

**Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund**  
**ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2024**  
(Regular Funding Cycle)

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|---|---|
| <b>Country</b>  | <b>Submitted by PUNO(s) UN Women or NUNO(s)<sup>1</sup></b>   |
| <b>Bangladesh</b>   | Name of Entity: UN Women Bangladesh<br>Name of Representative: Gitanjali Singh  |
| <b>MPTF Project Number (s)</b><br><b>00134256 (Outcome 6)</b><br><b>00122842 (COVID)</b>  | <b>Reporting Period</b>   |
| <b>Track</b> <i>Select all that apply</i><br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular Funding Track<br><input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Funding Track  | January 1 - December 31, 2024   |
| <b>WPHF Outcomes<sup>2</sup> to which report contributes for reporting period</b> <i>Select all that apply</i>  |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outcome 1: Enabling Environment for WPS<br><input type="checkbox"/> Outcome 2: Conflict prevention<br><input type="checkbox"/> Outcome 3: Humanitarian and Crisis Response | <input type="checkbox"/> Outcome 4: Conflict Resolution<br><input type="checkbox"/> Outcome 5: Protection of Women & Girls<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outcome 6: Peacebuilding and Recovery |
| <b>Programme Start Date</b>   | <b>Total Approved Budget (USD)</b>  |
| 1 December 2022   | Regular Funding Cycle: USD 1,250,000<br><br>(Balance from) COVID-19 Emergency Response Window USD 769,694-724,638=45,055.80<br><br>L-Hub Peer Learning and Mentorship USD 19,260                        |
| <b>Programme End Date</b>   | <b>Amount Transferred to CSOs (USD)</b>   |
| 31 August 2025  | <b>USD 607,797.39</b>   |

<sup>1</sup> Non-UN Organization. Applicable to Rapid Response Window for Peace Processes

<sup>2</sup> As per WPHF results framework nested model, WPHF outcome areas are equivalent to the impact level for grantees

## Executive Summary

On 1 December 2022, the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) provided a new cycle of support focused on the Rohingya humanitarian response in Cox's Bazar under its Forced Displacement Initiative, linked to Impact Area 6 on socio-economic recovery, participation, and leadership of women and young women in forced displacement settings. Through the selection process led by the National Steering Committee co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), six women-led (civil) society organizations (WLOs) were selected for a total allocation of USD 1.25 million (including UN Women technical support) in October 2022. Implementation started in May 2023 and has been instrumental in advancing women's leadership in peacebuilding, social cohesion, and community resilience initiatives in the forced displacement context of the Rohingya refugee crisis.

As a result of the interventions, a total of **51,884** community members benefitted directly from the humanitarian resilience building and leadership initiatives implemented by the six WLOs in 2024, including 38,544 among the Rohingya refugee community (RRC) and 13,340 members from the host community (HC). Among these beneficiaries, there are 37,606 women, 13,479 girls, 797 men and two (2) gender-diverse persons. In addition, 246,984 Rohingya and host community members benefitted indirectly from the humanitarian interventions in 2024.

Contributing to the Women, Peace and Security agenda in Bangladesh and increased gender-responsiveness of humanitarian activities in Cox's Bazar, WPHF initiatives led to enhanced abilities of Rohingya and host community women to contribute to building resilience and social cohesion within their communities, and to increased visibility of their efforts and role in the humanitarian response in this regard. Through the initiatives, women and girls advanced their skills and confidence to exercise leadership; improved their capabilities to resolve disputes and conflicts and facilitate peacebuilding dialogues within their communities; increased their knowledge and skills to ensure gender-responsive protection measures are implemented in response to gender-based violence (GBV), child marriage, polygamy, and human trafficking and to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA); became more empowered and resilient through learning basic literacy, numeracy and computer literacy skills; and learned basic entrepreneurship skills with almost 20 per cent of trained women starting income-generation activities. Importantly, initiatives included support to refer women and girls to essential health services, including mental health support. Alongside these, community outreach, consultations, stakeholder meetings, and workshops enhanced the understanding and resolve of men from both communities to foster gender-equal practices within their communities.

The fund strengthened the institutional capacities of the six WLOs to operate projects in the Rohingya forced displacement context and the capacities of seven Rohingya women networks in the refugee camps and 19 community-based organizations (CBOs) in the HC areas to respond to the needs of women and girls in their communities and to foster a safer, more gender-responsive environment within their communities, enhancing the sustainability and effectiveness of women-led efforts in the context of the Rohingya humanitarian crisis.

### Challenges

Progress under the fund was impacted by the sharp rise in insecurities within the camps in the first half of the year, including abductions and forced recruitment of men and boys, and nationwide civil unrest in July and August 2024. These developments increased fears and reported incidents of violence against women and girls, and placed restrictions on their movement, and on staff mobility affecting project implementation. Influenced by the armed conflict in Rakhine State, Myanmar, tens of thousands of Rohingya, many severely wounded, sought safety in safety in Cox's Bazar, stoking anti-Rohingya sentiment.

Other challenges that delayed progress under the fund included delays in securing government approval for work in the RRC, resulting in the postponement of project activities implemented by Rights of Women Welfare Society (RWWS) until February 2024 due to the unexpected suspension of activities by the NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB) in June 2023. In addition, activities implemented by the Women Entrepreneur Association of Bangladesh (WEAB) and WFWP-BD were further postponed until April and May 2024 respectively, influenced by the national elections

### Executive Summary

in January 2024. To mitigate these challenges, UN Women took proactive measures by collaborating closely with MoDMR, the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), and Camp-in-Charges (CiCs) to expedite the approval process. Additionally, UN Women engaged the UN Resident Coordinator to advocate effectively with government officials on these matters.

#### **L-Hub Peer Learning and Mentorship Programme**

In 2024, the Women's Federation for World Peace, Bangladesh (WFWP-BD) initiated a Peer Learning and Mentorship project awarded by the WPHF Global Learning Hub (L-HUB). In collaboration with another local WLO named Shukhi Manush, WFWP-BD strengthened their institutional and programme management skills through a robust peer-to-peer learning framework and mutual mentorship between the two organisations engaging 87 CSO staff and members of other entities. Working together, the two organizations enhanced their capacities on legal frameworks, human resources and stakeholder management, audit processes, financial management and reporting, and effective communication. Of the current grantees, AGRAJATTRA successfully obtained the L-HUB Peer Learning award in 2024 and will commence related activities in 2025.

## 1. Project Profile for Reporting Period

| Funding CFP <sup>3</sup>                         | Lead Organization Name                                   | Type of Organization <sup>4</sup> | WPHF Outcome/ Impact Area <sup>5</sup> | Project Location (State, Province or Region) | Name of Implementing Partner(s) and type of Organisation <sup>6</sup>                                     | Project Start and End Date as per Partner Agreements <sup>7</sup> | Total Approved Budget (USD) |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|---|-----------------------------|
| CfP 1  | AGRAJATTRA   | Women-led and women's rights      | Outcome 6                              | Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh                      | N/A   | 16 May 2023 to 30 April 2025                                      | 199,613                     |
| CfP 1  | Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS)                    | Women-led and women's rights      | Outcome 6                              | Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh                      | 1. (i) Upoma Nari Kallan Sangstha (UNKS)<br>(ii) Rohingya Women Empowerment (RWE)-Rohingya Refugee Camp 4 | 8 May 2023 to 30 April 2025                                       | 199,597                     |
| CfP 1  | Research, Training, and Management International (RTMI)  | Women-led                         | Outcome 6                              | Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh                      | N/A   | 8 May 2023 to 31 December 2024                                    | 197,899                     |
| CfP 1  | RW Welfare Society (RWWS)                                | Women-led and women's rights      | Outcome 6                              | Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh                      | N/A   | 16 May 2023 to 31 March 2025                                      | 185,056                     |
| CfP 1  | Women Entrepreneur Association of Bangladesh (WEAB)      | Women-led and women's rights      | Outcome 6                              | Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh                      | 1. Prottoy Unnoyon Shongstha  | 16 May 2023 to 30 April 2025                                      | 196,411                     |
| CfP 1  | Women's Federation for World Peace, Bangladesh (WFWP-BD) | Women-led and women's rights      | Outcome 6                              | Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh                      | N/A   | 8 May 2023 to 30 April 2025                                       | 189,649                     |
| CfP 4 CSO Peer Learning Awards Mentorship scheme | Women's Federation for World Peace, Bangladesh (WFWP-BD) | Women-led and women's rights      | Outcome 6                              | Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh                      | Shukhi Manush   | 2 August to 31 December 2024                                      | 10,000                      |

<sup>3</sup> For each grant, indicate if it is Country CfP 1; CfP 2; CfP 3, etc. Please also note if it is a CfP for the Food Security Initiative, Climate Security Initiative, Forced Displacement Initiative, or Peer Learning Grant

<sup>4</sup> Type of organizations are: i) Women's Led; ii) Women's Rights; iii) Both Women-led and Women's Rights; iv) Youth Focused; v) young women led; vi) both youth focused/young women led; vii) LGBTQI+; viii) Other as identified by the CSO.

