become economically productive and empowered through established livelihoods and prevention on SGBV	To build resilience and improved livelihood of marginalised and underprivileged women in the target communities	Not specified

Project outcome 1	Increased income through livelihoods support intervention.	Underprivileged women equipped with skills, strengthened their livelihoods income have access to basic needs-help improved household resilience.	Increased income through livelihood support interventions.	Support in the implementation of sustainable livelihood development for vulnerable women to improve their household economic security.
Project outcome 2	Strengthened women's empowerment and protection through education and advocacy on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) prevention and response community-based mechanisms	Strengthened women's empowerment and protection through SGBV prevention activities.	Improved living standard and safety of the targeted beneficiaries	Capacity building and strengthening the ability to protect women against violence and abuse through community outreach such as: awareness sessions, advocacy and information disseminations through IEC materials.
Project outcome 3	n/a	n/a	Strengthened women's empowerment and protection through education and advocacy on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) prevention and response community-based mechanisms.	n/a
Project indicator 1	% of women beneficiaries reporting that the livelihoods support has helped established income opportunities and are able to meet their food and other essential needs.	60% of women beneficiaries reporting that the livelihoods support has helped established income opportunities.	60% women beneficiaries received the livelihood support and reported that income opportunities have improved, enabling them to address their household needs.	50% [of women who] directly received livelihoods support reported income opportunities increased and can meet their food and other essential needs. 40% women reported an increased income by 10% at the end of the programme.
Project indicator 2	# of women reported increased income by 10% at the end of the project.	40% of women reported have increased income by 10% after receiving support from the project are able to have control over it and meet their food and other basic needs.	40% women reported increased income by 10 percent at the end of the programme.	60% of men, women, boys and girls targeted reported gains in knowledge and skills contributed to reduced violence, especially SGBV, at the household level and the community.

Project indicator 3	% Men, women, boys and girls targeted, reported to gain knowledge and skills contributed to reduced violence, especially SGBV, at household level and the community.	40% of women started their income generating activities have reported increased 20% of their savings.	60% of the targeted men, women, boys and girls reported a gain in knowledge and skills, contributing to reduced violence, especially SGBV, at household and community level.	n/a
Project indicator 4	n/a	60% of people's knowledge increased on gender equality and SGBV issues.	n/a	n/a

For information on the achievement of indicator targets, refer to [section 8.2.2](#), while data on people directly and indirectly reached can be found in [section 8.2.3](#).

6. Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Scope

6.1. Evaluation purpose

In 2021, the Red Cross Red Crescent Societies of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Viet Nam undertook and completed individual end-line country evaluations to measure the achievements of the women empowerment and livelihoods projects at the household and community level. These country projects were part of the Asia Pacific WEP.

To consolidate and aggregate the findings of the four country evaluations, the IFRC conducted a streamlined, internal meta-evaluation. The Meta-evaluation assessed linkages between the country evaluations, analyzed results and synthesized best practices, lessons learned and recommendations. The report produced will inform organizational learning and the strategic direction of participating National Societies, the IFRC, partner National Societies like the KRCS, and the future of the Women Empowerment Fund.

Purpose: To consolidate and aggregate the Women Empowerment Programme (WEP) findings from four country evaluations covering Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Viet Nam.

6.2. Evaluation scope

This meta-evaluation reviewed all country evaluations and key documents related to the Women Empowerment Programme supported by the IFRC, the four participating National Societies and the donor, KRCS. The meta-evaluation was a light, internal exercise consisting of a desktop review of the latest versions of all documents, complemented by key informant interviews where necessary. Interviewees were drawn from the regional and in-country project teams of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Viet Nam. If the opportunity arises, the meta-evaluation will feed into an impact evaluation in the future.

6.3. Evaluation objectives

1. Assess all the country evaluations to identify common thematic achievements in building resilience, preventing sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and improving the livelihoods of targeted women and their communities.
2. Aggregate evaluation findings and case studies according to **efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and appropriateness** to determine programme outputs and outcomes are achieved and meet targeted women and community needs.

3. Analyze evaluation findings and collect supplementary data to identify **sustainable practices** in the country projects within the programme areas that have the potential to be replicated, generalized and/or mainstreamed.
4. Identify **best practices** and synthesize **lessons learned and recommendations** to inform the strategic direction for future programming and the Women Empowerment Fund.

Please refer to Appendix B ([pg. 45](#)) and Appendix C ([pg. 46](#)) for the detailed evaluation matrix and data analysis plan.

6.4. Evaluations reviewed

An analysis of the four country evaluations reviewed in the meta-evaluation:

Evaluation characteristics	Afghanistan	Bangladesh	Pakistan	Viet Nam
Title of evaluation	Women Empowerment Programme in Afghanistan: End of project evaluation report	Report of the Final Evaluation: Economic Empowerment of Rural Women (EERW) Programme in Bangladesh	Final Evaluation Report: PRCS Women Empowerment Programme in Pakistan	Final Evaluation Report: Women's Empowerment Toward Community Safety and Resilience of Underprivileged Women in Viet Nam
Date of publication	19-Jun-21	1-Nov-21	1-Aug-21	30-Jun-21
Author	Mohammad Murtaza Haqeeqat	Eminence Associates for Social Development	Mir Hussam-ud-Din Quasmi (team leader)	Đào Ngọc Ninh
Study design	not specific	Descriptive study design	Not specific	Participatory qualitative method
Method of data collection	Survey, KII, lessons learned workshop, case studies	A structured questionnaire (survey), FGD, KII, IDI	Household survey (PSC), KII, FGD, desktop review, transect walk, observations	Questionnaire (survey), desktop review, KII, IDI, FGD, case studies
Method of analysis	Percentage, content analysis	Percentage (SPSS), Thematic analysis	Mean, percentage, poverty scorecard (PSC), content analysis	Percentage, content analysis, narrative analysis
Purpose	To determine the relevance and level of achievement of project goal, objectives, outcomes, development effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.	To assess the performance of the EERW programme over time and to capture the changes and achievements to build resilience and improved livelihood throughout the programme period.	To assess how the WEP has achieved its goals and objectives of building resilience and improving the livelihoods of marginalized and underprivileged women in target communities.	To evaluate whether the programme delivered relevant, efficient and effective activities to the targeted beneficiaries and community people as set in the programme logical framework
Differences	Less methodologically rigorous	Very methodologically rigorous	Methodologically rigorous, but did not organize analysis by OECD criteria	Moderately methodologically rigorous
Participants - survey	340	411	253	129
Participants - FGD	n/a	8 groups	n/a	18

Participants - KII	61	23	n/a	23
Sampling confidence level	n/a	95%	95%	n/a
Margin of error	n/a	5%	5%	n/a
Recruitment method	not specific	Systematic random sampling	Multi-stage systematic sampling	Randomized sampling

7. Evaluation Methodology

The methodology adhered to the IFRC Framework for Evaluations. The meta-evaluation was an internal exercise consisting of a desktop review of the latest versions of key documents, complemented by key informant interviews where necessary. Four country evaluations from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Viet Nam were reviewed as primary documents. Data from the country evaluations were organized and coded according to categories and themes. An outline of the methodology is available:

Desktop review

An internal literature review of the country evaluations from four countries and key documents as needed. Only final versions of the documents will be considered for review. Desktop review activities included scanning literature, analyzing secondary data as needed, and creating a reference list.

Data extraction

Information and data from the country evaluations were extracted into an excel sheet. The data was simultaneously coded and organized into an initial set of categories. A deductive coding approach was used, where codes were based the segmented evaluation criteria. Based on the categories coded, themes and sub-themes were identified.

Data synthesis

The country evaluations were described, followed by a narrative and/or quantitative analysis and synthesis of data. A structured description consolidated the characteristics of the findings and overall implications for the women empowerment programme. Relevant technical leads in protection, gender and inclusion were consulted. A quantitative synthesis of the data was also provided. However, this step was challenging due to heterogeneity, i.e. variation in the country evaluation results.

Supplementary key informant interviews

There are gaps in the information and data, particularly on sustainability, replicability, mainstreaming, and community engagement and accountability. Supplementary key informant interviews were conducted to fill in those data gaps as needed.

Write-up of the meta-evaluation

The discussion of the results of the meta-evaluation focused on the strength of evidence and limitations of the original country evaluations used. Limitations of the meta-review were discussed, and implications of findings for future programming. Best practices were identified, while lessons learned and recommendations were drawn from the evaluations and synthesized data.

8. Findings

8.1. Efficiency

8.1.1. Activities

Across the Women Empowerment Programme and projects, efficiency was heavily affected by the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, just as the projects were taking off, the COVID-19 pandemic struck all the countries involved in the Women Empowerment Programme. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Viet Nam were all hit at varying degrees by the devastating effect of the health emergency. Despite completing planning, preparation, orientation, early training and beneficiary selection, project activities ground to a temporary halt, community outreach and engagement had to pull back, and National Societies struggled to implement projects while prioritizing the COVID-19 response. Intervention modalities were scaled back, modified or extended to suit the social distancing and travel restrictions imposed on staff, volunteers and communities to help them stay safe. Alternative communication methods were sought with the reduction in field visits and in-person outreach. In-person regional technical support could only be carried out for three of the four countries due to the sudden travel restrictions. The programme and country projects demonstrated admirable efficiency in adapting project modalities to match the new normal. In some cases, the National Societies activated community networks established through the WEP to operationalize the COVID-19 response.

In **Bangladesh**, BDRCS mobilized the community facilitators who were already active in the various wards through WEP to raise awareness on COVID-19. Field teams, staff, volunteers, community workers and enumerators were provided with PPE, sanitizing material and guidelines for COVID-19 safe practices. Team supervisors provided psychosocial support where possible. Community social events like the women forum's courtyard sessions were carefully designed for no more than 18 members per group to minimize the virus spread. In **Afghanistan**, the compounded effect of the pandemic, security situation and population mobility challenged the project as restrictions caused 40 per cent of the women some difficulty in starting or expanding their businesses. Despite these challenges, the ARCS managed to complete the resilience, livelihoods and SGBV activities, albeit on a adapted mode (shorter durations). In **Viet Nam**, outreach and women club meetings that were initially planned for scale were modified to suit much smaller groups of 10 women/individuals for health safety reasons. In **Pakistan**, COVID-19 outbreaks caused significant delays in project activities. Monitoring visits were heavily restricted and became dependent on progress reports provided by field teams. Activities to meet intended outcomes were extended with implications for overall project timeframe, with similar situations faced in the other countries.

One way of analyzing cost-efficiency of a project is through direct and indirect costs, where a higher direct expenditure may indicate higher project efficiency. Based on the analysis below, most projects have a relatively high rate of cost-efficiency. However, it is noted that countries may categorize direct and indirect costs differently. For example, some may categorize staff training as a direct expense, while others may consider it an indirect cost. It is not possible to determine such detailed information at the meta-evaluation level.

The proportion of project direct and indirect cost by country, as analyzed by the country evaluation teams:

Country	Direct cost	Indirect cost	Cost-efficiency
Afghanistan			
Pakistan			
Bangladesh	67.3%	32.7%	
Viet Nam	92.2%	7.8%	

In **Viet Nam**, the project team implemented the project within the budget of USD 139,750, with indirect costs accounting for only seven per cent of the expenditures. Each of the targeted women received livelihood cash/assets of CHF 107 per household. The country evaluation team deemed personnel were assigned appropriately to the scale, budget and intervention scope, where a three-level project management mechanism was instated. Responsible staff covering project and financial management were assigned at both VNRC headquarters and provincial levels. In the commune, the project management unit was a cooperative of VNRC, the People's Committee and Women's Union members of the specific commune. Financial management processes were well established, complying with Vietnamese law and donor requirements.

In **Bangladesh**, the final project expenditure stood at CHF 180,387, with 67.3 per cent constituting direct and 32.7 per cent indirect expenditure. Each women's household received CHF 98 in livelihood cash/assets. In terms of project management, each related BDRCS branch has a project implementation committee and unit executive committee members overseeing the project. Community facilitators are appointed from the villages/wards¹ to better access and communicate with target communities, sometimes located at a distance from the nearest unit. The country evaluation team noted that each fieldworker/community facilitator covered roughly 280 beneficiaries.

In **Afghanistan**, security was a significant challenge to the project. Although military groups were accommodating to the ARCS and their staff, the target communities and provinces were affected by security incidences and potential threats, particularly in Kabul Nangarhar, Balkh and Kandahar. These created some delays in the project. Key informant interview pointed out some additional issues related to project efficacy (IFRC Afghanistan Country Evaluation, 2021). Timelines were delayed partly because of COVID-19, and partly because of the unstable situation in the country, where population movement led to changes in beneficiaries as some women stakeholders moved out of the target communities. In financial and project management, some activities and resources not budgeted adequately. Human resources appeared acceptable, although the key informant interviewees recommended additional staff in Kabul and the field. For project management, the heads of marastoons, based in branch offices, lead field operations in their provinces with technical assistance from the IFRC livelihoods coordinator and the head of the ARCS gender unit. Administration and finance officers are assigned for each province. Community-women respondents stated that more extended (four months) and in-depth training would better equip them with professional skills.

In Pakistan, budgeting appeared to be an issue as it was observed to be insufficient for a project of this scale in the country. The country evaluation team observed that 41 per cent of the budget was used for only one activity.

8.1.2. Intervention quality

Although the WEP afforded a large degree of flexibility to the individual country programmes suited to the in-country context and operational realities, measures were taken to ensure a level of coherence in their individual approaches. A Technical Working Group (TWG) was provided a platform for support, coordination and quality programming. The TWG comprises the regional technical leads for livelihoods and protection, gender and inclusion (PGI), the pledge manager and country-level WEP focal points. A Project Steering Committee (PSC) was also established to provide strategic guidance and direction on implementation of the project. The PSC comprises regional unit heads and heads of delegations. Vulnerability assessments were conducted in all countries to identify project location and potential target groups, including engagement with community leaders to sensitize them to the WEP. National Society staff and volunteers were trained in programme design, implementation, monitoring and establishing community committees. Information, education and communication (IEC) materials on SGBV for advocacy and training in were developed in-house with National Society gender focal points. Training in livelihood support and skills-training were carried out with active collaboration of various departments and ministries.

In **Viet Nam**, the quality of the intervention was maintained through regular monitoring activities that consisted of meetings, three-month progress reports and field visits. After each field visit, VNRC project staff updated a monitoring system devised for the project's logical framework indicators. The project team regularly discussed and solved issues that hindered project implementation, and VNRC's financial staff ensured adherence to financial procedures.