<sup>5</sup> WPHF Outcomes are Outcome 1: Enabling environment for the implementation of WPS commitments; Outcome 2: Conflict prevention; Outcome 3: Humanitarian and Crisis Response; Outcome 4: Conflict resolution; Outcome 5: Protection; Outcome 6: Peacebuilding and recovery. If the partner received institutional funding, please use this column to note this. As per WPHF results framework nested model, WPHF outcome areas are equivalent to the impact level for grantees

<sup>6</sup> For each co- implementing partner (those on cover page and who received a transfer), state if they are i) Women's Led; ii) Women's Rights; iii) Both Women-led and Women's Rights; iv) Youth-led/focused; or v) Other.

<sup>7</sup> Use the official start and end dates as per the partner agreement and/or amendment. If the project received an extension, please note this.

## 2. Beneficiaries and Reach (Consolidated)

a) Complete the Excel spreadsheet called “WPHF Beneficiary Template 2024” for each project and submit with your report. Instructions for this working sheet are found in the template. The excel sheet tracks beneficiaries by each CSO.

b) In the tables below, provide the consolidated number of direct beneficiaries reached for all projects during the reporting period and cumulative numbers.

| Current Reporting Period (2024) |               |            |                 |               |                        |
|---------------------------------|---------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Age Category                    | Women/Girls   | Men/Boys   | Other (LGBTQI+) | Total Direct  | Indirect Beneficiaries |
| 0-17 years                      | 13,479        | 61         | 0               | 13,540        | 54,160                 |
| 18-29 years                     | 35,114        | 0          | 2               | 35,116        | 1,40,464               |
| 30 years +                      | 2,492         | 736        | 0               | 3,228         | 12,912                 |
| <b>Total</b>                    | <b>51,085</b> | <b>797</b> | <b>2</b>        | <b>51,884</b> | <b>207,536</b>         |

**\*ATTACH WPHF Excel Beneficiary Template.**

| Cumulative   |               |            |                 |               |                        |
|--------------|---------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|
| Age Category | Women/Girls   | Men/Boys   | Other (LGBTQI+) | Total Direct  | Indirect Beneficiaries |
| 0-17 years   | 15,096        | 61         | -               | 15,157        | 60,628                 |
| 18-29 years  | 43,314        | 21         | 3               | 43,338        | 173,352                |
| 30 years +   | 2,536         | 715        | -               | 3,251         | 13,004                 |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>60,946</b> | <b>797</b> | <b>3</b>        | <b>61,746</b> | <b>246,984</b>         |

### 3a. Context/New Developments

Declining resources, increased insecurities and the situation of violence in the Rohingya camps alongside tens of thousands of new arrivals fleeing the armed conflict in Rakhine State presented critical challenges and risks to women and girls in the refugee camps in Cox’s Bazar in 2024. Altogether USD 545.4 million (64 per cent)<sup>8</sup> was received against the USD 852.4 million under the 2024 Joint Response Plan (JRP) appeal by the end of December, with critical implications for women and girls, including insufficient funding to ensure their protection and support to resilience-building initiatives tailored for women and girls.

Following the nationwide civil unrest and the fall of the incumbent government, an interim government led by Nobel Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus was formed. Continued prioritization by the interim government of non-integration and repatriation, barring Rohingya from pursuit of employment opportunities and from building linkages with markets outside the camps and maintaining dependency on declining aid, heightened stress and risks for exploitation and abuse, especially among Rohingya women and girls. Decision-making and leadership remained functions almost entirely managed by men in both communities, with the continued absence of women a factor behind the reluctance of women to seek support and services<sup>9</sup>. Initiatives supporting women’s leadership remained significantly underfunded as these are not classified as life-saving interventions.

The civil unrest also severely constrained the operational capacity of humanitarian providers, leading to disruptions in essential services focused on women's protection, sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), and gender-based violence (GBV). The withdrawal of security forces (APBn) from camps during this unrest further exacerbated vulnerabilities and increased risks of sexual and gender-based harassment and violence among women and girls in the camps, exacerbated by mobility restrictions placed on refugees and the caregiver role disproportionately burdening women and girls.

Against overall increased insecurities including abductions and forced recruitments among males and a parallel increase in reported gender-based violence (GBV) incidents among women and girls, and the fresh arrival of tens

<sup>8</sup> JRP 2024 Funding Update – December 2024

<sup>9</sup> UNDP & UN Women. Brief on Gender & Security Survey Results among Rohingya in Cox’s Bazar. (Confidential report).

of thousands of Rohingya fleeing the armed conflict in Myanmar, many Rohingya women assumed sole responsibility for their families, some organizing into groups to protect their camps from violent groups. While recognized by many Rohingya women as demonstrating women's equal capability for leadership, this did not translate into increased engagement with women leaders at official gatherings and events in the camps. Nonetheless, high numbers of Rohingya and host community women pursued protection, peace, security and empowerment services through WPHF-supported activities, demonstrating the value of the activities, increased awareness and agency of women, and community support for women's participation in activities outside their households.

### 3b. Coordination in Humanitarian/WPS

In 2024, UN Women was selected as a strategic and appealing partner for the GBV Sub-Sector and Protection Sector under the 2025-2026 Joint Response Plan (JRP), and as an appealing partner under the Livelihoods and Skills Development Sector. This enabled UN Women to contribute to strategic discussions, preparedness planning and emergency response activities across these coordination platforms and to secure recognition for the efforts of the six WPHF grantees, who are all reflected in the 2024 JRP and the forthcoming 2025-2026 JRP as UN Women's implementing partners, enhancing their visibility. The WPHF grantees are also members of the PSEA Network, GBV Sub-Sector, LSDS sector and GiHA Working Group. Excluding WEAB, the remaining five grantees are affiliated with the NGO Platform in Cox's Bazar. These partnerships facilitate enhanced networking and capacity-building initiatives tailored to the complexities of forced displacement in the region.

The focus on initiatives led by local women's rights organizations within the UN Women's strategy emphasizes the growing acknowledgment of their essential role in advocacy and operational implementation. Drawing from previous insights and lessons learned, UN Women will develop a comprehensive strategy aimed at advancing women's leadership in 2025.

In Cox's Bazar, the Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group (GiHA WG) coordinated by UN Women and reporting to the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) of the Humanitarian Response Programme with a dual reporting line to UN Women, has been instrumental in enhancing the gender mainstreaming capabilities of humanitarian actors, ensuring the urgent needs of Rohingya refugee and HC women and girls are addressed. Additionally, UN Women serves as Co-Chair of the GiHA WG nationally.

UN Women is leading a Joint Programme (JP) "Enhancing resilience and self-reliance of the Rohingya refugees and host community in Cox's Bazar across education, food and nutrition, and gender-responsive protection through a humanitarian-development nexus approach", in collaboration with IOM, UNICEF, UNHCR, and WFP with the funding support of the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation. This JP focuses on protection and pursues a nexus approach to addressing the challenges of the protracted crisis context. In 2025; UN Women will support the development of a Localization Roadmap for the JP, providing opportunities to spotlight the critical role of local WLOs, CBOs and Rohingya women's networks in the humanitarian response.