Baseline and endline surveys in **Bangladesh** ensured the progress of the country project was accurately measured and accounted for. Instead of only capturing achievements at the end of the project cycle with unclear

¹ Union Councils (or Union Parishads or Unions) are the smallest rural administrative and local government units in Bangladesh. Each union is made up of nine wards. Usually one village is designated as a ward.

attributions, the BDRCS could make concrete attributions to project performance and measure changes in the community women's knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) over the length of the project. Regular monitoring activities such as monthly monitoring reports and field visits were conducted. Furthermore, intervention quality of project activities was ensured through regular "courtyard sessions", described further in sections [8.2.3](#) and [Error! Reference source not found.](#). Courtyard sessions allowed target women and communities to provide direct feedback on the project so that staff could make changes as necessary.

In **Afghanistan**, when asked to rate the performance of the overall project, 58 per cent of direct women respondents described it as useful, and 38 per cent described it as high quality² (as opposed to effectless and poor quality, [Figure 4](#)). Income-generating activities (IGA) were designed according to a market needs assessment and women stakeholders' household survey ([Figure 5](#)). In the market needs assessment, wholesalers and retailers were interviewed to identify overall IGA cost, maintenance cost, business expenditures and annual net income. Every IGA was ranked according to feasibility, marketability, profitability, sustainability, socially acceptability, income generation potential, among others, to determine the appropriateness for target beneficiaries. Appropriate training was provided to staff at the start of the project, covering technical aspects of livelihoods and SGBV, procedures, tools and collaboration. ARCS project staff from all six provinces took part in a business skills development training-of-trainers, so that they can better impart relevant skills to the targeted women and their communities. Although baseline data collection was mentioned in the country final report, it was mainly used to collect data for beneficiary selection (IFRC Afghanistan Country Report, 2022).

In **Pakistan**, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities, which would have otherwise ensured the intervention quality, were severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions. There were no M&E staff at the provincial level, while M&E staff from the headquarters and IFRC office could not travel to the project sites. Turnover of field staff was also high, as their salary structure was not aligned with the market rate. Nevertheless, the PRCS did collect baseline and endline data through surveys, which overall showed an increase in household income and demonstrated the success of the project ([Figure 20](#)). A stratified sampling approach was used to collect data from households at a 95 per cent confidence level. District vulnerability mapping and market assessments were also conducted to determine the suitability of project locations and interventions.

8.1.3. Collaboration and coordination

All country projects of the WEP had excellent collaboration and coordination with internal and external stakeholders, particularly government, non-government, and community-based organizations. While some country collaborations consisted more of information sharing sessions and clearing project delays and bureaucratic obstructions, other countries had deeper partnerships entrenched in the project's design and implementation, especially in Viet Nam and Bangladesh. In these countries, local organizations and government agencies were tapped to run the livelihood training and/or SGBV awareness sessions, and filled in technical gaps in the National Societies. The IFRC country teams and the four National Societies further coordinated with other Partner National Societies (PNS) present in the country to bring synergies between the ongoing activities, for example in the Marastoons in Afghanistan.

8.1.3.1. Internal collaboration

Internal collaboration in **Viet Nam** was found to be efficient, particularly between VNRC and provincial/commune project management units. There was a clear delineation of roles, with provincial chapters carrying out activities with local community partners and reporting to VNRC headquarters monthly/quarterly, while the headquarters oversaw overall project coordination. Communities were consulted in detail about beneficiary criteria and

² Although the measure itself might not best represent project performance, since the respondents agreeable to the project were split between the "useful" and "high quality" category, most seemed to view the ARCS project positively.

selection, and the target women had the freedom to choose the training packages that were most relevant and suited to them.

In **Bangladesh**, internal collaboration emphasized strong relationships with the communities being assisted. The relationship was ensured not just through project management committees at the district and unit level but within the villages/wards themselves through the appointment of community facilitators. These were appointed focal points who were from the target communities themselves, who served as a conduit between the women, their communities and BDRCS. This proved to be highly effective, particularly when COVID-19 struck, as the community facilitators could keep the activities going even when project staff could not travel to the remote sites as frequently. Courtyard sessions under the women forums were held within small groups in every ward/village, with 45 groups of 18 members/group across the nine wards. The sessions allowed the women to discuss issues, plan and conduct activities and provide the project with feedback.

8.1.3.2. External collaboration

Externally, the VNRC partnered with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Women's Union, an organization that promotes gender equality and the advancement of women in **Viet Nam**. As it was the first time VNRC implemented a project on gender equality and women empowerment, the collaboration assured the quality of the VNRC intervention in supporting vulnerable women.

The direct benefits of the partnerships in **Viet Nam** were two-fold. Firstly, in coordination and administration, where VNRC was able to share project management responsibilities at the commune level with the local Women's Union. Secondly, the partners supplemented gaps in technical support. The provincial Women's Union experts conducted information and communication sessions on SGBV and gender equality. This was critical as VNRC had not done projects on SGBV before. In the meantime, provincial Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development sent experts for livelihoods support, husbandry and cultivation training, which benefitted the targeted women and communities. Again, this collaboration complemented gaps in VNRC's local expertise. In the supplementary key informant interviews, the excellent coordination and partnership with the Women's Union and government departments were cited as some of the strongest features of the project. It allowed Viet Nam to conduct a number of key activities at minimal cost, human resource and technical input, with maximum outcomes and benefits for the women stakeholders and their community.

In **Bangladesh**, external collaboration mostly involved work with local government, representatives and leaders. Firstly, 280 local community leaders, community influencers, and local government officials participated in orientations and workshops on SGBV, sensitizing them to the gender issues women face in society. Secondly, like Viet Nam, local government institutions provided technical support and local experts to the BDRCS for livelihood and skill development training.

In **Pakistan**, the PRCS collaborated the most with the local government livestock department. The department supported the project in vaccinating the women's livestock and providing long-term, sustainable support to the women in livestock management through a helpline. A stakeholder meeting was also held with the local government departments, safe houses, hospitals, local organizations and legal prosecutors to discuss referral pathways for SGBV survivors.

Collaboration in **Afghanistan** was established since the start of the project, when ARCS engaged with provincial authorities and community leaders to select the target areas and list of beneficiaries. ARCS held numerous meetings with government officials (municipality, Department of Women Affairs, and Department of Labour and Social Affairs) and other like-minded organizations. The purpose was to 1) introduce the Women Empowerment project; 2) coordinate and consult the project target areas; and 3) avoid the potential risks of duplication.

8.2. Effectiveness

8.2.1. Programme and project achievement

Afghanistan project goal:	To improve the socio-economic situation of the most vulnerable and destitute women and girls in the Marastoons and communities to become self-sufficient, thus contributing to their social inclusion.
Project outcomes:	Women and girls are equipped with skills to be economically independent and resilient.
	Women have increased awareness on protection and women rights through sessions, education and advocacy on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

The country evaluation found that the project achieved its outcomes and goal in **Afghanistan**. Some key survey findings proved the project's success. Women survey respondents reported that they have become self-sufficient through the project, with 72 per cent agreement (39 per cent selecting good and 33 per cent selecting excellent, [Figure 3](#)). Respondents were asked to select words describing overall project performance: 58 per cent considered the project useful, while 38 per cent described it as high quality ([Figure 2](#)).

In helping the women become more independent and resilient, the country evaluation observed that women respondents attributed positive changes to the project, such as improved living standards, income and economic independence. However, the meta-evaluation notes no quantitative measure of this attribution. Interviewees from different regions preferred different activities – one region favoured coalition building and SGBV awareness, while another preferred market access and skill development training. All regions commonly celebrated the opportunity to bring women together and upskill collectively.

“Previously these women were not united at all but after implementation of this project, they learned new skills, they have become united, they are happy in their life, and moving forward with the family.”
~ Woman interviewee, Afghanistan

There were more challenges and limitations in increasing women's awareness of protection and women's rights because of the contextual situation in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, significant progress was made in this outcome, with 84 per cent of respondents attributing increased awareness on rights to the project directly. Most notably, 57 per cent of respondents self-reported that women are more aware of their rights, while 19 per cent had somewhat better awareness ([Figure 6](#)).

“After establishment of our women group [as part of the project], many changes have been brought and as such they are going to the market, and dealing with shop keepers directly. If someone wouldn't come on time to the meetings or women gatherings, other women would blame her a lot for waste of time.”

~ Woman interviewee, Afghanistan

Bangladesh project goal:	To build resilience and increase the livelihood options amongst marginalized and underprivileged women to become economically productive and empowered through established livelihoods and prevention on SGBV.
Project outcomes:	Underprivileged women equipped with skills, strengthened their livelihoods income have access to basic needs-help improved household resilience.
	Strengthened women's empowerment and protection through SGBV prevention activities.

Vulnerable women (841 individuals) reached by the project in **Bangladesh** have strengthened their livelihood incomes and skills. Baseline and endline surveys showed that the targeted community women increased their

average monthly income (Figure 8) by 6.5%, from BDT 5,029 (CHF 53) to BDT 5,355 (CHF 57). Of those surveyed, 41 per cent of the women reported the increase in income to be 10 per cent or higher. As a result, households were able to boost their monthly expenditures by two per cent. Meanwhile, 56% of the women engaged in income-generating activities increased their savings by 20% or above.

Improved livelihood resilience is demonstrated by 86 per cent of women (264 individuals) surveyed who confirmed they are actively earning an income from the opportunities presented through the project's livelihoods support. Fourteen per cent have not yet begun earning from skills gained through the livelihoods training. In addition to livelihood and skill development training, 101 women received training and orientation on market linkages.

"I have started earning [an income] by selling the vegetables from my garden and without a doubt it has made me a self-dependent woman. I am spending the money from my earnings for my daughter's education and bearing some other household expenses".

~ Woman respondent, Bangladesh

Nevertheless, further validation of livelihood resilience and training can be found in the areas where the women chose to spend their increased income (Figure 11). The majority (26 per cent) chose to reinvest the earnings in their livelihood extensions. The other category follows this (19 per cent³) and food items purchasing (17 per cent). The country evaluation compared assets purchased by direct and indirect project beneficiaries (Figure 12) to measure household competency and management. The assumption is that the group that increased their possessions over the last year comparatively had better purchasing power and asset management competencies. Overall, direct beneficiaries spent more on productive and non-productive assets than their indirect beneficiary counterparts.

There is a spillover effect from the livelihoods component to resilience building, as the vulnerable women with better incomes participated more in economic decision making, demonstrated by a 13 per cent increase from 22 per cent participation at the baseline survey to 35 per cent at the endline. The women forums and their monthly, regular courtyard sessions were a platform for the women to meet to discuss problems and carry out activities. They also served as a platform for livelihood and SGBV awareness-raising activities.

"Before being a part of the EEWP programme, my husband was the only earner of the household, and he used to work as a day labourer. We had a hard time then, and sometimes we didn't even have enough to eat. Through the programme's financial support, I have started poultry trading and bought chickens and ducks. It has strengthened my economic stand in the household and the community."

~ One of the women respondents in the focus group discussions

Overall, there is strong evidence through the baseline and endline surveys, proving strengthened women's empowerment and protection among vulnerable women directly and the community served indirectly. Gender equality knowledge has improved exponentially from 17 per cent at the baseline start of the project to 67 per cent (direct recipients) and 52 per cent (indirect recipients) in the endline survey. Similar significant increases were seen for SGBV knowledge, with 22 per cent only at baseline and 66 per cent (direct) and 51 per cent (indirect) at

"There was a time when my husband used to beat me for dowry almost every day. In fact, one evening he walked out on to me and my children, harassing me for dowry. However, the scenario changed when I started earning for myself and the household, and I was able to do so with the help of this programme. Now, the perception of my husband changed too, so, he doesn't ask for dowry nowadays."

~ a woman respondent during focus group discussions, Bangladesh.

³ The high figure in the "other" category may be remedied in future by participatory survey design methodologies and pilot testing.

the endline survey. According to key informant interviews, child marriage was a high impact topic that was most commonly discussed (a table of topics can be seen in [Figure 13](#), as well as more key SGBV findings). According to supplementary key informant interviews, discussions on child marriages resulted in observable positive changes in the community. Baseline and endline survey results further show a reduction in incidences of violence, as self-reported by the people reached by the project, with an 83 percent decrease among women directly reached, and a 60 per cent decrease among the community indirectly reached ([Figure 14](#)). An impact study or assessment is recommended to verify the observations.

Viet Nam project objectives:	Support in the implementation of sustainable livelihood development for vulnerable women with the aim to improve their household economic security.
	Build capacity and strengthen the ability to protect women against violence and abuse through community outreach such as: awareness sessions, advocacy and information dissemination through IEC materials.

In **Viet Nam**, livelihoods of vulnerable women benefitting from the project were enhanced, evidenced by 95.9 per cent of survey respondents reporting improvements to income. In comparison, only 4.1 per cent claimed their income did not improve (on page 42, [Figure 16](#)). This positively impacts household financial security and economic resilience to shocks and disasters.

Of the 480 people targeted as direct beneficiaries, 100% were disadvantaged women from the four communes. The project surpassed its target by reaching 540 people, including vulnerable women, local government officials and grassroots project staff, who were reached with livelihood training in farming, poultry raising, livelihood capital and household economic planning. Direct livelihood support was provided to 480 vulnerable women amounting to CHF107 per household, while 16 women received loans through the revolving fund for livelihood activities.

Four women's clubs were established in the four target communes that ran monthly meetings to build women's capacity. The project's livelihood activities were conducted through these clubs, as were information sessions on gender equality and SGBV, supported by local authorities and the Women's Union. Training and communication/information sessions directly reached 160 government leaders and 1,798 women and community members. Notably, the women's clubs were instrumental in disseminating gender equality and SGBV messaging to 10,000 people in the wider community, who, through their participation, supported the project and became indirect beneficiaries. Improvements to awareness in SGBV and gender equality among the women's club members and the communes were observed.

“The public’s awareness of gender violence prevention has improved. Like in my commune previously, there were usually seven to eight domestic violence cases every year, but recently, I saw a decrease. There have been no cases since the second half of 2020.”
 ~ Interview with a respondent from Tuy Phước district, Bình Định province, Viet Nam.

Pakistan project goal:	To build resilience and improved livelihood of marginalised and underprivileged women in the target communities.
Project outcomes:	Increased income through livelihood support interventions.
	Improved living standard and safety of the targeted beneficiaries
	Strengthened women’s empowerment and protection through education and advocacy on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) prevention and response community-based mechanisms.

Despite having to shorten the project timeframe because of COVID-19, **Pakistan** worked towards its project outcomes and goal of building resilience and livelihoods of marginalized and underprivileged women in the target communities. Similar to the other country projects, activities focused on three areas of intervention, livelihood support, training and development, women groups and community-based organizations, and SGBV awareness.

While an increase in household income as a result of project activities was not determined, the country evaluation was able to capture the participants' knowledge on livestock management following the interventions. In terms of knowledge, 98 per cent of respondents said they knew more about good animal breeds and have taken action to replace their livestock. Up to 96 per cent have construction animal shelters after training, and the sheds visited by evaluators clean, with 82 per cent respondents cleaning the sheds twice a day or daily.

Since the training, there has been an almost 95 per cent increase in visits to the government livestock department, demonstrating the women stakeholders can seek local technical assistance as needed. Livelihood cash funds or grants were transferred to 841 vulnerable women participants amounting to PKR 18,300 (CHF 93) to enhance their livelihood activities or purchase livestock. An unexpected outcome of the project was that PRCS facilitated 64 women to register or update their identity cards or CNIC with the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA). CNICs were necessary to retrieve the cash grants from the financial service provider (FSP). The women stakeholders received further support from PRCS and the livestock department in vaccinating their new animals. The community-based organizations established/revitalised by PRCS were encouraged to maintain a savings group and associated bank accounts, which can help the women with funds to start or grow their small businesses.

In terms of SGBV prevention and education, PRCS ran 53 SGBV awareness sessions that reached 8,932 people (4,771 females, 386 girls, 3,328 males, 385 boys and 62 children).

8.2.2. Indicators

Many of the countries involved in WEP exceeded the targets set through individual country project indicators. Where results directly relating to indicators set were not found, approximate achievements were reported on instead. An overview of indicator achievement by country projects is provided:

	Indicator	Target	Actual	Variance	Analysis
Vietnam	50% [of women who] directly received livelihoods support reported income opportunities increased and can meet their food and other essential needs. 40% women reported an increased income by 10% at the end of the Programme.	50%	94%	+44%	Exceeded target as 94% women surveyed reported income improvements. The project reached 480 vulnerable women and 160 local government and grassroots project staff, a total of 640 people.
	60% of men, women, boys and girls targeted reported gains in knowledge and skills contributed to reduced violence, especially SGBV, at the household level and the community.	60%	70%	+10%	More than 70% ⁴ of the women who were the project's direct beneficiaries improved their awareness of gender equality and gender-based violence prevention. The planned reach was for 480 women and 160 influencers, and the actual reach exceeded the target as 1,958 people were directly reached and 10,000 indirectly reached ⁵ .
Bangladesh	60% of women beneficiaries reported that the livelihoods support	60%	86%	+26%	86% of beneficiaries reported that the livelihoods support helped

⁴ It is unclear if this result accurately measures the indicator as the survey question appears to be asking about the women's knowledge of Viet Nam agency missions in gender equality and SGBV.

⁵ In Viet Nam, training workshops for 160 government leaders and communication sessions reaching 1,798 community members, among them the 480 targeted women. Women's club dissemination activities reached 10,000 people in the community indirectly.

	has helped established income opportunities.				establish income opportunities, and they were actively earning money. The project reached 841 vulnerable women directly with livelihood support and training.
	40% of women reported have increased income by 10% after receiving support from the project are able to have control over it and meet their food and other basic needs.	40%	41%	+1%	Baseline and endline surveys showed 41% of women reported increasing their income by 10% or above after receiving support from the project (Figure 8).
	40% of women started their income-generating activities have reported an increased 20% of their savings.	40%	56%	+16%	56% of the women engaged in income-generating activities increased their savings by 20% or above (Figure 9).
	60% of people's knowledge increased on gender equality and SGBV issues.	60%	66%	+6%	66% of vulnerable women directly reached reported an increase in knowledge on violence against women or SGBV (Figure 14). Markedly, KAP improved, evidenced through reported decreases in incidences of violence (direct 83%, indirect 60%) after the project (Figure 14).
Afghanistan	% of women beneficiaries reporting that the livelihoods support has helped established income opportunities and are able to meet their food and other essential needs. ⁶	0%	60%	-	60% of the 841 women successfully started up their enterprises and businesses despite the protracted COVID-19 pandemic.
	# of women reported increased income by 10% at the end of the project.	-	n/a	-	Other indicators are observed to replace this indicator, such as 60% of women started enterprises (above), and 841 women reached with livelihood support; refer to annex (IFRC Afghanistan Country Report, 2022)
	% men, women, boys and girls targeted, reported gaining knowledge and skills contributed to reduced violence, especially SGBV, at household level and the community.	-	n/a	-	Results for this indicator was not found. However, it is observed that other indicators at the output level replaced them, see annex (IFRC Afghanistan Country Report, 2022)
Pakistan	40% women reported increased income by 10 percent at the end. of the programme.	40%	n/a	-	Data specific to this indicator was not found. However, baseline and endline surveys showed that maximum income had increased by 150% at the household level, while mean income had increased by 146%.

⁶ In the Afghanistan project, specific targets were not set for the indicators.

60% of the targeted men, women, boys and girls reported a gain in knowledge and skills, contributing to reduced violence, especially SGBV, at household and community level.	-	n/a	-	Data specific to this indicator was not found. The most relevant indicator was the participation rate, which stood at 100 per cent among the respondents. Baseline and endline surveys also indicated knowledge on all forms of violence has increased by 51%.
--	---	-----	---	--

8.2.3. People reached

The availability of sex and age disaggregated data across the WEP and its country projects was robust. Overall, 15,582 people were directly reached across the programme, while 33,987 were indirectly reached, exceeding the programme target of 13,000 people.

Number of People Reached by the overall WEP					
Country	Direct Recipients				Indirect Recipients
	Male	Female	Unspecified	Total	
Afghanistan	2,244	2,864		5,108	n/a
Bangladesh	129	995	n/a	1,124	13,870
Pakistan	3,713	5,157	n/a	8,870	8,145
Viet Nam	n/a	480	n/a	480	11,972
Total	6,086	9,496	0	15,582	33,987

The detailed sex and age disaggregated data is available for each individual country project as well:

AFGHANISTAN: Number of People Reached								
Age group	Direct Recipients				Indirect Recipients			
	Male	Female	Unspecified	Total	Male	Female	Unspecified	Total
0 to 5	463	560		1,023				0
6 to 15	1,012	1,133		2,145				0
16 to 59	612	991		1,603				0
60 +	157	180		337				0
Total	2,244	2,864		5,108				0

BANGLADESH: Number of People Reached								
Age group	Direct Recipients				Indirect Recipients			
	Male	Female	Unspecified	Total	Male	Female	Unspecified	Total
0 to 5	0	0		0				0
6 to 12	0	0		0				0
13 to 17	0	1		1				2,000
18 to 29	40	116		156				3,000
30 to 39	35	268		303				3,500
40 to 49	30	237		267				3,000
50 to 59	15	203		218				2,000

60 to 69	9	112		121				300
70 to 79	0	50		50				50
80+	0	8		8				20
Total	129	995		1,124				13,870

PAKISTAN: Number of People Reached

Age group	Direct Recipients				Indirect Recipients			
	Male	Female	Unspecified	Total	Male	Female	Unspecified	Total
0 to 5	0	0		0				0
6 to 12	95	109		204				242
13 to 17	110	358		468				607
18 to 29	1,130	1,110		2,240				529
30 to 39	1,402	2,059		3,461				2,021
40 to 49	368	1,101		1,469				1,980
50 to 59	467	290		757				985
60 to 69	67	75		142				881
70 to 79	74	55		129				900
80+	0	0		0				0
Total	3713	5157		8,870				8,145

VIET NAM: Number of People Reached

Age group	Direct Recipients				Indirect Recipients			
	Male	Female	Unspecified	Total	Male	Female	Unspecified	Total
0 to 18				0	165	170		335
18 to 59		480		480	464	238		702
60 +				0	30	106		136
Total		480		480	659	514	10,799	11,972

8.2.4. Community engagement and accountability (CEA)

All country projects enjoyed a high degree of acceptance from the communities. In Viet Nam, the beneficiary selection was highly participatory and therefore received strong endorsement from the community, who essentially came up with the criteria and scored the potential participants themselves. In Bangladesh, the community joined in the courtyard sessions. According to supplementary key informant interviews, many potential conflicts on beneficiary selection were resolved there and then, with vulnerable women respondents themselves speaking up to explain the project modality and selection process to questioning community members. In Afghanistan, the country evaluation observed that all survey respondents and interviewees were well versed with the project's purpose and scope, and community elders were guided throughout the project implementation.

Women groups in various forms were established across target communities in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Viet Nam to create a safe platform and space for the women to converge and carry out activities. In Bangladesh, the women forums and their monthly, regular courtyard sessions were a platform for the participants to meet often, interface with each other, discuss common problems and seek solutions. BDRCS were careful to make these groups small, with no more than 18 women per group, to allow ease of discussion and control the spread of COVID-19. The courtyard sessions were highly participatory and welcomed members of the wider community to join in. A similar strategy was adopted in Viet Nam, where women's club gatherings were done at the hamlet level with about 10 members per group. In Pakistan, PRCS applied its participatory approach through setting up the community-based organizations and women saving groups. In Afghanistan, women's saving groups became informal self-help groups and hosted a revolving fund.

"At first, the women were shy and afraid of talking in front of others in the meetings and courtyard sessions. But now the situation has changed, and women are actively participating in different discussions"

~ Key informant interview with field staff, Bangladesh

Through the country evaluations, the women recipients provided feedback and opinions on the country project and their activities. Although the women seemed satisfied with the activities designed in Viet Nam, they were less satisfied with the amount allocated for the livelihood support (CHF107 per household). In Afghanistan, the women stakeholders were involved in the project design, coming up with ideas on the types of skills for the training.

Community engagement and accountability (CEA) feedback mechanisms were established in a variety of ways. In Pakistan, communities had access to feedback/suggestion boxes and a hotline number as an avenue for suggestions and complaints about the project. CEA related banners were displayed in all ten targeted communities, as were beneficiary selection criteria. In Bangladesh, the courtyard sessions were mobilized as an interactive CEA mechanism, keeping the women informed and updated about the project's progress and activities, and serving as a space for them to discuss issues and provide feedback. As members from the community were allowed to participate, the courtyard sessions were also a place to address their queries. According to supplementary KII, the project's women stakeholders were so invested and knowledgeable about the project that could proactively justify the beneficiary selection process and intervention scope, leading to a high degree of acceptance by the community. In Afghanistan, banners were distributed to communities in the five targeted province containing project information, beneficiary selection criteria and a hotline number. Project beneficiaries were also identified in consultation community members and leaders.

8.3. Relevance

8.3.1. Meeting needs

8.3.1.1. Selection of the most vulnerable communities and women

In **Viet Nam**, the country project targeted four communes experiencing poverty that are additionally vulnerable to natural disasters such as floods, storms and saltwater intrusion. These disasters, in turn, have an impact on the communities, the women and the women's livelihoods. The project instituted a transparent and participatory beneficiary selection process in Viet Nam, coordinating with villages/hamlets and local authorities so that they participated in developing criteria⁷ and scoring potential beneficiaries. As a result, 100 per cent of direct beneficiaries were disadvantaged women, who were selected and benefited the most from the project's resilience activities, which also received high endorsement from local villages/hamlets and communes.

⁷ The collectively agreed criteria for beneficiary selection in Viet Nam were: 1) voluntary participation; 2) poor women; 3) women heads of household; 4) single women; 5) no or unstable livelihoods; 6) committed to principles of livelihood development

According to the country evaluation, 841 vulnerable women and girls in **Bangladesh** were selected to participate in the project based on criteria such as living with low economic facilities and potential survivors of SGBV. The country evaluation verified their vulnerability: 56 per cent of the direct beneficiaries were illiterate, only 24 per cent completed their primary education, and 26 per cent were widowed. A selection procedure for project beneficiaries was followed.

In **Afghanistan**, women participants or stakeholders were selected according to robust selection criteria⁸ based on a detailed household survey and needs assessment. ARCS chose the target communities across six provinces in consultation with local provincial governments. and The selection criteria and project information was circulated widely in the targeted communities and received positive feedback. A beneficiary baseline assessment tool was used to collect data through household surveys. After data verification, final lists on eligible participants were shared with and validated by community elders and local authorities. The final list consisted of , 841 most vulnerable women from Bamyan (91), Balkh (150), Herat (150), Kabul (150), Kandahar (150), and Nangarhar (150).

In **Pakistan**, the district of Tharparkar was selected as the primary project district as it is the second least developed district after Awaran in Balochistan. Talukas, UCs and communities were selected in close coordination with district government. Five of the ten communities selected were revitalized communities from a previous solar-powered water intervention, funded by the Canadian Red Cross. Selection of beneficiaries followed a multi-stage process, which was spearheaded by community-based organizations and later verified through PRCS field visits and phone calls.

8.3.1.2. Gaps in SGBV prevention

In **Afghanistan**, the war has displaced scores of women, who are forced to take care of their families without sources of income. Further, in 2018 and beyond, the civilian population, particularly women and children, continued to bear the brunt of the armed conflict, loss of life, continuous threats and intimidation through sexual violence. Child marriage is still common, with 28 per cent of girls married before age 8, while 35 per cent of women aged 15-49 reported they had experienced physical and/or sexual violence in the last 12 months (UN Women, 2021). Recent political developments have reversed the hardwon advances in women empowerment or gender equality, and it has become an extremely taboo subject in Afghan society. To adapt to the country's realities, the ARCS has had to integrate SGBV prevention across its projects and livelihood activities.

In **Viet Nam**, gender inequality is high, with the country ranking 71 out of 189 countries on the UNDP Gender Inequality Index⁹. Despite higher enrollment rates for women compared to men in education institutions, their representation in leadership is low¹⁰, and women in the informal economy only earn 50 per cent of men's despite having similar qualifications (World Bank). Their vulnerability to SGBV or physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence is 34 per cent¹¹, which is high for the country. In the two provinces, Ben Tre and Binh Dinh provinces housing the four target communes, IFRC conducted research on "Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Disasters in Vietnam" and found awareness of gender equality and SGBV low in these areas. The level of interest in gender equality among evaluation survey respondents was high, with 98.4 per cent interested in such topics ([Figure 17](#)).