*Figure 1: WPHF donor mission and meeting with six grantees in Dec 2024*

*(Credit: UN Women, Cox's Bazar)*



The second National Steering Committee meeting for the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) in Bangladesh was convened in December 2024, co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR). Representatives from UNFPA and UNHCR, as well as donor delegates from the German Foreign Agency and the Australian High Commission in Bangladesh, representatives of two civil society organizations (ActionAid Bangladesh and Bangladesh Mahila Parishad) participated in the meeting, which was organized with UN Women support. The meeting showcased the progress and impact of WPHF funding, sharing the key contributions of the WPHF supported local women-led CSOs to strengthening the leadership, livelihoods and economic empowerment of Rohingya and host community women in Cox's Bazar, fostering social cohesion.

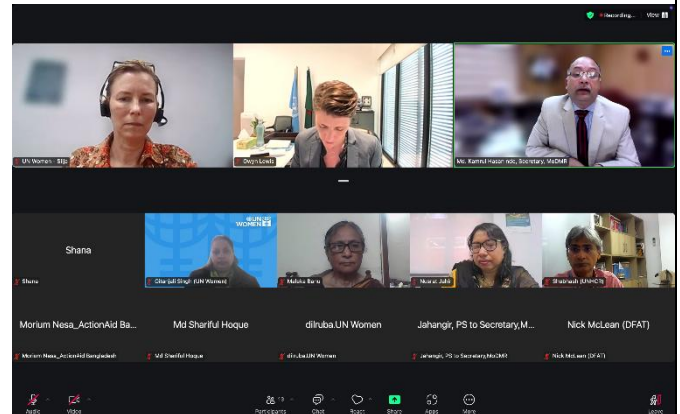


Figure 2: WPHF National Steering Committee Meeting, 1 Dec 2024 (Credit: UN Women, Cox's Bazar)

Additionally, the WPHF Mission to Bangladesh was conducted successfully in December 2024, generating testimonials, videos, and photographic evidence on the results of WPHF-supported initiatives in Cox's Bazar to use in mobilizing additional resources and partnerships to support future initiatives in Bangladesh and for the Rohingya humanitarian response.

#### 4a. Overall Results (Impact and Outcomes) Achieved

##### Country-Level Impact and Results:

##### **WPHF's Impact Area 6: *Improved socio-economic recovery, participation, and leadership of women and young women in forced displacement contexts.***

By empowering women and adolescent girls as key agents of social change, the program has strengthened their leadership skills while promoting advocacy for the prevention of GBV. This approach has not only produced immediate positive effects but has also laid the groundwork for long-term gender equity and the dismantling of deep-seated social norms. These efforts highlight the essential role of women's leadership in crisis settings, demonstrating their ability to drive change and promote resilience, protection, and social transformation within their communities.

In 2024, leadership development initiatives significantly improved the leadership skills of women and girls from both the Rohingya refugee community and the host communities. These efforts took place against a backdrop of increasing insecurity, rising incidents of gender-based violence (GBV), and the continuous influx of Rohingya refugees fleeing armed conflict in Myanmar.

One of the most significant advancements was the self-mobilization of Rohingya women in asserting their rights and leadership roles. Despite the interim Government's continued policy of non-integration and repatriation, which prevents Rohingya from formal employment and increases reliance on declining aid, women took proactive steps to protect and empower themselves. Faced with forced recruitment of men, many Rohingya women assumed sole responsibility for their families, demonstrating resilience and leadership. Some organized community groups to safeguard their camps from violent groups, while others actively sought protection and empowerment services despite severe mobility restrictions.

In 2024, the WPHF Regular Cycle Window made substantive contributions to gender equality and the empowerment of Rohingya and host community women in Cox's Bazar, the majority of them young women between 18 to 29 years old, through enhanced capacities, resources, agency and access to services and support. In their capacity as newly elected GiHA WG members representing local WLOs/WROs, the WPHF grantees BNPS and RWWS contributed to ensuring systemic gender mainstreaming across the 2025-2026 JRP. Women and girls from the RRC and HC are spearheading livelihoods and leadership initiatives for women, transforming gendered expectations related to the role of women in their communities and contributing to enhanced well-being, economic resilience and leadership of women. This includes 242 women (97 in the RRC and 145 in the HC) now engaged in IGAs, and 651 women and adolescent girls (295 from the RRC and 356 from the HC) with increased confidence and skills to participate in decision-making processes and to lobby for enhanced attention to gender equality and women's rights within their communities.

This was facilitated by initiatives led by the six WLOs supported by the WPHF focused on strengthening the leadership skills and self-confidence of project beneficiaries and supporting them through trainings, coaching, and referrals to humanitarian (RRC) and financial (HC) services expanding their access to income generation and livelihoods opportunities, on par with community outreach and awareness raising to tackle social barriers through promoting gender equal behaviours and practices within the communities. Women and girls in both RRC and the HC, including women with disabilities and gender diverse persons, learned basic skills in literacy, numeracy, computer literacy and credit and savings management, and acquired livelihoods skills, including managing small businesses, engaging in poultry raising and homestead gardening activities, and to produce marketable items through hand stitching, macramé, and block batik techniques.

Workshops engaging key community actors and businesses supported identifying market linkage opportunities for host community women. Within the RRCs, the WLOs engaged collectively with ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB), operating the Women's Market in Camp 5 to establish a joint shop managed by the six grantees, enhancing access among the trained women to female clients in a safe environment and fostering a collaborative approach to business management among Rohingya and host community women. The trained women from both Rohingya refugee and host community are now increasingly contributing to financial stability and income generation within their households, playing a crucial role in the overall socio-economic recovery from COVID-19 and in enhancing resilience within their communities, increasing social acceptance of women's income-generating role and the need to support this within communities. With the appropriate resources and support, these women are now positioned to leverage available livelihood opportunities in the long term.

The project initiatives implemented by the WPHF grantees have encouraged more Rohingya refugee (259 women and 36 girls) and host community (313 women and 43 girls) to exercise leadership through participating in community dialogues to advocate to decision-makers on issues of concern to them; developing and implementing strategies for the prevention of disputes and conflicts, and GBV, SEA and child marriage within their communities; and coordinating with local government offices to secure birth registration certificates, widow/old-age/lactating mother benefit allowances, and other support for women and girls in their communities. Participation in educational and leadership development activities enhanced adolescent girls' understanding of their fundamental right to education, encouraging them to prioritize their education moving forward. Empowered by increased self-confidence, many women and girls benefitting from the projects began to advocate for their own welfare and that of their peers. Additionally, women and girls have acquired tools to resolve conflicts and build community peace and are using these to foster more harmonious relations between and within RRC and the HC.

All six WLO partners have developed institutional frameworks and empowered their personnel and the leadership of the seven Rohingya women's networks in the refugee camps and nineteen CBOs in the HC areas through learning and training activities on how to manage projects sustainably, including sustainable models for women's resilience and leadership development beyond the lifespan of the projects.

#### **CSO Impact and Results:**



**WPHF's Impact Area 6: *Improved socio-economic recovery, participation, and leadership of women and young women in forced displacement contexts.***

**1. AGRAJATTRA**

The 100 Women Coalition Forums (WCFs) established and facilitated by AGGRAJATTRA engaged 2,000 members (747 women and 253 adolescent girls in the RRC, 767 women and 233 adolescent girls in the HC) in leadership development activities focused on preventing GBV and shifting attitudes on gender equality. The forums provided platforms for Rohingya and host community women and girls to increase their knowledge and understanding of and acquire skills in speaking out on gender issues in community decision-making processes and dialogues, and to make an impact on their communities as social change agents, contributing to increased gender inclusiveness and security within their communities.

The initiatives promoted women's empowerment and income generation by providing opportunities for acquiring livelihood skills and by implementing activities to enable women to access markets, such as organizing a meeting with 37 business owners in Cox's Bazar to garner their support for WCF members' efforts to establish market linkages. These interventions significantly enhanced participants' income-generating potential while fostering their engagement in community development initiatives. Furthermore, there has been a substantial increase in awareness regarding gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and advocacy efforts aimed at promoting community engagement for the attainment of gender equality, leading to a meaningful and lasting impact. Moving forward, it is essential to continue these initiatives including strengthening market linkages further to ensure the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of the project.