⁸ The selection criteria in Afghanistan: 1) women-headed household with dependents 2) women with disabilities and poor income 3) female widows with dependents under 18 4) families with out-of-school girls 5) orphan adolescent girls 6) elderly women over 60 living alone.

⁹ The Gender Inequality Index is a composite measure reflecting inequality between women and men in three different dimensions: reproductive health (maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rate), empowerment (share of parliamentary seats held by women and share of population with at least some secondary education), and labour market participation (labour force participation rate). Source: United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 2016.

¹⁰ Women representation in the National Assembly is at 24.4 per cent, according to the UNDP.

¹¹ Proportion of ever-partnered women aged 18-60 years experiencing intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. Source: General Statistics Office [Viet Nam], 2010. 'Keeping silent is dying', Results from the National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam.

Therefore, the project's scope of extending beyond SGBV to cover gender equality and expanding reach to vulnerable women and the wider community was in line with the country's gender-based needs.

The most common trend in rural **Bangladesh** is that women are under the control of male members in all stages of life (Mabud & Akhter, 2013). According to the 2015 VAW survey by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), over almost two-thirds (73%) of ever-married women in Bangladesh have experienced some form of partner violence in their lifetime (UN Women, 2015). However, in Rangpur district, 55% of women are physically assaulted in their lifetime, while 34% have faced sexual violence. A study surveying 2,174 women towards the end of this lockdown, published in *The Lancet* in August, found that during the time of COVID-19 lockdown, women experienced an increase in emotional, sexual, and physical violence. In fact, more than half of those who reported physical violence, such as being slapped or having something thrown at them, said that this violence increased since the onset of the lockdown. For some, this domestic violence was new.

In **Pakistan**, gender inequality is high, where women from marginalized social classes can only engage in the informal sector and are known as home-based workers (HBW). Of the 20 million HBW, 12 million of them are women (UN Women, 2021). Up to 18 per cent of women are married before they are 18, and 16 per cent report that they have been subject to physical and sexual violence in the last 12 months (UN Women, 2021).

8.3.1.3. Fulfilling livelihood needs

Livelihood support and skill development training across WEP fulfilled the needs of the beneficiary women and their communities as they are based in areas with poor socio-economic conditions. Through the programme, National Societies in each of the countries selected target communities based on vulnerability assessments, mapping and consultations with local governments and communities, to ensure areas of high needs are selected for intervention.

In **Viet Nam**, the four target communes of the project are located in Giong Trom district, Ben Tre province, in the Mekong Delta region, and Tuy Phuoc district, Binh Dinh province in the South Central coastal region. These areas are frequently affected by natural disasters and suffer high poverty rates, unstable livelihood and income opportunities, and high rates of unskilled labour. Among the women surveyed, 95.9 per cent reported improvements to livelihoods due to the project ([Figure 16](#)).

In northern **Bangladesh**, participants of the project come from Kachukata Union of Nilphamari district, a rural area with a low literacy rate. The community people used to depend on agriculture for their livelihood purposes. The women had very few opportunities for income-generating activities. Though some of the portions of women work, these works were based on home services, and they had very little mobility to the other areas. They did not have any savings and had social constraints, household restrictions, lack of social networking, and limited access to the labour market. The rate of dowry culture and child marriage was very high areas well.

In **Afghanistan**, the selected communities came from the ARCS Marastoon programme, established in 1931 to provide humanitarian support to destitute women. The Marastoon programme counts families with widow-headed households, physically challenged individuals, people with special needs, intellectual disabilities and children among the socio-economically vulnerable beneficiaries.

Tharparkar is ranked 109th on the Human Development Index (HDI) out of the 114 reported districts of **Pakistan**. Tharparkar is the second least developed district of Pakistan after Awaran in Balochistan. Tharparkar is also amongst the worst performing districts in terms of development with a 0.227 HDI index. Within Sindh province, Tharparkar, Umerkot, and Sujawal are bracketed amongst the three least developed districts (UNDP Pakistan, 2017).

8.3.2. Project design

8.3.2.1. Alignment with international and national policies

The overall WEP and country projects is in accordance to the IFRC's Strategic Framework for Action on Gender and Diversity. Gender and diversity is being mainstreamed and features strongly in the IFRC Strategy 2030. Furthermore, WEP aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and national development plans. They are compatible with government programmes on disaster risk reduction, climate change, and the national strategies on gender equality, violence prevention and anti-discrimination. For example, with the 2016-2020 Socio-Economic Development Plan of the Government in Viet Nam.

8.3.2.2. Participatory and/or taking into account community needs

Programme and project designs with participatory elements or considered the women's input in selecting interventions appeared to have high success.

Vulnerable women receiving livelihood support in **Viet Nam** could choose the types of training they wanted to receive through an open support package, thus fulfilling their specific livelihood needs and interests. Survey respondents mainly selected training topics on poultry farming (78.72 per cent), while a minority selected small trading (14.65 per cent), according to [Figure 15](#). This resulted in most respondents staying the course on their chosen livelihood activities, with 89.93 per cent of respondents' livelihoods unchanged at the end of the project. Among the women surveyed, 95.9 per cent reported improvements to livelihoods due to the project ([Figure 16](#)).

In **Bangladesh**, the BDRCS surveyed pre-existing skills and knowledge of the targeted women, tailoring the livelihood and skill development training activities on income generating activities (IGA) to suit their individual capacities and needs. PRCS in **Pakistan** met with the community-based organizations (CBO) it had established to identify women participants according to beneficiary selection criteria. The lists were then verified, approved and endorsed by the CBOs.

Afghanistan implemented a very robust beneficiary selection process as well. A multi-stage beneficiary assesment was carried out, which also served as baseline data:

- Community filtering and identification with provincial authorities
- Sharing of beneficiary selection criteria and project information with the selected communities and finalizing the criteria with them
- Data collection at the household level with a beneficiary assessment tool
- Household information verification and final lists shared with local authorities and communities.

8.3.3. Impact and outcomes

Impact is not very accurately measurable at the end stage of a programme. When impact is inferred, it usually encompasses long-lasting change in a community or society. An impact study or evaluation is usually conducted one year after completion for any meaningful reference to impact. In this section, the meta-evaluation will look at the country projects' short-term outcomes and will refrain from making conclusive statements on impact.

In **Viet Nam**, 95.9 per cent of women surveyed by the country evaluation team reported an improvement in livelihoods ([Figure 16](#)). The four women's clubs in Viet Nam and ensuing SGBV educational activities have improved the 480 women members' awareness on gender equality and gender-based violence. The country evaluation's measurement of women's awareness focused on their knowledge of agencies active in these areas, with 92.2% knowing these agencies and 70.5% aware of their missions. Their ensuing action list for SGBV prevention was then dominated by organizational-related tasks such as mediation, document signing, promoting relevant laws and training. However, when questioned on how women can promote gender equality, many survey respondents said sharing responsibilities in household work and creating gender equal opportunities in studies and work were important ([Figure 19](#)). Responses indirectly indicated good knowledge, despite the lack of comparative baselines.

Thanks to baseline and endline surveys in **Bangladesh**, substantial conclusions on immediate outcomes can be drawn from the project. However, an impact study or evaluation for all four countries will better measure medium to long-term impact, should the opportunity arise. Immediate effects can be seen through increased and active income among 86 per cent of women respondents, while 56 per cent of women engaged in income-generating activities improved their savings by 20 per cent or more. Vulnerable women participated more in household decision making, up from 22 per cent to 35 per cent. In terms of gender equality and SGBV prevention, not only was awareness raised among the women and communities from 17 per cent to 66 per cent, gender-based violence appears to have decreased. According to baseline and endline surveys, incidences of violence have reduced exponentially, as self-reported by the people reached by the project, with an 83 per cent decrease among women directly reached and a 60 per cent decrease among the community indirectly reached ([Figure 14](#)).

“Although I tried several times, failed to grow vegetables due to lack of knowledge regarding choice of right location, condition of the soil for plants, and ripening cycles. Through the livelihood trainings, I have gained practical knowledge on right way to nurture a garden and to protect it from cattle and insects. Besides, I learned about the proper timing to collect the vegetables and ways to preserve them. I cannot express how delighted I feel seeing my four year’s old daughter chasing around her mothers’ garden with a full stomach.”

~ Interview with a community woman respondent, Bangladesh, 2021

In **Afghanistan**, 72 per cent of women self-reported improved self-sufficiency due to the project ([Figure 3](#)). Many women interviewees described that improved access to markets was a positive outcome of the project. ARCS also strengthened rapport, trust and relationships with the target communities.

In **Pakistan**, one of the outcomes observed by the country evaluation was the reduction in child marriages, with only two reported under 18 marriages taking place (there was no mention of a comparative baseline figure).

8.3.4. Thematic activities

List of major activities conducted across the four countries by theme:

Theme	Afghanistan	Bangladesh	Pakistan	Viet Nam
Resilience	Capacity building for staff on technical aspects of livelihoods and SGBV, procedures, tools and coordination	Women forums, courtyard sessions.	Self-help groups. Community mobilization of CBOs ¹² . Organizational development training for women. Capacity building for PRCS. Linkages between government and communities	Women's clubs
SGBV	Integrated across activities because of Afghanistan context.	Gender equality and SGBV awareness-raising and sensitization,	Aware raising workshops for women on SGBV.	Training workshops on women's rights and SGBV, communication

¹² CBO: Community-based organizations

		courtyard sessions to discuss specific topics	Awareness-raising for community on SGBV. Capacity building for government departments on SGBV, referral pathway establishment, IEC	meetings, wider communication sessions on preventing SGBV, loudspeaker broadcasting, IEC material
Livelihoods	Cash livelihood support, women's saving groups, access to markets workshops, training in various skills including livestock, poultry farming, embroidery tailoring, handicrafts, soap making, confectionery, jam processing etc.	Skill development training (poultry rearing, homestead gardening, cow/goat rearing, small business, gardening, and a few vocational skills), related cash livelihood support, market linkage workshops on marketing products, linkage to local markets, business plan development	Livestock Management Training (LMT). Linkages with government livestock department, livestock vaccinations, cash livelihood support fund, women saving groups. capacity building for government departments on livestock management	Market surveys, Open selection livelihood skills training in farming, poultry raising, livelihood capital and household economic planning, cash livelihood support, revolving fund and loans

8.4. Sustainability

8.4.1. Sustainable mechanisms/practices

According to the country evaluations, stakeholders regarded the Women Empowerment Programme as an integrated, interdisciplinary programme with a strong grassroots and community reach. Implemented across four countries in different geographical locations and political contexts, the WEP posed a fundamental shift in the way Red Cross Red Crescent Societies viewed women's agency, focusing on a long-term perspective on women development.

For most National Societies, projects with such a strong focus on women's empowerment, resilience and livelihoods were a first for them, with much potential to develop and replicate in the future. Disadvantaged women built their resilience through a two-pronged approach. Firstly, women-friendly groups raised awareness on gender equality/SGBV and grew the voices and collective action of vulnerable women. Secondly, cash/asset livelihood support, income-generating activities and savings-based revolving funds enhanced the economic power of women. The programme was made more sustainable through community-based approaches, awareness of family and community structures, capacity building of community support groups, and linkages to markets and existing facilities/services/referrals by local governments and agencies.

However, similar to the reality of many pilot programmes and projects, there are distinct challenges involved in sustaining, replicating and mainstreaming new interventions that are beyond the regular programming of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies involved. much needs to be done in terms of promotion and advocacy, especially

with regional and country senior leadership. Mechanisms, tools, SOPs and guidelines could be developed to enhance the replicability of the most successful practices of the WEP. Some countries, especially Bangladesh, have documented implementation guides, while Viet Nam may have selected SOPs in the local language. Mainstreaming might still be a distant possibility, since supplementary KIIs revealed that such projects targeting women directly were new for many a National Society. However, there is distinct interest and potential among National Societies for sustainability and replicability to other communities or even countries, with the appropriate leadership, financial and technical support. In future, financial sources such as unearmarked funding channeled for women in crises programme can be tapped for WEP inspired programming.

8.4.1.1. Programme/project implementation mechanisms

Sustainable:	Yes	Replicable:	Yes	Mainstream potential:	Yes
--------------	-----	-------------	-----	-----------------------	-----

While the overall programme and all country projects experienced a degree of success in empowering women in the gender and economic sphere, it was clear from the country evaluations and supplementary KIIs that the some faced more challenges than others. In **Bangladesh**, the success and sustainability of WEP was highly attributed to the project management structure within BDRCS. A project management committee was set up in the BDRCS specific to the EERW project, supported by the unit executive committee. This ensured a dedicated structure and human resources within the BDRCS to implement WEP and ERRW activities. Once the project was completed, BDRCS handed it over to the relevant committee in the branches.

Project facilitators elected from within the target community themselves was another practice that ensured the WEP's success, particularly during the strictest COVID-19 restrictions, when it was almost impossible for project staff to conduct visits to the target communities. These in-community facilitators served as communication lines between the women beneficiaries and BDRCS, advocated for the women's needs, and ensured activities continued in the community.

In Viet Nam, a provincial project management unit was formed in VNRC to implement the WEP, and worked closely with their partners to implement project activities.

The lack of such a mechanism was cited as a challenge in **Afghanistan**. A specific unit was not assigned to oversee the country project, and responsibility fell to either the ARCS disaster risk management or gender focals, and/or Marastoon units, who were already overstretched by emergency operations. As a result, human resource and a lack of technical capacity became an issue. Nevertheless, ARCS leadership has expressed significant interest in expanding WEP if appropriate funding becomes available.

8.4.1.2. Partnerships with local organizations and government units

Sustainable:	Yes	Replicable:	Yes	Mainstream potential:	Yes
--------------	-----	-------------	-----	-----------------------	-----

One of the mechanisms that was a key contributor to the WEP and the success of its country projects were the close collaborations and partnerships with grassroot organizations and government departments. WEP not only provided material support to the women but linked them to local agencies, acting as a catalyst in building resilience and sustainability.

In **Pakistan** and **Bangladesh**, the programme utilized a referral group, linking women with local resource organizations, government and non-government providers, securing support for the women beyond the project timeframe. In **Vietnam**, the project linked to the Women Union's, a grassroots organization penetrating all levels of Vietnamese society, mandated to protect women's legitimate rights and strive for gender equality. VNRC accessed the Women Union's expertise in running gender equality and SGBV awareness sessions, and even went so far as signing a cooperation programme with them, paving the way for more collaborations beyond the project. Similar expertise were appropriated from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (**Viet Nam**) and

local government units (**Bangladesh**) for the livelihoods and skill development training. These partnerships were tapped to fill in human resource and technical gaps in the National Societies, which the evaluation notes was commonly cited as challenges to the WEP, and the shared modality reduced the workload and resources needed from the National Societies involved. Through the KIs, most countries engaged in collaborative mechanisms highlight these as successful elements, where similar partnerships can be mobilized, replicated and mainstreamed to extend the reach, efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of the National Societies locally and regionally.

8.4.1.3. Livelihoods support and training

Sustainable:	Yes	Replicable:	Yes	Mainstream potential:	Maybe
--------------	-----	-------------	-----	-----------------------	-------

Activities that mainly supported women’s livelihoods were a first for many National Societies. Mainstreaming women-focused IGAs may be ambitious for now. However, there is potential to incorporate women needs and considerations and incorporate some WEP influenced practices to encourage women’s participation in regular livelihoods programming.

In **Afghanistan**, income-generating activities have the potential to continue beyond the project timeframe, particularly those focused on capacity building, skill training and market access, as acknowledged by women interviewed in the country evaluation. However, KIs revealed the project was challenged in implementing the new interventions, as there were no pre-existing operational tools, or procedures to guide implementation.

In **Bangladesh**, similar activities that promote livelihoods through assets provision, skills transfer, business counselling and market linkages have enhanced the asset base of beneficiary households. Survey results show 86% of beneficiaries report that they are earning an income from the project’s livelihood opportunities (homestead gardening, poultry rearing, cattle rearing, goat rearing, tailoring, fish cultivation and handicrafts). Supplementary key informant interviews further reinforced the livelihood training as a sustainable practice with high replicability and mainstreaming potential. BDRCS openness to continue with projects for women, provided funding and impact assessments will be available in the future, is significant. It was the first time the National Society conducted livelihood activities focused mainly on women. The project’s success also helped the BDRCS overcome some doubts from past experiences with micro-loan/credit distribution.

BDRCS and IFRC went one step further by matching the training with cash to kick-start livelihoods in the form of cash grants provided per household. Through the knowledge gained in the training and seeder funds provided, the women were able to continue their new income-generating activities beyond the immediate project timeframe, according to post-project monitoring by BDRCS branches.

8.4.1.4. The revolving fund

Sustainable:	Yes	Replicable:	Yes	Mainstream potential:	Yes
--------------	-----	-------------	-----	-----------------------	-----

Another sustainable mechanism with high replicability and mainstreaming potential was the revolving fund. The revolving fund equipped vulnerable women with a sustainable savings scheme, allowing them to enhance their livelihood work, household assets, living standards, and economic decision-making power. The fund was implemented across all country projects through the savings groups or community women organizations established through WEP. These were semi-formal or informal setups, allowing the women to save money without needing to set up a bank account, which is not feasible in some contexts like Afghanistan. These groups could then serve as a platform for more women resilience-building activities. They could also receive training in skills like group management, financial management and technical aspects of maintaining a revolving fund.

8.4.1.5. Women networking and community groups

Sustainable:	Yes	Replicable:	Yes	Mainstream potential:	Yes
--------------	-----	-------------	-----	-----------------------	-----

Women networking opportunities may also have potential for sustainability, replicability and mainstreaming. The activation of ward and union Women Forums¹³ in **Bangladesh** enables community women to meet monthly to discuss issues such as SGBV, plan activities and serves as a mechanism to maintain a revolving fund. The plan is to eventually shift all project responsibilities to the Women Forum groups, so continuous capacity building and monitoring of the forums will benefit the community and the National Society.

The EERW [project] has developed our capacities and helped us to understand various perspective of women empowerment. I hope that even if the programme ends, we are capable to carry out the activities, and solves our problems through the Women Forum"
- Female respondent in Bangladesh

Similarly, in **Viet Nam**, women's clubs promote learning and sharing of information and experiences among disadvantaged community women and house a revolving fund. VNRC, local government authorities and women unions have committed to maintaining these clubs beyond the project timeframe. Club management team can be supported in their pathways to sustainability with capacity building in strengthening activities and creating cohesion among club members.

8.4.2. Mechanisms/practices that increase capacity

In **Bangladesh**, the Women Forums are an excellent mechanism for increasing women's capacity in the community. The women can gather during the monthly courtyard meetings, discuss the most relevant issues, and seek solutions. One such solution was the revolving fund, which allowed the women to address challenges from the lack of individual and family savings. Savings mechanisms do not just serve as a livelihood buffer, but help improve the women's resilience to hazards and shocks and give them the confidence to take on microfinancing loans. Although causality cannot be determined, there is a correlation between increased savings at baseline and endline surveys and asset purchasing power in Bangladesh.

"Nowadays women are more conscious and vocal about their rights and issue related to violence. They are representing different forums and actively participating in different meetings at Union and Upazila level and expressing their opinions on different issues."
~ a Union chairman, Bangladesh.

Furthermore, the women forums and their regular courtyard sessions were platforms to raise awareness on SGBV. Local leaders and government officials have noted that the women in the community are more willing to advocate for their individual and collective rights. Survey results at baseline and endline further indicate a marked increase in women's household decision-making power before and after the project (Figure 10). There were improvements across the board in daily food consumption, clothing and household needs, healthcare and child education. Women with only minor involvement reported moderate participation in decisions at the project evaluation phase.

In **Viet Nam**, women's clubs were created, where disadvantaged women exchange knowledge, share information, learn from each other's experiences and integrate into society. These clubs are intended to serve as self-governing community groups for women. Similar to the other country projects, these clubs maintain a revolving fund that helps the women with savings and upholding capital. They are particularly vibrant in Viet Nam VNRC is advocating for more resources to replicate these women's clubs in other communes and provinces. In the communities

¹³ Women Forums are a platform or a society in Bangladesh where a group of women can share and discuss interesting problems encountered at home and other social activities to come up with a probable solution.

covered by WEP, the local government saw the benefit of these clubs and committed to maintain them sustainably beyond the project timeframe.

Similar women or self-help groups were formed in Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, they appear to be particularly robust and active in Bangladesh and Viet Nam.

8.4.3. Challenges and lessons learned

- **Delays and extensions in the programme and projects:** the COVID-19 pandemic and other disasters caused unprecedented delays in implementation, extending projects by about four months. This meant that results of some activities could not be monitored as the projects had ended.
- **Cash grant or livelihood support per household was insufficient:** While the activities were deemed well designed, community feedback revealed the allocation for livelihood support (between CHF 90 to CHF 120 per household) could be higher to create more impactful change in the womens' livelihoods. Some women had to take loans from other organizations to supplement the cash grant in purchasing livestock.
- **Participatory and collaborative approaches with local partners:** Including local partner organizations, governments and communities in project design and activities will ensure local ownership and sustainability of the WEP and its projects.
- **Engage support from the entire household, especially the spouses:** Being active in household work and the added dimension of income generation through the WEP created a double burden for the women. Support from their family members in sharing household work would have been helpful.
- **Market and customer availability:** In some instances, the women trained through WEP added to the existing pool of small businesses and workers, creating a saturated market in that sector.
- **Fair prices for goods produced:** Women reported some difficulty in obtaining a fair price for their goods in the market. Some seasonal or perishable produce had to be sold cheaply in local community markets.
- **Child marriages and dowry practices:** In areas where these are widespread, beneficiaries report a reduction in such practices. However, local governments and other organizations emphasize that these are deeply entrenched cultural practices that is unlikely to change sustainably within the short duration of the WEP, and more long-term work is needed.
- **Activity-based monitoring:** Although progress reports are available, some country evaluations found it difficult to find more detailed monitoring reports on items like the women groups/clubs, courtyard sessions and savings groups.
- **Lengthy administrative processes for livelihood/cash grant disbursements:** The nature of the cash grants required the vulnerable women to own bank accounts. For many of the women who did not have preexisting accounts, the application process to register for one took time, as some of these women also did not have identity cards. In the end, National Societies sometimes found themselves facilitating the women's registration for identity cards, which can also be seen as an unintended outcome of the WEP.
- **Human resources and staff turnover:** Some country projects experienced high turnover of staff and gaps in key positions. Some countries also reported a lack in a dedicated project management structure/staff for the project.
- **Changes in beneficiaries caused delays in activities:** In a number of countries, the selected beneficiaries had to be changed because of some of the women moved locations (particularly in Afghanistan where the population situation is fluid), or because they did not fulfil the criteria and requirements of the project (Viet Nam). This caused some delays in implementation.
- **Female literacy and education levels of the women participants:** meant project staff had to proactively simplify training materials and use local languages as the initial training modules were too advanced and complicated for the women stakeholders (Afghanistan).

"The training was very hard for us at the beginning and we weren't able to understand the lessons. It's because we are not educated and have only studied up to sixth or seventh class. We are happy that the trainer realized it at the very initial step and changed the training materials and approach very quickly".
~ Woman respondent, Afghanistan

- **Communication methods:** In some countries, mobile phones were relied on to communicate with the disadvantaged women stakeholders. However, this was not viable for some of the women and communication with them was hampered. Countries that utilized more community-based approaches for communicating about activities appeared to fare better on this challenge.

9. Conclusion

The Women Empowerment Programme was implemented across four countries with very different geographical, social, cultural and political contexts. Some of the countries were even in the midst of a humanitarian crisis. The programme posed a fundamental shift in the way most National Societies supported women, and many regarded WEP as the first programme in the organization that focused on women agency, empowerment and resilience in the long term.

The WEP involved four key components: a process to put in place a mobilization strategy, capacity building and training for stakeholders in livelihoods and gender equality and SGBV prevention, linkages to markets, local agencies and referral centres, and internal learning processes.

Funding and resources may be key challenges for many of the National Societies, and KIIs pointed out a lack of focus on women empowerment frameworks in National Societies strategic plans or direction was also an issue. Once strategic focus and a framework for women empowerment is in place, then the National Societies can plan to increase resources and source funding to institutionalize and materialize the women empowerment agenda.

10. Recommendations

The implementation of the Women Empowerment Programme in four countries, namely Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Vietnam have achieved its intended purpose, goal, outcomes and outputs for women to become more self-sufficient, resilient and aware and can take necessary actions of the SGBV. Based on the independent evaluations conducted separately in these countries to assess its achievements, challenges and lessons learned against planned objectives and activities, it was apparent that several key recommendations were highlighted to improve future programmes. These recommendations considered the success of the programme's implementation and the wish-list that these programmes be more sustainable and replicable to benefit more women in the future.

Key recommendations highlighted in the evaluation reports are mainly grouped into these categories:

- Programme design and structure;
- Human resources;
- Internal and external collaborations; and
- Sustainability.

10.1. Programme design and structure

While the overall framework for the programme was working successfully to reach out to vulnerable women and empower them to be more resilient, there are several recommendations on the framework of the programme. Framework recommendations particularly cover a clear distinction of context, way-of-work, action plan, outcomes/outputs, timeline and sustainability between emergency response and long-term development programme. Red Cross and Red Crescent members are well-versed in emergency responses, often get used to rapid responses, and have similar expectations for development programmes. Clear distinction and expectations should be appropriately laid out in the overall framework of the programme design at the beginning of the programme. They should be sensitized to all stakeholders, including donors.

All evaluation reports recommended that the framework of the programme to be revised for a longer-term duration of 3-4 years to ensure sustainable improvements and continuation of the program beyond the programme timeframe. More information on sustainability will be outlined below.

The success journey of women's empowerment could be enhanced through the participation of male household members. The overall framework should also consider including the theoretical framework of the family system/institution, not only on economic and livelihood dimensions. Complementary support from household members is necessary to ensure long-term benefits to empower women in the long run. It was recommended that the programme framework to be revised to include male and other household members to support women via the creation of supporting roles activities or training.

Evaluation reports from Pakistan and Bangladesh highlighted the need to revise the framework and risk mitigation strategies to include COVID-19 to avoid disruption and delay of the programmes.

While assessments have been conducted at the early stage of the programmes, improvements on assessment purposes and details are highly recommended. It was recommended that more robust assessments be carried out to identify correct social profiling and anthropological characteristics of targeted beneficiaries, for example, some of the selected beneficiaries were illiterate and faced considerable challenges going through the programme. It was also recommended that training modules to be geared and prepared to include this type of demographics. There was also a recommendation on improvement of assessment to include an assessment on livestock market price so that the amount received matching the market price.

Regarding the recommendation to improve training modules, key recommendations include appointing a more proficient and experienced trainer for the training. They include refresher training to ensure a continuous and steep learning curve from the beneficiaries. Training modules should also be customized to suit the baseline assessment of beneficiaries' skills, knowledge, and demographic characteristics.

There are several components in the WEP programmes – income generations, and SGBV. It was recommended that the SGBV participants be included in the income generations component. Beneficiaries also highlighted that more emphasis on Disaster Risk Reduction and health components in the programme design.

Through the programme, women are generally empowered in various income generation activities. However, the programme should be designed to include beneficiaries' awareness and behavioural change on financial planning and management to ensure the community's complete cycle of poverty eradication.

Programme monitoring and evaluation (M&E) should be further looked into where based the evaluations. It was found that inadequate focus was given to M&E components in the programme notably appointing M&E focal person and scheduling effective and regular monitoring on the ground. M&E framework should be established and widely sensitized to all programme staff and volunteers, appropriately budgeted and adhered on. Although National Societies have their PMER departments, it was recommended that the National Society PMER department be involved in the M&E activities in the future. Monitoring should also include field financial monitoring by finance focal person to ensure financial transparency.

10.2. Human resources

The WEP programmes were implemented with limited number of dedicated team and often understaffed. It was recommended to hire project assistance and M&E focal person to ensure less disruption to the programme. Staff and volunteer retention strategy should also need to be considered when designing the programme.

Evaluation reports also recommended that staff to be more gender-balanced. Although staff and volunteers in the field are generally gender-balanced, it was not the case at the National Society headquarters. It was recommended to increase women's presence at the leadership level at the National Societies.