Figures 3, 4, 5: Livelihood activities, AGRAJATTRA.2024 (Credit: AGRAJATTRA)

**Outcome 1: *Enhanced mobilization of CSOs and leadership of women and young women activists in conflict and violence prevention processes and response in the stated project locations.***

With the support from AGRAJATTRA, the Women's Coalition Forums (WCFs) achieved significant results in empowering women and girls to assume active roles in conflict and violence prevention. Contributing to the achievement of Outcome 1, the project enhanced the leadership skills of and supported the advocacy efforts led by WCF members on a range of topics, including GBV prevention, positioning women and girls as pivotal agents of social change for sustainable progress in gender equity and in addressing harmful social norms. In the Rohingya refugee camps, the WCF members-initiated 32 GBV response activities, referred 23 GBV cases, and launched four child marriage prevention efforts. In the host community, WCF members responded to 45 GBV

cases, referred 31 GBV cases, launched 26 child marriage prevention initiatives, referred 26 cases for family planning support and 35 cases for health support, and facilitated 20 referrals to government-provided trainings. These initiatives resulted in strengthened partnerships in support of gender equality and women's empowerment objectives among various stakeholders, including community members, local authorities, and marginalized groups, and collective agreement on strategies to combat and respond to GBV and integrated referral pathways. These initiatives not only addressed immediate challenges related to GBV but also increased the visibility of women-led initiatives and gender equality principles, establishing an agreed framework for responding to gender equality concerns in the targeted project locations.

Through training facilitated by AGRAJATRA, WCF members enhanced their knowledge and skills to address and respond to gender-based violence (GBV) within their communities through prevention initiatives and referrals to appropriate GBV services and support. Among these participants, 451 WCF members (171 women and 36 girls in the RRC, 201 women and 43 girls in the HC) strengthened their capabilities in leadership, gender equality, and GBV prevention; and 333 WCF members (116 women and 36 girls in the RRC, 133 women and 48 girls in the HC) enhanced their knowledge and skills on PSEA. ***Outcome 2: Enhance economic status and employment scope of 2000 women and young women both displaced Rohingya (1,000) and HC (1,000) at Cox's Bazar Sadar, Teknaf, and Ukhiya Upazila under Cox's Bazar district.***

The mobilization of 100 WCFs in support of women's empowerment with support provided by AGGRAJATRA for varied livelihoods, leadership and soft skills training for the members, has contributed substantially to enhanced economic resilience among the 2,000 WCF members. A total of 451 women and girls (171 women and 36 girls in the RRC and 201 women and 43 girls in the HC) acquired skills in block/batik printing and varied handicrafts, enabling them to start new production initiatives, and soft skills in marketing their products through training. Among these, a total of 59 HC women have established income-generating activities.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, women leaders within the WCFs have played an instrumental role, mentoring their peers on how to access economic opportunities and to manage their earnings to improve their income, increasing the self-confidence and financial autonomy of WCF members.

The effectiveness and sustainability of these initiatives was enhanced by collaboration with local officials and community leaders, including officials representing the Department of Women Affairs, the Department of Youth Affairs, the Union Parishad and Camp-in-Charges, which was facilitated by AGGRAJATRA.

## **2. Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS)**

The project has directly benefitted 1,093 women and girls and 2 gender-diverse persons from the RRC and the HC, advancing their awareness of women's human rights, their skills in leadership and increasing their involvement in decision-making within their households on issues such as children's education, family planning, marriage, family business development, and freedom of movement of women and girls. Altogether, 236 women and girls (including 21 with disabilities) have learned skills in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, equipping them with tools to monitor and mitigate conflicts within their communities and to respond to crises effectively. This has enabled them to undertake 19 initiatives to resolve conflicts within their communities (7 in RRC; 12 in HC), 11 initiatives to prevent child marriage (3 in RRC; 8 in HC), 5 initiatives to prevent GBV (2 in RRC; 3 in HC), and 7 initiatives to prevent domestic violence (2 in RRC; 5 in HC).

In addition, 177 women (47 from RRC, 130 from the HC) have enhanced their ability to engage in income generation activities (IGAs), acquiring skills in various livelihoods and in financial and digital literacy. Among them, 130 women from the HC initiated IGAs, including on food processing (40), block printing (30), gardening (30) and poultry and duck rearing (30) in 2024. Additionally, the project has strengthened understanding among 576 male gatekeepers of the legal rights of women and girls, including through orientation sessions and discussion meetings covering related topics such as the legal age of marriage.

<sup>10</sup> Lack of access to markets is a challenge to achieving sustainability for income-generating activities in the refugee camps.





Figure 7: IGA training on food processing for women.2024  
(Credit: BNPS, 2024)

Figure 6: Group meeting on women's rights, child marriage.2024  
(Credit: BNPS)

**Outcome 1:** Enhanced leadership and participation of women and young women who are forcibly displaced in Cox's Bazar.

Altogether, 1,095 women, girls and gender-diverse persons (375 women and 15 girls from the RRC and 673 women, 30 girls and 2 gender-diverse persons from the HC) are now better equipped to participate in humanitarian decision-making and response activities, having acquired comprehensive knowledge regarding multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance and on available protection services, and enhanced their understanding on women's human rights, women's leadership and empowerment, and the importance of community solidarity, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and self-development. Participating women and girls now have increased awareness of their rights and entitlements, and the participating girls now understand their fundamental right to education and the risks of early marriage, as reflected by the collective commitment of all the participating women to protect their daughters from forced marriage, ensuring adherence with the legal age of marriage, and to ensure their daughters complete their education. This was supported by regular women's group meetings and awareness-raising sessions on the rights of women and girls, GBV protection and prevention, child marriage, polygamy and trafficking, among others, which contributed to enhanced self-reliance and leadership skills among project beneficiaries, and enhanced community acceptance of gender equality and women's rights. Furthermore, project beneficiaries report seeking support through helplines and engaging with local officials to address GBV.

A total of 1,095 participants (375 women and 15 girls from the RRC and 675 women and 30 girls from the HC) have increased their awareness and understanding of gender equality and women's rights – including in crisis contexts, with support from BNPS. Within the HC, a total of 349 HC women, including three women with disabilities, have acquired skills in conflict resolution and understanding of "Do No Harm" principles and women's safety during conflicts through training facilitated by BNPS, equipping them with strategies for peacebuilding and contributing to the cultivation of a lasting culture of peace in their communities, and equipped by advanced

leadership training, 90 women are now acting as “persons of confidence” with whom women and girls can confide their economic conditions through IGAs.

A total of 576 male gatekeepers, such as community leaders, religious authorities, refugee camp leaders, and youth representatives (144 community leaders, 66 Majhi<sup>11</sup> and 61 boys from RRC; 212 community leaders, 6 marriage registrars, 87 religious leaders from the HC) improved their understanding of women's rights and child marriage issues through participation in project activities, including 19 community orientation sessions and 18 discussion meetings facilitated by BNPS. These activities have deepened their understanding of vital issues like child marriage, polygamy, the legal minimum age for marriage, and the Child Marriage Restraint Act (2017) in Bangladesh. Their active engagement in the sessions and increased knowledge bring hope for a positive shift, with participants expressing commitment to end child marriage within their families and communities, and to seek support through the government hotline service when needed.

Notably, 177 women (47 from RRC, 130 from the HC) enhanced their ability to engage in IGAs with the support from BNPS, completing trainings in food processing, sustainable gardening, poultry farming, duck rearing, block printing, hand stitching, and hat making. After the trainings, ten women have had established sustainable income generating activities by the end of 2024.

### 3. Research, and Training and Management International (RTMI)

The project initiatives implemented by RTMI have significantly improved the well-being and lives of 44,106 direct beneficiaries (31,137 women, 12,948 adolescent girls, and 21 men) within the RRC and surrounding HC, increasing primary health and GBV awareness among community members. In addition, community outreach activities reached 41,899 women and adolescents through household visits and supported referrals to health services. Finally, 129 women and adolescent girls (70 RRC and 59 HC) have enhanced their livelihood skills through RTMI-supported interventions focused on supporting micro-entrepreneurship through IGA-related in-kind material assistance and establishing market linkages, specifically related to tailoring, dressmaking, and block handprint businesses. Through the integrated approach pursued by the project, which prioritized skills development and support for participants to access comprehensive health services alongside support to the initiatives led by the women to advocate for their rights, the project has advanced gender equality, fostered economic self-sufficiency, and bolstered community resilience within both the RRC and the HC. This comprehensive approach has established a robust framework for promoting gender equality and enhancing the well-being of the women and girls in RRC (24,532 women and 9,691 girls) and HC (6,605 women and 3,257 girls).

#### ***Outcome 1: Foster social cohesion and peacebuilding between the host and Rohingya Refugee communities.***

Through community outreach activities implemented by RTMI, 41,899 women, girls (23,548 women and 9,399 girls from RRC, 5,936 women and 3,016 girls from the HC), and 38 men have improved access to primary health care and referral systems, understanding of GBV, early marriage, and other critical gender inequalities affecting their communities.

As a result of participation in Community Support Group activities, 964 women and girls (443 women and 39 girls from RRC; 357 women and 125 girls from HC) increased their understanding on critical issues such as how to access health care services, strategies to prevent GBV, and pathways to economic empowerment. Through participation in strategy and capacity building workshops, 450 women and girls (216 women and 84 girls in RRC, 104 women and 46 girls from the HC) learned skills in facilitating

Figure 8: Group solidarity and Livelihood training in the host community. 2024 (Credit: RTMI)



<sup>11</sup>Rohingya leaders in the RRCs appointed by the government authorities.

peacebuilding, such as in facilitating dialogues and collaboration, between the RRC and HC. This initiative, supported by RTMI, promoted social cohesion also through the organization of joint workshops, enhancing collaboration and understanding across the two communities.

Furthermore, the project fostered livelihood development among beneficiaries, equipping 129 women and adolescent girls (60 Rohingya women and 10 Rohingya adolescent girls; 40 HC women and 19 HC adolescent girls) with livelihoods skills, such as in tailoring and dressmaking, while improving basic literacy, numeracy, computer literacy and business skills among them. Aided by a market assessment undertaken by RTMI in the Ukhiya sub-district of Cox's Bazar, which included market research, surveys, and stakeholder engagement with both buyers and sellers to analyse prevailing market trends, particularly those affecting women, the project has initiated the development of market linkages for products developed by host community women, training HC women in digital marketing and how to make mobile payments.<sup>12</sup> In total, 35 women (20 Rohingya and 15 HC women) have initiated IGAs, earning an average income between BDT 2,000 to 3,000 per month, contributing to improving their overall financial well-being and economic resilience.

#### 4. Rights of Women Welfare Society (RWWS)

Following delays in initiating project activities due to the unexpected suspension of all RWWS activities by the NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB) in June 2023, RWWS has moved forward swiftly from February 2024 with the implementation and by year-end, communities in project locations have witnessed a significant increase in women's confidence to engage in leadership and decision-making processes and IGAs. The 110 women CBO members (88 in the RRC and 22 in the HC) have improved skills through trainings and other capacity development initiatives to contribute to their communities and to play a visible role in decision-making processes, which has proven crucial in establishing more gender inclusive approaches to supporting Rohingya and host community women in the forced displacement context of Bangladesh.



Figure 9: CBO leadership training.2024 (Credit: RWWS)

Namely, the project has a focus on enhancing the technical competencies, leadership abilities, and knowledge on gender equality and women's rights among 110 women members (88 women from RRC and 22 women from the HC) of 8 CBOs established by RWWS (seven in the RRCs and one in the HC). Comprehensive training programs in entrepreneurship, leadership, GBV prevention, and mental health and well-being have significantly strengthened their capacities for community leadership, self-reliance, and impactful household decision-making.

Altogether, 2,000 women at the community level increased their awareness on GBV and childcare related issues through engaging in sessions facilitated by the 110 trained women from the CBOs, who facilitated 250 such sessions within their communities. Furthermore, 110 women CBO members, along with 5 RWWS volunteers, improved their

understanding on PSEA and learned how to identify and utilize relevant reporting mechanisms effectively through training supported by RWWS.

**Outcome 1:** *Improved socio-economic stability through learning and livelihood capacities of forcibly displaced women and young women.*

<sup>12</sup> Due to the restrictive Government of Bangladesh policy on non-integration, the Rohingya do not have access to markets, online or in person, outside the camps. Small-scale IGAs are implemented within the camps and are focused on providing goods and services for the humanitarian response, but these are hampered by the lack of a sustainable market base. A key priority is that of building skills for the eventual future where the Rohingya can participate in and contribute to local markets in a sustainable manner.



The 110 women members of the eight (8) community-based organizations (CBOs) have significantly developed technical competencies and strengthened their leadership capabilities, including skills in literacy and numeracy, entrepreneurial and negotiation skills. Among them, 66 CBO members have learned livelihoods skills through completing 25-day training in traditional handicrafts such as hand stitching, macrame, and block batik printing, creating a portfolio of handmade products to sell in local markets, which is expected to increase their income, and which has bolstered their self-confidence and self-reliance. In the next reporting period, the trained women will facilitate cascade trainings within their communities to support other women to learn livelihood skills and initiate income generating activities.

**Outcome 2:** *Enhance leadership, and self-reliance of displaced women and young women to participate in decision-making and engage in community and business solution.*

A total of 110 dedicated women CBO members (88 in the RRC, and 22 in the HC) from eight CBOs enhanced their understanding of gender equality, gender norms, power dynamics, GBV and PSEA and the importance of, and equalizing care work burdens, through their participation in 50 training sessions facilitated by RWWS. Equipped with these skills, the women have increasingly engaged in household and community-level decision-making processes. Furthermore, altogether, 2,000 women at the community level benefitted from awareness-raising sessions facilitated by the 110 trained women from the CBOs on issues such as GBV and balancing care work responsibilities between women and men.

## 5. Women Entrepreneur Association of Bangladesh (WEAB)

Despite the postponement of activities implemented by the Women Entrepreneur Association of Bangladesh (WEAB) to April 2024, influenced by the national elections in January 2024 (as reported in the previous reporting period), the project has made significant strides in enhancing the self-reliance of Rohingya and host community women, reaching 447 women (231 from RRC and 216 from the HC) with varied learning and leadership development initiatives in 2024, equipping women with knowledge and skills in business creation, financial planning, and in how to engage in and influence decision-making processes.

Trained in leadership skills, the women have begun to contribute to addressing critical community challenges, such as GBV, and to influence decision-making processes within their families and community structures.

**Outcome 1:** *Enhanced Capacity development and self-resilience of women from both forced displaced and HC in terms of developing their networking, decision-making, skill development & livelihoods.*

Altogether, 126 women (90 Rohingya and 36 host community women) have enhanced their knowledge and skills in leadership, gender equality and PSEA. Contributing to enhancing economic resilience, 115 HC women have enhanced their entrepreneurship and livelihood skills through completing related trainings on block printing, creating jewellery and other handmade products, facilitated by WEAB. Further, 20 HC women leaders of CBOs have increased their capacities in partnership development, networking, fundraising and media marketing, contributing to enhanced capacities for the sustainable operation of CBO activities. To promote longer-term sustainability, WEAB has facilitated networking between the project beneficiaries and women-led CBOs in the Ukhiya and Teknaf sub-districts, supporting beneficiaries' access to diverse services, information resources, and market opportunities. As a result, these women from the CBOs are now actively participating in various development initiatives and decision-making processes. They possess the skills to accurately identify community



Figure 10: IGA training on artificial jewellery making.2024 (Credit: WEAB)

issues and devise effective solutions, positioning themselves as playing a key role in decision-making within their families and broader communities. Additionally, the executive committee, composed of seven CBO members selected by project beneficiaries, facilitates networking opportunities between the project participants and other relevant CSOs. Their efforts are focused on building the confidence of beneficiaries while addressing the pervasive issue of gender-based violence in their society.