10.3. Internal and external collaborations

All evaluations in four implemented countries recommended stronger linkages and collaborations with local agencies/authorities to further enhance the impact and ensure long-lasting capacity building of empowered women. Simultaneously, this is the opportunity to increase local agencies' capacities in championing/supporting women-centric initiatives and, at the same time, guarantee sustainability beyond the programme timeframe. National Societies are recommended to play a more active role in linking women with these agencies and encouraging local agencies to establish different types of capacity-building initiatives to complement the activities of the WEP programme for a more holistic approach to empowering women. In Bangladesh, for example, it was recommended to collaborate with financial institutions for sustainability and longer-term interventions continued by these agencies where financial institutions could provide medium- or longer-term financial assistance and advisory services for Small and Medium Enterprises. Whereas in Vietnam, it was recommended to collaborate with Provincial Women's Union for more diversified training and activities which will benefit both women and the agency itself. It is also worth noting that establishing linkages and collaborations should be done at the early stage to outline roles and responsibilities through formal agreements between IFRC, National Societies and the agencies, and regular communications with local agencies should be maintained.

The evaluations also recommended establishing collaboration with external agencies, and organizations that have experiences in similar programmes to enable knowledge sharing, and best practices for better future implementation. For example, in Pakistan, there are possibilities for greater impact through collaboration with the country's University of Agriculture and/or Veterinary Colleges.

10.4. Sustainability

Considering the success of the programme in building the capacity of the women, increasing their access to the market and increase women's capacity and role in handling SGBV, all evaluations highlighted that stakeholders strongly recommended to scale-up the programme to other women in the same communities/areas and extend the programme to other geographical locations. This is to ensure sustainability and greater impact. Stakeholders recommended future programmes to focus on longer-term capacity enhancement rather than stop short at one programme for target communities. Other than scaling-up, it was recommended to extend the duration of the programme for mid and/or long-term, i.e. three to four years.

While funding and resources are a challenge to go beyond the programme timeframe, the main aspect to look at the National Societies' and Secretariats' existing strategic focus on embracing women-centric focus in the strategic direction and plans. Without strategic directions and/or institutionalization of women-focused agenda, all programmes will remain as one-time initiatives. Once the strategic focus and framework on women are in place, then the National Societies and Secretariat can plan begin to work on filling in the gaps on increasing resources and sourcing funding to institutionalize and materialize the women empowerment agenda – either scaling-up the programme or mainstreaming it across all sectors.

The IFRC Secretariat should play a bigger role in advocating and encouraging National Societies not only providing technical support in the implementation of women empowerment programmes but convincing National Society leaders to start relooking at their longer-term strategic priorities, direction and framework to include women empowerment agenda across all sectors.

Although the programmes have achieved its goals and objectives, the true impact of the programme can only be seen some time later after the programme ended. Impact evaluation is highly recommended and budgeted and this type of evaluation could only be done at a later stage to realistically evaluate whether the programmes pose lasting change to the beneficiaries and to further collect more information to fine-tune details for programme design improvements.

11. References

12. Appendixes

12.1. Appendix A: Figures

12.1.1. Afghanistan charts and graphs

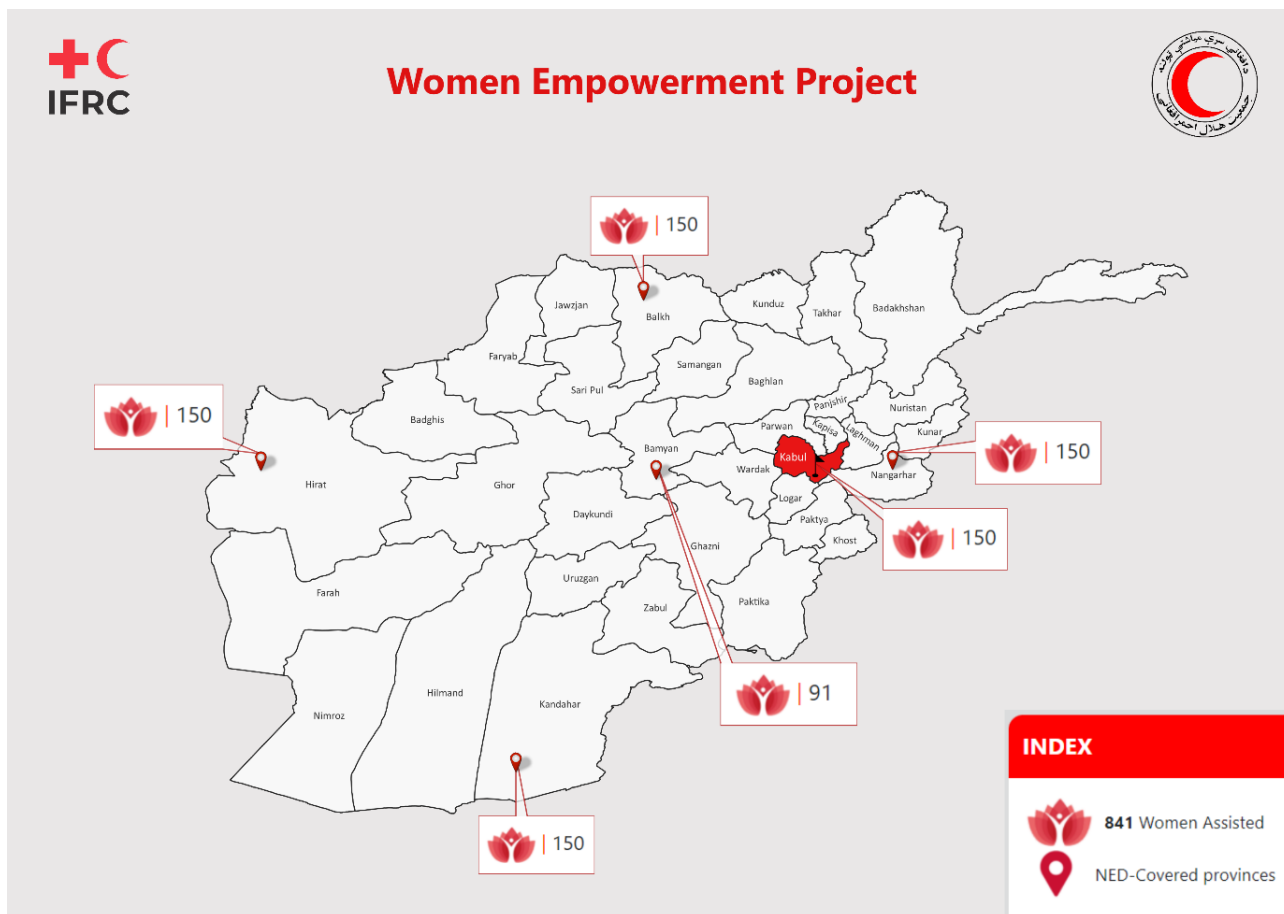


Figure 1: Project sites in Afghanistan

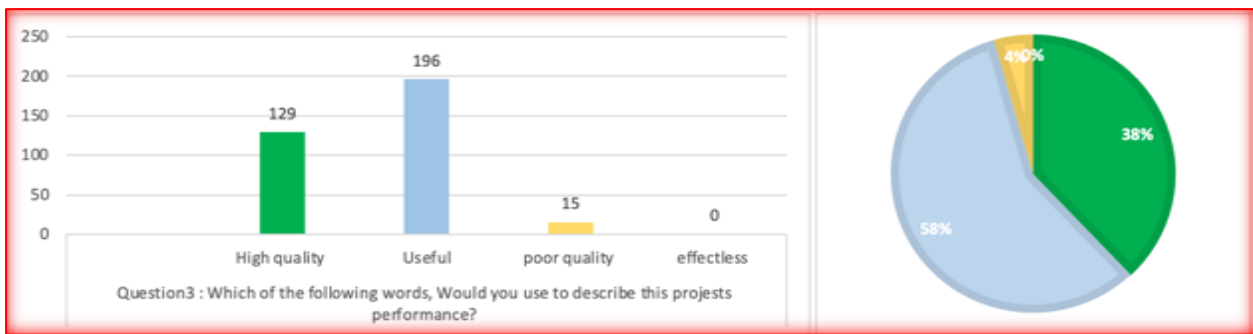


Figure 2: Survey respondents in Afghanistan select key words to describe the country project's performance.

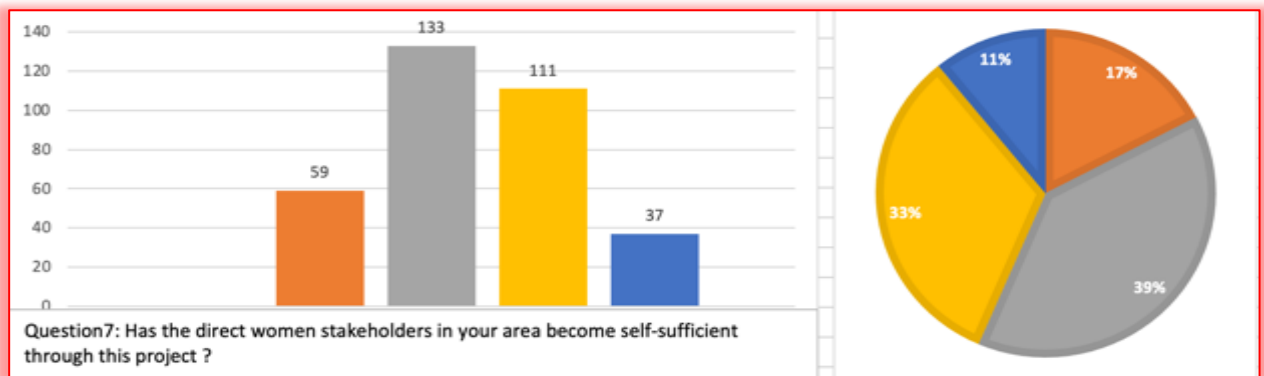


Figure 3: Women respondents in Afghanistan agree that they have become more self-sufficient through the project (72%).



Figure 4: Survey respondents in Afghanistan were asked to use selected words to describe the project's performance.

Province	Type of Income Generation Project	# of women stakeholders Involved
Bamyan	Gand Hazaragi tailoring production	10
	Modern tailoring production	11
	Fast food production and processing	10
	Handicrafts/embroidery production	10
	Pickle production and processing	10
	Confectionery (cake production)	15
	Jam processing/tomato paste production	15
	Livestock (goat farming)	10
Sub-Total		91
Balkh	Livestock (goat farming) in 4 villages	110
	Bakery shop	20

	Tailoring production	20
Sub-Total		150
Herat	String Pasta Production/Ash Rishta	30
	Handicrafts/hand embroidery	30
	Aloe-vera Soap Making	30
	Sesame oil Production	30
	Tailoring production	30
Sub-Total		150
Kabul	String pasta production and processing	15
	Tailoring production	56
	Livestock (goat forming)	63
	Handicrafts/embroidery production	16
Sub-Total		150
Kandahar	Tailoring production	30
	Livestock (goat forming)	57
	Handicrafts/embroidery production	63
Sub-Total		150
Nangarhar	Modern tailoring production	72
	Poultry (chicken farming)	78
Sub-Total		150
Total Households / Women Received Livelihoods Assistance		841 Women

Figure 5: In Afghanistan, details of the specific livelihood/income generation activities (segregated by province).

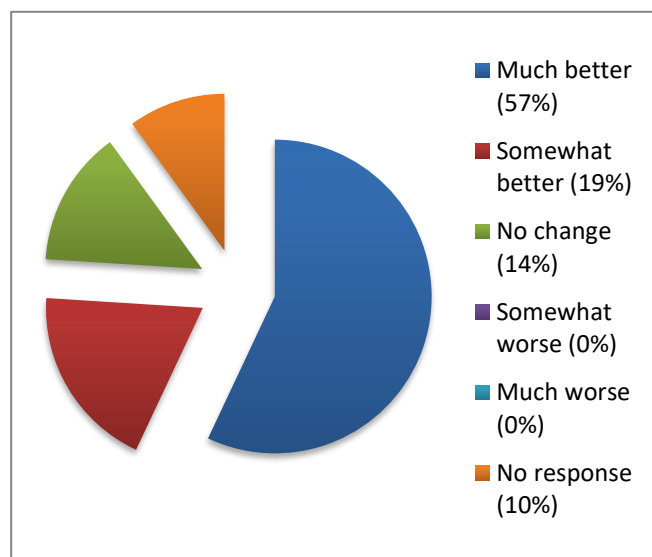


Figure 6: In Afghanistan, women respondents were asked if women have become more aware of their rights.

12.1.2. Bangladesh charts and graphs

Indicators	Direct	Indirect
Age Group (Years)	%	%
< 18	-	0.7%
18-25	5%	5%
26-35	19%	29%
36-49	39%	43%
≥50	36%	22%
Gender		
Female	99.6%	95%
Male	0.4%	5%
Religion		
Islam	90%	90%
Hindu	10%	10%
Marital Status		
Married	74%	89%
Widow	26%	11%
Divorce	0.4%	-
Education		
Illiterate	56%	50%
Primary	24%	27%
Secondary	19%	21%
SSC or Equivalent	-	0.7%
HSC or Equivalent	1%	0.7%
Post-Graduation	-	0.7%

Figure 7: Key socio-demographic status of respondents in Bangladesh.

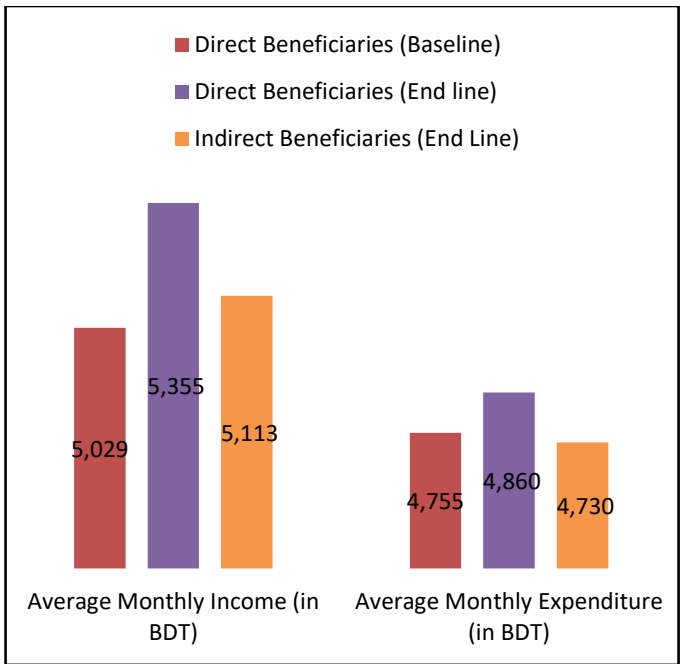


Figure 8: Bangladesh - changes in average monthly income and expenditure in BDT at baseline and endline surveys.

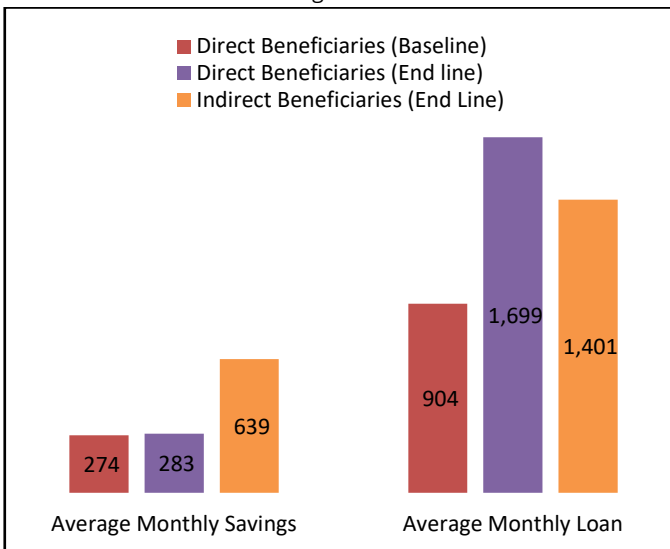


Figure 9: Bangladesh, monthly savings and loans of women directly reached at baseline and endline surveys.

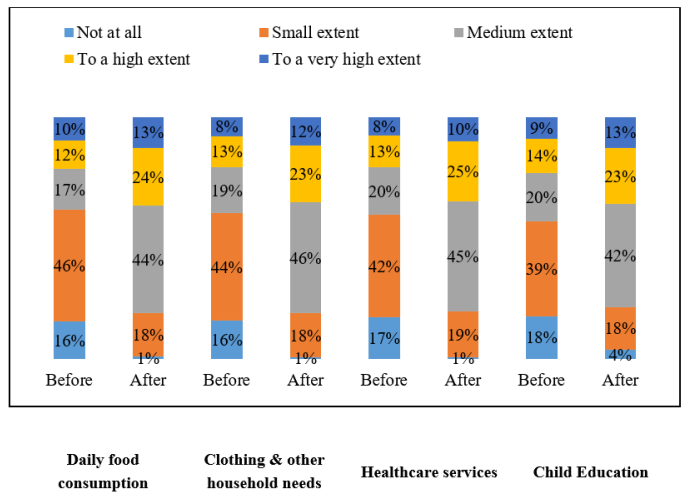


Figure 10: In Bangladesh, the participation of women beneficiaries in household decisions.

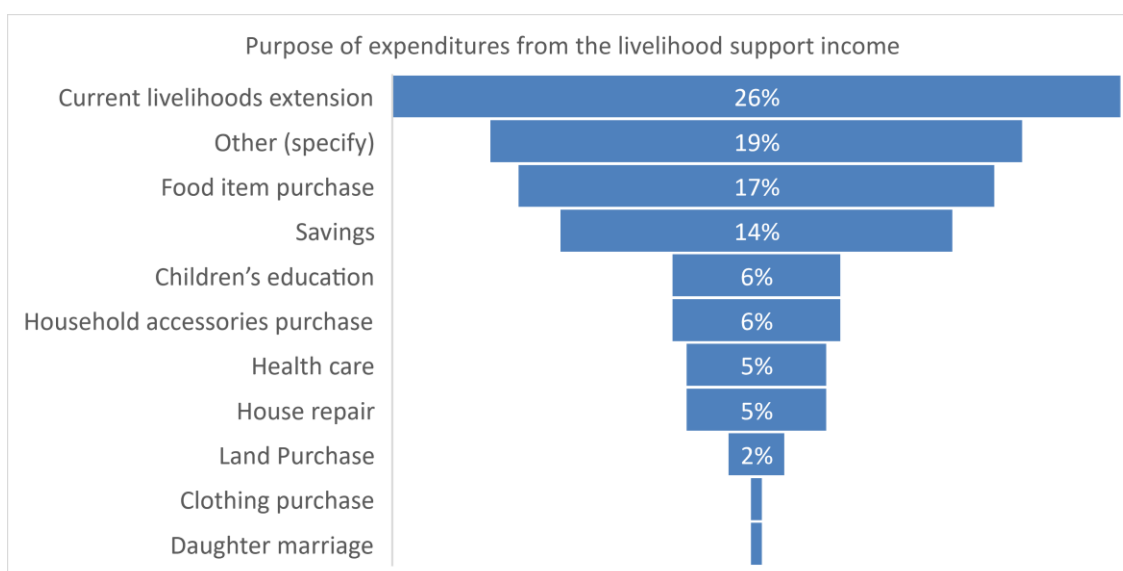


Figure 11: Women in Bangladesh report on their usage of income from the livelihoods support as "purpose of expenditure". Many (26%) reinvested the income into their livelihood extensions.

Indicators	Assets	Direct Beneficiary (%)	Indirect Beneficiary (%)
Agriculture Tools	Duck/ Chicken/ Pigeon	55%	11%
Agriculture Tools	Kodal	35%	18%
Agriculture Tools	Axe	26%	12%
Livestock	Goats/ Sheep	23%	5%
Livestock	Cow/ Buffalo	22%	7%
Appliances/Furniture	Khat/chowki	20%	7%
Appliances/Furniture	Mobile	19%	10%
Appliances/Furniture	Almirah/ wardrobe	19%	12%
Agriculture Tools	Grubber	19%	13%
Appliances/Furniture	Electric Fan	17%	11%
Transportation	Bicycle	17%	8%
Appliances/Furniture	Bench/Chair	14%	6%
Agriculture Tools	Shabol	14%	8%
Appliances/Furniture	Trunk/wooden box	13%	3%
Appliances/Furniture	Table	10%	5%
Appliances/Furniture	Blanket/quilt	10%	4%
Transportation	Insecticide Spray Machine	10%	8%
Appliances/Furniture	Electricity	9%	6%
Appliances/Furniture	Mattress	9%	1%
Appliances/Furniture	Television	7%	3%
Livestock	Calves	5%	3%
Appliances/Furniture	Fishing Net	4%	3%
Appliances/Furniture	Dressing Table	3%	1%
Transportation	Rickshaw/Van	3%	1%
Appliances/Furniture	Freeze/Deep Freez	2%	1%
Appliances/Furniture	Sewing Machine	2%	0%
Appliances/Furniture	Water Pump	1%	0%

Transportation	Scooter/CNG/Auto Rickshaw/Auto Bike	1%	1%
Livestock	Solar Electricity	0	1%

Figure 12: Survey results from Bangladesh measuring assets of respondents (direct and indirect beneficiaries) purchased in the last year. A higher asset purchase is assumed to indicate better asset management competencies and increased incomes.

Topics	Direct Beneficiary (%)	Indirect Beneficiary (%)
Household Violence and its reduction	51%	46%
Dowry and Child Marriage	82%	71%
Trafficking and way of stop	31%	29%
Gender based Sexual Violence	25%	29%
Gender Discrimination	37%	21%
Women and Men Role in Household/ Gender Role in Household	34%	29%
Referral pathway/relevant number for report on SGBV	14%	17%
Women Empowerment	48%	25%
Women Income and contribution in household	56%	33%
Livelihoods	29%	29%
Role of BDRCS in Bangladesh	48%	33%

Figure 13: In Bangladesh, topics covered in the courtyard sessions run by the women forums are analyzed.

Figure 14: In Bangladesh, improvements in knowledge, attitudes and practices related to SGBV among beneficiary women surveyed.

Table 20: Knowledge on Violence Against Women and Children

Knowledge on VAW	Direct Beneficiary (%)	Indirect Beneficiary (%)
Yes	66%	51%
No	34%	49%

Table 1: Experienced Any Type of Violence

Experienced Violence	Direct Beneficiary (%)	Indirect Beneficiary (%)
Yes	17%	14%
No	83%	86%

Table 22: Violence after EERW Programme

Violence Status	Direct Beneficiary (%)	Indirect Beneficiary (%)
Reduced	83%	60%
Not reduced	17%	40%

Table 23: Seek Assistance After Violence

Assistance for Violence	Direct Beneficiary (%)	Indirect Beneficiary (%)
Yes	6%	7%
No	11%	7%

Table 24: Practice of Child Marriage

Child Marriage	Direct Beneficiary (%)	Indirect Beneficiary (%)
Yes	14%	12%
No	86%	88%

Table 2: Practice of Dowry

Dowry	Direct Beneficiary (%)	Indirect Beneficiary (%)
Yes	98%	99%
No	2%	1%

12.1.3. Viet Nam charts and graphs

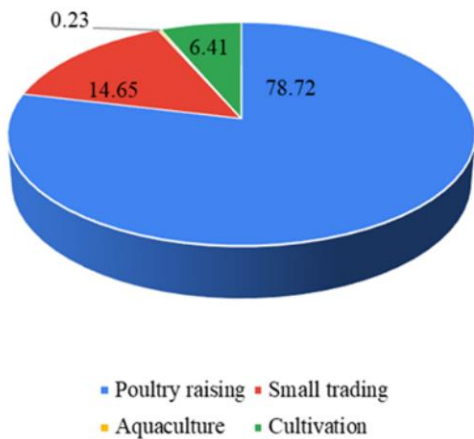


Figure 15: Survey respondents that selected livelihood trainings by type in Viet Nam.

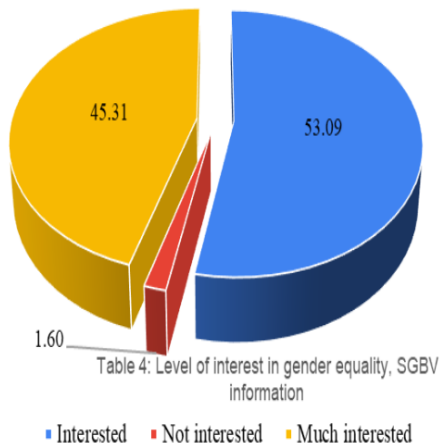


Figure 17: Among Viet Nam survey respondents, 53.1% were interested in gender equality and SGBV information, 45.3% were very (much) interested and 1.6% were not interested.

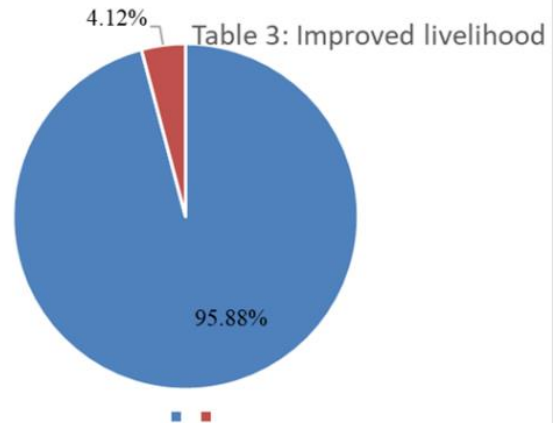


Figure 16: 95.88% of the respondents assessed that the livelihood model had improved income. Only 4.12% of the respondents said that the livelihood model was less profitable and the income had not improved.



Figure 18: Of the Viet Nam survey respondents, 46.45% found the information on gender equality and SGBV very useful, 51.9% said it was useful, while 1.6 said it was not useful.

Table 8: to answer the question of what you should do to promote gender equality?

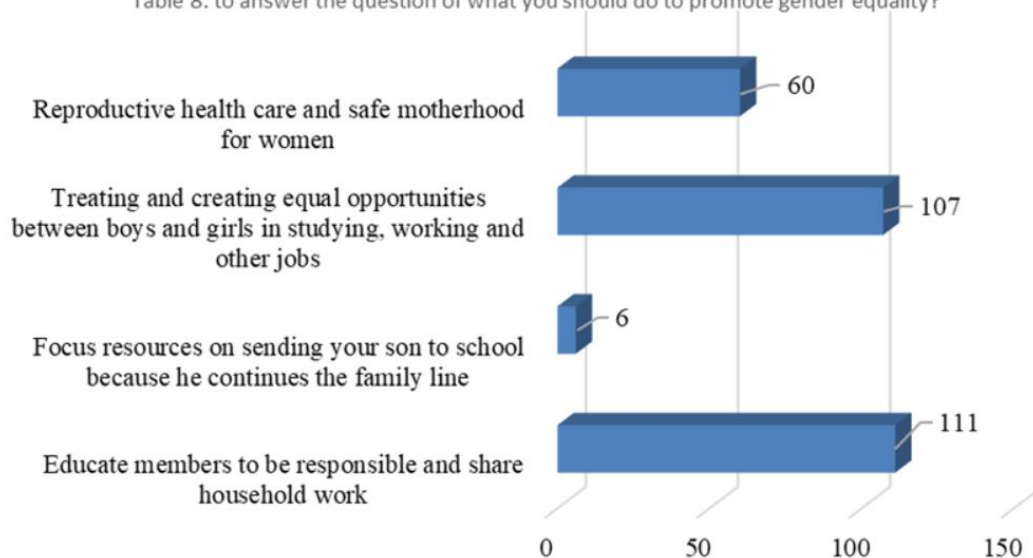


Figure 19: Viet Nam respondents' measures to promote gender equality include sharing of household work and creating gender equal opportunities.

12.1.4. Pakistan charts and graphs

E: Income Level of Beneficiaries:

A baseline survey was conducted at the start of the programme to determine the income level of beneficiaries at the household level.

A slight decrease, due to loss of regular earning opportunities, can be seen in the minimum income of the beneficiaries from PKR 1,500 to PKR 1,200 per month (-27%) while maximum income increased substantially from PKR 10,000 to PKR 25,000 per month.

Similarly, mean income of the beneficiaries also increased substantially from PKR 4,672 to PKR 11,498 per month (146%).

Chart No. 1 Monthly HH Income

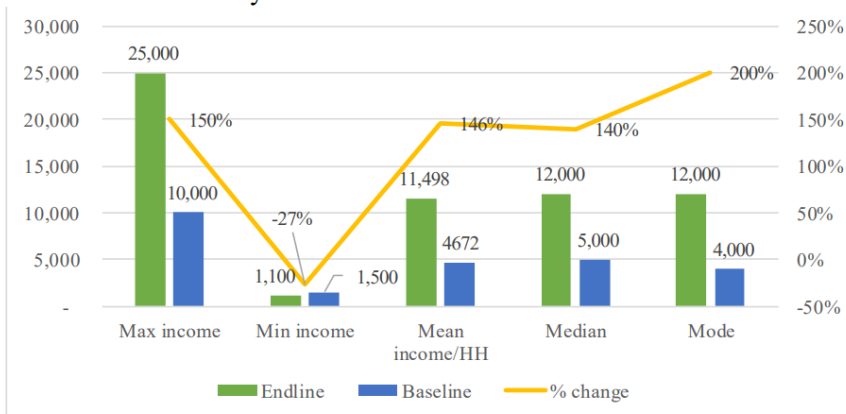


Figure 20: Baseline and endline surveys in Pakistan show an increase in max, mean, median and mode income among the women participants.