#### 6. Women's Federation for World Peace – Bangladesh (WFWP-BD)

Challenged by delays in initiating project activities, in 2024 WFWP-BD took important strides toward expanding access to livelihoods for Rohingya and host community women through partnerships established with ten local CBOs in the HC to collaborate on activities on women's rights and empowerment, with action plans established with the CBOs to be rolled out in 2025. With support from WFWP-BD, the ten CBOs launched successful advocacy initiatives implemented through community meetings and awareness sessions to advance women's rights and empowerment within their communities, and enhanced their institutional capacities through peer learning and mentoring facilitated by WFWP-BD. Notably, one member of a CBO leveraged the skills and materials received from the project to start a business, successfully opening an outlet shop in Ukhiya. The project contributed to improving access to livelihood opportunities for 200 women (120 from RRC and 80 from HC) through building their skills in producing traditional block batik and macramé crafts, on par enhancing the role of women in mediating community conflicts and championing peace through increasing the skills of 100 women from the RRC and HC in mediation, conflict resolution, alternative dispute resolution, and strengthening their legal and social awareness. These trained women leaders are expected play a pivotal role within their communities in awareness raising and conflict mitigation efforts moving forward.



Figure 11,12: IGA training on macrame and block printing, HC and Rohingya camp.2024 (Credit: WFWP-BD)

**Outcome 1:** *Improved resilience to marginalized and vulnerable women and young girls in both Rohingya and HC to enable them to become economically active through the creation of sustainable livelihoods for themselves.*

A total of 200 women (120 from RRC and 80 from HC) have enhanced their livelihood skills by completing pre-vocational training courses in traditional handicrafts (block batik and macrame) and learning soft skills in business marketing. In addition, altogether 120 women from RRC and 80 women from HC increased their skills and knowledge on homestead gardening techniques, food and nutrition, and related market linkages through training facilitated by WFWP-BD. Addressing the high rate of school drop-outs among adolescent girls in both communities and the specific mobility constraints that they face, the project enhanced access to skills development training for 200 adolescent girls (100 from the RRC and 100 from the HC), improving their income

generation skills in traditional handicrafts and homestead gardening. As a result, 100 HC adolescent girls began to contribute to family nutrition and income generation by initiating vegetable cultivation activities.

The ability of women to establish and grow small businesses was enhanced by introducing the Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) under the WFWP-BD project, through which 100 HC women improved their skills and knowledge on entrepreneurship and business creation. Under the EDP, 20 HC women improved their financial independence, having learned how to open a bank account, utilize mobile banking, and become familiarised with available loan facilities and loan application and management processes. Also, 120 Rohingya women benefitting from varied capacity development initiatives exhibited a strong interest in entrepreneurship; however, their ability to initiate business ventures remains restricted by government regulations.

**Outcome 2:** *Enhanced Women and Girls' Empowerment: Rohingya and host community women and young women to enhance their leadership and decision-making skills at the individual, household, and community levels.*

In 2024, WFWP-BD finalized training modules on gender-responsive leadership, self-confidence and self-reliance building of women leaders as well as on conflict analysis and mediation, which will be rolled out in 2025, with plans to train 200 and 100 women leaders respectively in these skills.

#### 4b. New Resource Mobilization and Sustainability

##### Rights of Women Welfare Society (RWWS)

Since September 2020, RWWS, in partnership with UN Women's previous partner Oxfam, had been actively implementing the "Means to Lead: Empowering Rohingya Refugee and HC Women through Leadership, Learning, and Livelihoods" project funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC)). Specifically, RWWS has managed the UN Women-supported Multi-Purpose Women's Centre (MPWC) and its activities in Ukhiya. Activities within the MPWC run by RWWS have included women's leadership development, literacy and numeracy, psychosocial counselling, GBV case management, basic health care and midwifery/sexual reproductive health services, women's self-support groups, community outreach and awareness raising.

UN Women is spearheading inter-agency discussions in Cox's Bazar on the localization agenda in the context of the SDC funded Joint Programme it is leading and, in alignment with the commitment to increase support to local women's rights organizations (WROs) as key actors in the humanitarian response, UN Women cost extended the RWWS project twice in 2024 with additional funding of USD 553,662 (BDT 66,993,052). This enabled the organization to directly manage as of May 2024 the Multi-Purpose Women's Center (MPWC) it was operating prior under UN Women's agreement with Oxfam, with two additional MPWCs in the HC added to the partnership agreement with RWWS as of November 2024. This shows the increased operational capacities of RWWS, building on the WPHF project, to mobilize and manage funding.

#### 4c. Outputs and Activities Completed

##### 1. AGRAJATTRA

**Output 1.1:** *Women/ young-women coalition- forum established.*

The 100 Women Coalition Forums (WCFs) established in 2023 with the involvement of 2,000 women and girls (747 women and 253 girls from the RRC and 767 women and 233 girls from the HC), comprising equal representation from RRC (Camp 1-East, Camp 8-East, Camp 26) and HC (Teknaf, Ukhiya, and Cox's Bazar Sadar

sub-district) have become increasingly vocal advocates for gender equality and conflict and violence prevention within their communities, with the capacity development support from AGGRAJATRA. These forums contributed to empower their members, promote gender equality, and address GBV issues within the communities, building the capacities of the WCF members to perform leadership roles and support their peer women and girls. The WCF guideline developed by AGGRAJATRA, which will be launched in 2025, contributes to the long-term sustainability of these efforts and enables scale-out by other humanitarian actors.

In 2024, AGRAJATTRA successfully facilitated 96 sessions focused on gender-based violence (GBV), human rights, particularly women's and girls' rights and gender mainstreaming and addressed the complexities of domestic violence for all members of the WCF. Through these sessions, the WCF members enhanced their understanding on how to combat child marriage and violence against women, and where to report such incidents through established government hotline numbers 109 and 999. By fostering an inclusive and supportive environment, the WCF members were encouraged to share personal experiences in storytelling sessions and to mentor youth, actively challenging detrimental social norms. As a result, participants have significantly deepened their understanding and commitment to advocating against Violence Against Women (VAW) within their communities, fostering a more informed and proactive approach to addressing these pervasive issues and building intergenerational solidarity.

The WCFs successfully engaged community stakeholders in promoting positive social norms and practices to prevent GBV through a series of awareness campaigns and strengthened coordination with local authorities to enhance conflict prevention and response efforts. In the refugee camps, 70 GBV response initiatives were implemented by WCF members, involving 45 women and 25 girls, including 3 women with disabilities (WWDs). Meanwhile, in the HC, 41 initiatives engaged 38 women and 3 girls, including 9 persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the promotion of gender equality. These efforts underscore the potential of WCFs to foster safer, more inclusive communities through advocacy, collaboration, and community-based interventions.

**Output 1.2:** *Trained women's activists/ women leaders are present for monitoring as well prevention and response of conflict/ violence related women and young women in the project locations.*

During the reporting period, the leadership capabilities of 372 women (171 RRC and 201 HC) and 79 girls (36 RRC and 43 HC girls) were substantially enhanced, enabling them to advocate for their rights with dignity and confidence through dedicated leadership training. The training also bolstered WCF members' efforts in promoting gender equality and addressing GBV issues, including the prevention of child marriage and domestic violence. The comprehensive leadership training focused on leadership development, gender equality, and the prevention of GBV equipped participants with the necessary competencies to formulate actionable strategies to foster peer-to-peer learning and initiate sustainable community-based initiatives. Additionally, the project successfully established collaborative relationships with local activists, service providers, and Union Parishad members to ensure a holistic support system for WCF members. The strengthened partnerships with key stakeholders have improved coordination and resource allocation, creating a conducive environment for the WCFs.

**Output 2.1:** *Capacity and skill developed of displaced Rohingya and Host community women and young - young for managing suitable income-generating activities (IGAs).*

A total of 436 women and girls (136 women, 50 girls, including 2 persons women with disabilities from Refugee Camp 1 East, 8 East and 26; 207 women, 43 girls, including 4 women with disabilities from the HC of Ukhiya and Cox's Bazar Sadar sub-districts) equipped with essential skills for self-sufficiency, market-oriented businesses, and financial independence. The successful completion of 17 batches of soft skills training on livelihood development (block/batik printing and handicrafts) contributed to the above.

**Output 2.2:** *Displaced Rohingya and Host community women and young women are engaged in suitable economic enhancing activities or suitable IGAs.*



A total of 436 women and girls (136 women, 50 girls, including 2 persons with disabilities from refugee camps 1 East, 8 East and 26; 207 women, 43 girls, including 4 persons with disabilities from the HC of Ukhiya and Cox's Bazar Sadar sub-districts) increased their soft skills through related livelihood development trainings in this reporting period. Amongst them, 182 women and girls (62 women and 17 girls from the RRC; 82 women and 21 girls from the HC) successfully transitioned into facilitator roles, where they actively supported their peers and develop market-ready products. This initiative has significantly enhanced economic opportunities and elevated household incomes, thereby fostering broader economic development within their communities. By engaging these women and girls in economic activities, the program has led to measurable improvements in household income levels and has positively impacted overall community development initiatives.

**Output 3.1: Cross-Cutting and Prerequisite Activities for all Outputs.**

The last kick-off workshop following seven workshops in 2023, under the "Building Inclusive Foundations for Women's Empowerment" objective in Cox's Bazar Sadar and Ukhiya upazilas (sub-districts) was implemented by AGGRAJATRA in 2024 to ensure an inclusive approach to project implementation, securing commitment from key stakeholders such as CiC offices and local Chairmen, whose leadership is crucial for fostering collaboration. The workshop engaged 40 participants and addressed gender disparities and the specific needs of women with disabilities. This initiative laid a strong foundation for the project, reinforcing its commitment to women's empowerment, community well-being, and resilience through life skills training. The engagement of stakeholders is expected to yield long-term benefits and ensure equitable opportunities for all diverse community groups.

The "Training & Awareness on PSEA and Safeguarding" initiative made significant strides during the reporting period, reaching 333 WCF members (116 women and 36 girls in the RRC, 133 women and 48 girls in the HC) across eight batches, representing 83 per cent of the target (333 out of 400) beneficiaries. The training covered the six core principles of PSEA, empowering participants to recognize, prevent, and report exploitation and abuse, thereby enhancing community accountability and protection mechanisms. Additionally, a Partners Capacity Building Workshop strengthened the knowledge of six WPHF implementing partners on compliance and partnership regulations. Further, two new staff members were trained to align with safeguarding protocols. The program's inclusive approach prioritized marginalized groups, promoting resilience, equity, and trust within host and camp communities and establishing a solid foundation for long-term safeguarding practices.

**2. Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS)**

During the reporting period, 177 women (47 RRC and 130 HC) enhanced their ability to engage in the income generating activities as a direct consequence of skills development training and support from BNPS, inclusive of training in food processing, sustainable gardening, poultry farming, duck rearing, block printing, hand stitching, and hat making. Concurrently, a total of 576 men and boys (305 HC and 271 from Rohingya refugee), including 449 leaders and marriage registrars, 66 Majhis/camp leaders and 61 boys, improved their understanding of women's rights and empowerment and child marriage issues through participation in project activities.

**Output 1.1: Training and skills provided to displaced women and girls on collection actions against GBV and improving access to productive resources.**

A total of 1,095 women, girls and gender-diverse persons from both the RRC (375 women and 15 girls from RRC; 673 women, 30 girls and 2 gender-diverse persons from the HC including nine women and girls with disabilities and eight survivors of GBV) participated in 388 group meetings organized by Bangladesh Nari Pragati Sangha (BNPS) and its implementing partners (Upoma Nari Kallan Sangstha-UNKS and Rohingya Women Empowerment -RWE). These sessions focused on key issues like conflict resolution, gender equality, women's human rights, and the Child Marriage Act of 2017. Participants reported a significant increase in their understanding of the legal age of marriage, the risks of early marriage, the importance of women's involvement in decision-making, and



social cohesion. This training has helped raise awareness and foster positive changes in attitudes toward these critical issues.

BNPS and its implementing partners facilitated 106 training sessions focused on conflict resolution and peacebuilding among all 1,095 women, girls and gender-diverse persons. These sessions markedly enhanced participants' comprehension of the underlying causes of conflict and the integral role of conflict resolution in promoting peace, particularly in the context of forced displacement in Cox's Bazar. These sessions were pivotal in fostering social cohesion between the Rohingya refugee population and the HC, thereby facilitating peaceful interactions both within and among these groups.

Moreover, 803 awareness-raising initiatives were conducted among these 1,095 women, girls and gender-diverse persons addressing various forms of violence, their causes and consequences, and strategies for preventing GBV. This collective effort culminated in a unified commitment to combat child marriage. The initiatives emphasized girls' empowerment through educational opportunities and skill development programs, thereby contributing to significant social change and enhancing community resilience.

**Output 1.2:** *IGA, financial literacy and computer training provided to forcibly displaced women and young women.*

A total of 90 women from the HC participated in three leadership skills training sessions facilitated by UNKS and BNPS. These sessions empowered them to serve as change agents and "persons of confidence" within their communities. As a result, they gained the confidence to engage in IGA, a critical step toward enhancing their economic independence and resilience.

Through livelihoods skills training supported by BNPS, 177 women (47 RRC and 130 HC) enhanced their skills in areas such as food processing, horticulture, poultry and duck farming, block printing, hand stitching, and hat production. Following the training, 10 of these women have demonstrated the ability to establish and run income-generation activities sustainably and effectively.

To enhance sustainable livelihood development, 130 trained women from the HC received BDT 10,000 (USD 85 approximately) each in cash assistance to support them to establish IGAs, contributing vital resources to the economic resilience and empowerment of the beneficiaries. While the average income derived from these activities has not yet been calculated, this data is anticipated to be available in the forthcoming year.

**Output 1.3:** *Dialogues and awareness created with CSOs and policy makers for improved and need-based policies on forced displacement.*

No progress has been made yet; these activities will be accomplished in the first quarter of 2025.

### **3. Research, and Training and Management International (RTMI)**

**Output 1.1:** *Women and adolescent received self-reliance skill training.*

In 2024, a total of 44,106 Rohingya refugees and HC women, girls and men (24,532 women and 9,691 girls from RRC and 6,605 women, 3,257 girls and 21 men from the HC) improved their knowledge and skills in livelihoods, basic literacy and numeracy, GBV prevention and response, health awareness, and referral services through participation in RTMI project activities. Out of these, 283 women and girls (109 women and 85 girls from RRC and 65 women and 24 girls from the HC) enhanced their livelihood skills, basic computer literacy, and basic literacy and numeracy. Amongst them, 35 women (20 women from RRC and 15 women from the HC) went on to initiate IGAs, earning an average monthly income ranging between BDT 2,000 and 3,000 (USD 16-25) through tailoring and block printing.

Altogether, 450 women (320), girls (130) and 25 men from the RRC (216 women, 84 girls and 7 men from RRC) and 150 in the HC (104 women, 46 girls and 8 men from the HC) benefitted from 15 strategy and capacity building workshops. Conducted by Community Health Workers (CHWs), these workshops built their awareness of social issues, particularly gender-based violence. The sessions empowered women and girls, increasing their confidence to speak out against violence and advocate for a safer environment and enhancing their understanding of their rights. These workshops were crucial in improving quality of life, promoting awareness, and strengthening support systems for a more secure and inclusive society.

In total, 70 women and girls from the RRC (60 women and 10 girls) and 59 from the HC (40 women and 19 girls) have enhanced their livelihood skills and knowledge through the livelihoods and self-reliance skill training supported by RTMI. This emphasizes skills development for micro-entrepreneurship, specifically in tailoring, dressmaking, and block-handprint textile businesses, and market linkages to foster women's economic self-sufficiency and promote their autonomy and resilience, with the aim to contribute to their long-term socio-economic stability.

Through the entrepreneurship development initiative, 54 women from RRC learned skills in homestead gardening, completing a 6-week training course, enhancing their household nutrition security and paving the way for the women to establish small-scale businesses, thereby contributing to improved financial stability for their families.