No.	Village	Taluka	UC	# of beneficiaries
1	Bughliar	Diplo	Sobhyar	40
2	Bitri	Islamkot	Bapuhar	57
3	Dabhi Bheel	Diplo	Sobhyar	29

4	Gangalus	Diplo	Jharmiryo	109
5	Khathorio	Diplo	Sobhyar	62
6	Khetlari_Kolhi	Diplo	Jharmiryo	51
7	Koorio	Diplo	Jharmiryo	75
8	Loonihar	Mithi	Jorou	123
9	Mau_Akhairaj	Mithi	Mithario_Bhatt	143
10	Pabe_Jo_Tar	Mithi	Mithario_Bhatt	152
	Total			841

Figure 21: Number of women beneficiaries selected per village in Pakistan

Table 3: Details of the SGBV session delivered under WEELI Project, Tharparkar Branch

Village	Female	Girls under 18	Boys under 18	Male Children under 10	No. of sessions	Total participants
Bhugliar	270	24	14	110	0	425
Bitri	390	34	46	228	0	704
Dabhi Bheel	399	30	21	254	2	712
Gangalus	509	32	55	305	17	923
Khathoriyo	360	21	40	265	6	698
Khetlari Kolhi	245	8	10	106	5	378
Koorio	258	17	11	87	0	382
Loonihar	775	84	72	698	0	1,634
Mau Akhiraj	767	56	40	630	17	1,518
Pabe Jo Tar	798	80	76	645	15	1,622
Total	4,771	386	385	3,328	62	8,996

Figure 22: People reached by the SGBV sessions in Tharparkar, Pakistan

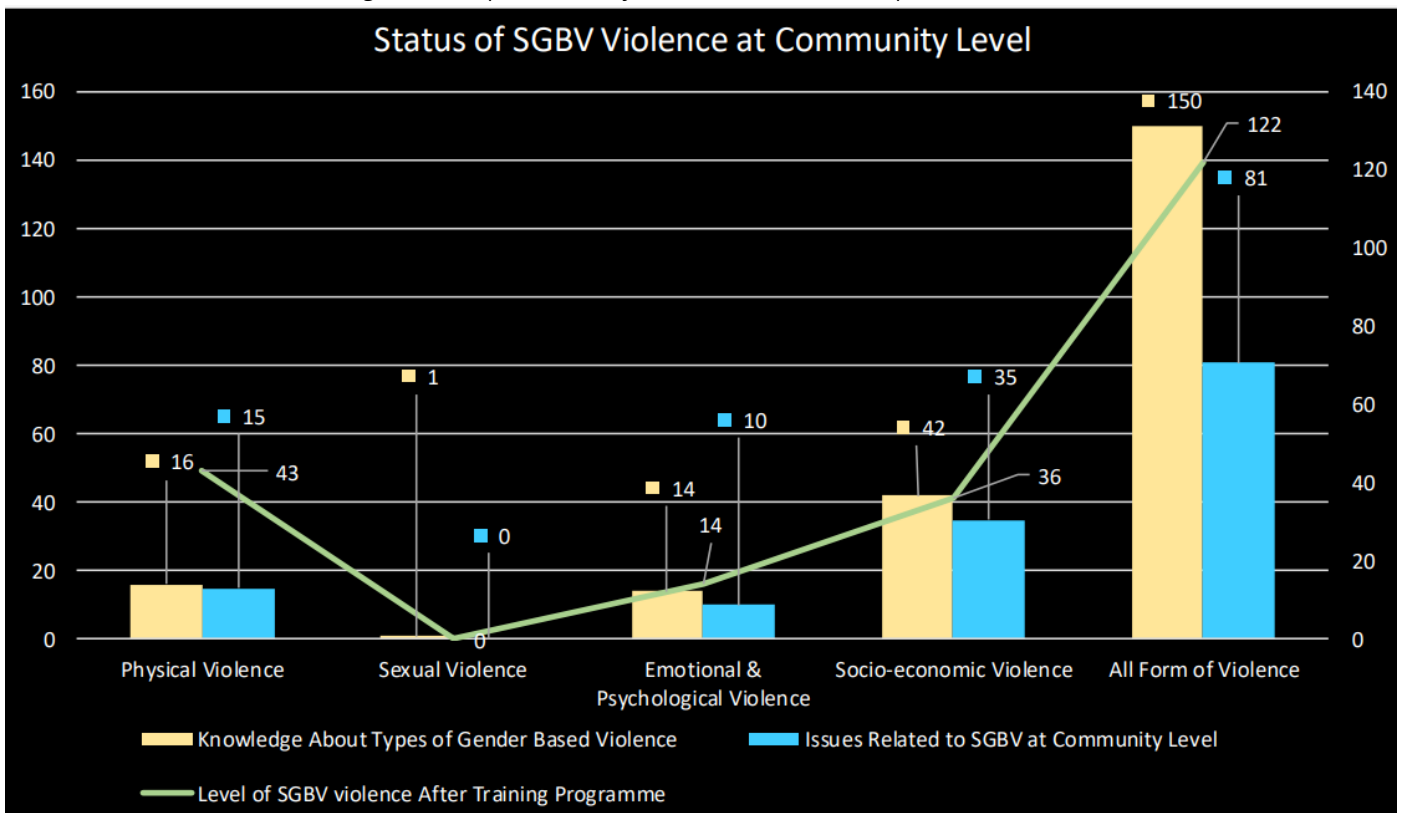


Figure 23: Status of SGBV knowledge and issues among respondents in Pakistan

12.2. Evaluation Matrix

The evaluation matrix prepared for the Women Empowerment Programme meta-evaluation:

Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions	Sub-questions
Efficiency	Were the programme results delivered efficiently and cost-effectively?	How efficient and cost-effective was the delivery and implementation of program and country project activities?
		Was intervention quality considered in the programme and project modalities?
		Were there collaborations between NS and other stakeholders to increase efficiency?
Effectiveness	Were the outcomes and outputs of the programme achieved?	To what extent did the country projects achieve overall outcomes and outputs in serving the target population? Include intended and unintended.
		To what extent did the programme achieve overall outcomes and outputs to serve the target population? Include intended and unintended. How did the country projects contribute to the programme's achievements?
		To what extent were the indicators of the programme and country projects achieved?
		Did the collaborations between NS and stakeholders improve effectiveness?
		How was community engagement encouraged and accountability issues addressed in the country projects?
Relevance	Was the programme relevant and appropriate in meeting the needs of the women and their communities?	To what extent did the programme meet the needs of the targeted marginalized, underprivileged women and/or their communities?
		To what extent was each country project design appropriate in meeting these needs?
		To what extent was the intended impact on the target communities achieved, as articulated by the programme goal and outcomes?
		Were the programme/project activities resilience and SGBV focused?
Sustainability	What are the sustainable practices of the programme that can be replicated, generalized and/or mainstreamed?	What mechanisms and practices in resilience, SGBV and livelihoods for women and communities contributed the most to programme outcomes?
		Among resilience, SGBV and livelihoods mechanisms and practices, identify those that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are the most sustainable for women and communities within the project scope, that will likely continue beyond the project timeframe. - Can be replicated, generalized and mainstreamed to other communities, taking risk profiles into account.

		What mechanisms and practices increased the capacity of women in the community committees or units and the National Societies sustainably?
Sustainability	What are the sustainable practices of the programme that can be replicated, generalized and/or mainstreamed?	What learnings are beneficial and sustainable for internal and external stakeholders of the programme and country projects?

12.3. Data Analysis Plan

Data Analysis Plan

DR: Desktop review

By Evaluation Matrix

KII: Key informant interview

1 EFFICIENCY

Efficiency and cost-effectiveness

	Overall	Afghanistan	Bangladesh	Pakistan	Viet Nam
1.1. Activities					
1.1.1. Efficient activities	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
1.1.2. Cost-effective activities	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
1.2. Intervention quality					
1.2.1. Programme modality	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
1.2.2. Project modality	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
1.3. NS & stakeholder collaboration					
1.3.1. Extent of collaboration	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
1.3.2. Efficacy of collaboration	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR

2 EFFECTIVENESS

Outcomes & outputs achieved

	Overall	Afghanistan	Bangladesh	Pakistan	Viet Nam
2.1. Country project achievement					
2.1.1. Project outcomes and outputs (intended)	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
2.1.2. Project outcomes and outputs (unintended)	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
2.2. Overall programme achievement					
2.2.1. Programme outcomes and outputs (intended)	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
2.2.2. Programme outcomes and outputs (unintended)	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
2.3. Indicators achieved					
2.3.1. Country project indicators	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
2.3.2. Programme indicators	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
2.4. CEA					
2.4.1. Community engagement	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
2.4.2. Accountability issues	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR

3 RELEVANCE

Relevance and appropriateness in meeting needs

	Overall	Afghanistan	Bangladesh	Pakistan	Viet Nam
--	---------	-------------	------------	----------	----------

3.1. Meeting needs					
3.1.1. Women/communities - resilience, SGBV	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
3.1.2. Women/communities - livelihoods	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
3.2. Project design					
3.2.1. Appropriate in meeting resilience, SGBV needs	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
3.2.2. Appropriate in meeting livelihood needs	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
3.3. Intended impact achieved					
As per programme/project goal/outcomes	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
3.4. Feedback					
3.4.1. Seek community feedback	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
3.4.2. Respond to community feedback	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
3.4.3. Modalities used	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
3.5. Project activities					
3.5.1. Resilience focused	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
3.5.2. SGBV focused	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
3.5.3. livelihoods focused	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR

4 SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable practices to replicate, generalize and/or mainstream

	Overall	Afghanistan	Bangladesh	Pakistan	Viet Nam
4.1. Contribution to programme outcomes					
4.1.1. Mechanisms/practices - resilience, SGBV	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
4.1.2. Mechanisms/practices - livelihoods	DR	DR	DR	DR	DR
4.2. Mechanisms/practices identified					
4.2.1. Sustainable - beyond project timeframe Replicated, generalized and mainstreamed (RGM) to other communities (low risk)	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII
4.2.2. RGM to other communities (low risk)	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII
4.2.3. RGM to other communities (high risk)	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII
4.3. Mechanisms/practices - increase capacity					
4.3.1. Women in community committees/units	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII
4.3.2. Women in NS	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII
4.4. Learnings					
4.4.1. Internal stakeholders	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII
4.4.2. External stakeholders	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII	DR, KII

12.4. Detailed recommendations by country

Afghanistan	Pakistan	Bangladesh	Vietnam
-------------	----------	------------	---------

Programme design	training/module revision	Some of selected beneficiaries were illiterate and training materials were too technical to understand. to conduct profiling assessment on targeted beneficiaries and prepare localized training materials to suit them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to appoint high quality trainer for training module development. To plan for refresher training. Training modules should be interlinked to provide continuous learning to the beneficiaries. - Consider livestock pre-market assessment so that the amount received match the market price. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Module should be designed based on assessment of skill. - To include women in other income generating activities should be considered - To include SGBV beneficiaries for income generation programmes as well. - to include more emphasis on DRR and health components in the programme design. - to consider increasing beneficiaries awareness on financial planning not just income generating. 	
Programme design	Overall programme framework		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to establish policy framework, robust strategy especially during covid to avoid delay. - clear distinction between emergency and development programme with regards to accountability, context, action plan, outcomes/outputs, timeline impact and sustainability. - SGBV sessions should not be a one-time session but rather continuous to build trust and impactful observation/assistance. - to revise SOP on hiring and monitoring FSP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to include male members of the household on the programme - awareness on women empowerment and its benefits. To encourage support from household members via creating supporting roles/training etc. - Risk mitigation plan for Covid19 should be introduced to avoid potential disruption to the programme. 	These projects should be carried out for longer-term duration (3-4 years) for sustainable improvements.
HR	HR: staff/team NS	Under-staffed particularly for Project Assistant and dedicated staff for M&E. gender balance team in Kabul (all men), increase women in leadership role.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff retention strategy should be in place in term of salary. - ensure gender balance 		
Programme structure	Monitoring	lack of active interaction with other department. The project team did not have M&E focal person and ARCS PMER department was not involved in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommended to include participation from PRCS PMER. Should conduct regular monitoring visit. M&E framework should be established, properly budgeted and adhered 		

		the project. Recommended to involve ARCS PMER in future.	on. - Finance officer to visit programme areas to ensure financial transparency.		
collaboration	Local Agency	Working with local agencies/govt. at early stage (MoU)- have authority and and sustainability	to develop strong linkages with relevant local authorities and linking beneficiaries with local agencies	- Linking with financial institution for sustainability and longer term intervention continued by local agencies i.e. financial institution can continue providing financial assistance for Small and Medium Enterprises. - to engage local agencies and encourage different types of capacity building initiatives. - to share official letters and meeting minutes to stakeholders, local authorities - to ensure transparent communication.	- to maintain engaging women's clubs to strengthen links with the community. - to establish collaboration with Provincial Women's Union - for more diversified training and activities. This will in turn increase capacities of local agencies.
collaboration	Linking with other organizations (Knowledge sharing)	to consult/link with other organizations that has experiences in similar programme, enable knowledge sharing, best practices, for better future implementation.	To look at possibility to engage academia i.e. University of Agriculture, Veterinary Colleges		
sustainability	Extension to other geographical areas / same area more people	Considering success of the programme in building capacity of the women and increase their access to the market, recommended to extend to other geographical locations. Stakeholders also recommended to extend the project at the same location with different beneficiaries. explore other internal/external donor to continue the programme.	to ensure sustainability and greater impact, it is recommended to focus on continuous long-term capacity enhancement to similar/existing beneficiaries rather than stop short at one module and expand to other communities	- Recommendation for future programme scaling up to include other women in the same community and as well other vulnerable areas. - to extend duration of the programme.	To replicate similar projects in other provinces especially in disaster prone areas.

sustainability	Impact evaluation	Although it is considered achieving goals and objectives, impact of the programme can only be seen some time after the programme ended. Impact evaluation can provide more information whether the programme posed lasting change to the beneficiaries and if extension is feasible.			
----------------	-------------------	--	--	--	--