The project provided foundational literacy and numeracy training to 43 women (30 RRC women and 13 HC women) and 66 girls (64 Rohingya refugee girls and 2 HC girls) from Rohingya refugee and HC. This program has been particularly impactful for these women and girls without formal education, equipping them with crucial skills in counting, reading, and writing. Acquiring fundamental computer skills has empowered a cohort of women (12) and girls (3) with pertinent competencies that enhance their employability and facilitate economic contribution within HC. This development not only fosters empowerment but also improves their overall financial stability. The newly acquired computer literacy skills can open avenues for volunteer engagement and instructional opportunities in Myanmar Curriculum education targeted at Rohingya women (19) and girls (11) within the refugee context. These initiatives may bolster educational outreach and capacity-building efforts in this demographic.

**Output 1.2:** *Women and adolescents received primary health care services through community outreach and engagement.*

Altogether, 964 women and girls (443 women and 39 girls from the RRC; 357 women and 125 girls from the HC) participated regularly in Community Support Group meetings (48 total), increasing their understanding of women's rights issues. Moreover, 41,899 women and girls (23,548 women and 9,399 girls from the RRC; 5,936 women and 3,016 girls from the HC) increased their knowledge on postnatal care, family planning, communicable diseases, GBV, mental health and support, and nutrition-supported by RTMI through referral support and accessed health centres.

Furthermore, a total of 60 healthcare providers (39 women and 21 men), including doctors, nurses, health volunteers, and medicine shop owners improved their knowledge of Essential Service Package (ESP) components at the Health Complexes in Teknaf and Ukhiya sub-districts in the HC through training facilitated by RTMI. The training covered a wide range of services and areas such as healthcare delivery systems, sexual and reproductive health services, management of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) cases, implementation of standardized prevention mechanisms against GBV, PSEA, and provision of psychosocial support. This initiative promotes a more integrated and coordinated approach to health service delivery, thereby improving overall care outcomes.

**Output 1.3: Monitoring and Reporting.**

The baseline survey conducted by RTMI in 2024 and encompassing respondents from 298 households (179 Rohingya and 119 HC respondents) across six refugee camps and three sub-district project locations in Cox's Bazar found women to profess strong interest in acquiring tailoring skills, in particular, followed by handicrafts, vegetable cultivation and poultry rearing. Contributing to effective monitoring, the RTMI senior management undertook several field visits to monitor the project in 2024, which enhanced also networking with the five other WPHF partners, government stakeholders, and the Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG).

**4. Rights of Women Welfare Society (RWWS)**

**Output 1.1: Women and young women of CBOs are equipped or enhanced with the technical knowledge.**

The Rights of Women Welfare Society (RWWS) onboarded eight women-led community-based organizations (CBOs) to implement activities in the camps and HC (seven in the RRC and one in the HC). The women's leadership capacity-building workshop conducted at Camp 1 East, 1 West, 5, 14, and the HC among 110 women (88 in RRC and 22 in HC) enhanced participants' competencies in recognizing and addressing gender disparities within their communities. Participants developed skills to facilitate awareness-raising initiatives through targeted community engagement sessions.

Through the support provided by RWWS, CBO members have improved their capacities to engage with their communities, identify gender disparities, and work towards the promotion of equitable opportunities for all. Regular monthly and quarterly meetings have proven to be an essential forum for leaders of 10 CBOs to refine their skills in knowledge sharing, accountability, and collaborative strategy development. Participants engaged in comprehensive discussions regarding their experiences with various initiatives executed in both camp and HC environments, highlighting the challenges faced and successes achieved in these contexts. Feedback from community stakeholders was systematically gathered, laying the groundwork for a reflective analysis of lessons learned from ongoing projects. The primary focus of these sessions was to formulate strategies for effectively managing constrained resources while simultaneously promoting greater community engagement and enhancing networks for improved coordination in addressing the needs and priorities of women. Additionally, these women leaders shared best practices and success stories, which serve to disseminate effective methodologies across varied communities. Moreover, these meetings function as a dual-purpose mechanism: firstly, they act as a monitoring framework for current projects and initiatives, allowing participants to provide constructive feedback, assess outcomes, and adapt strategies as needed; secondly, this structured approach reinforces women's organization and augments accountability within community initiatives.

A capacity-building workshop was organized to enhance the understanding and technical skills of community-based organization (CBO) members on key issues such as gender-based violence (GBV), support for GBV survivors, the impact of unpaid care work, power dynamics, and women's leadership. The workshop provided participants with valuable insights into gender issues, effective support mechanisms for survivors, strategies for implementing care work initiatives, and an exploration of different power constructs. Emphasizing the

significance of unity and the empowerment of women in leadership roles, the workshop aimed to foster positive social change.

Additionally, 110 women from the CBO successfully completed basic literacy and numeracy training, equipping them with essential skills in counting, reading, and writing. This training empowers them not only individually and at the household level but also contributes to their abilities to effectively manage their CBO efforts moving forward.

**Output 1.2:** *Community-level sessions training will be conducted by 100 trained women and girls.*

A total of 2,000 participants underwent capacity-building training focused on GBV and caregiving responsibilities through 250 community-level workshops in the RRC (1,600) and in the HC (400). These sessions were facilitated by trained personnel from the CBOs across Rohingya refugee Camps 1 East, 1 West, 5, 14, and Palongkhali in the HC. The objective was to empower CBOs to initiate change regarding GBV awareness and caregiving practices, particularly at the individual family level. Post-training evaluations indicate a significant increase in participants' ability to identify and report incidents of GBV. Furthermore, a notable shift has been towards more equitable sharing of caregiving responsibilities within households. This transformation underscores an enhanced understanding of gender equality principles and a commitment to fostering balanced role distribution within family dynamics, which came through the group meetings facilitated by RWWS.

The stakeholder engagement workshop to understanding of the root causes and consequences of GBV, leading to positive shifts in attitudes toward gender equality and women's rights effectively deepened the analysis of the root causes and consequences of gender-based violence (GBV), fostering a significant shift in attitudes towards gender equality and the rights of women. The workshop convened 200 community stakeholders, including camp-in-charge (CiC) personnel, influential community leaders such as Imam *Majhis*, male relatives of women leaders, and 110 women leaders representing the refugee camps and the HC. Through facilitated interactive dialogues, the event enhanced collective accountability among participants. Notably, several male participants expressed their commitment to dismantling entrenched gender norms and implementing protective measures for women and girls. This collaborative initiative has not only strengthened the relationships between community-based organizations (CBOs) and community stakeholders but has also promoted a stronger sense of community ownership and participation in GBV prevention and response strategies.

**Output 1.3:** *Women and young women of CBOs are capacitated with the livelihood.*

A total of 66 women members (44 women from RRC and 22 women from the HC) of community-based organizations (CBOs) have successfully enhanced their technical skills in the production techniques of block batik, hand stitch, and macrame by completing an intensive 5-day livelihood skill training program held at Camp 1 East, 14, and in the HC. Upon completing this training program, participants are now adept at independently manufacturing a diverse range of block batik products, hand stitched items, and macrame creations, with the potential for local sales and access to broader markets. This skill enhancement is poised to bolster economic empowerment for women and increase household incomes, simultaneously strengthening the economic resilience of their communities.

**Output 1.4:** *Community-level sessions/training will be conducted by 100 trained women and girls on livelihood and income-generating activities.*

No progress has been made under this output result during this reporting period because activities have not started in 2024.

**Output 2.1:** *Women and young women are capacitated with advance leadership, advocacy skills and technical trainings on entrepreneurship to start small business.*

The 110 women CBO members refined their capabilities in advanced leadership, advocacy strategies, and entrepreneurship-related technical competencies. This training equips them to initiate small business ventures and collaboratively develop a comprehensive socio-economic development framework to enhance opportunities for women and girls within refugee and HC.

**Output 2.2:** *Provide tools and livelihood kits to 10 CBOs to start income generation activities, practices, and Cash for Work options.*

No progress has been made under this output result during this reporting period because activities have not started in 2024.

## **5. Women Entrepreneur Association of Bangladesh (WEAB)**

**Output Statement 1.1:** *Women/young women are acknowledged on self-resilience, leadership, participation and self-confidence.*

A total of 126 women (50 in RRC and 76 in HC) enhanced their competencies in leadership, gender mainstreaming, PSEA, and hygiene practices through participation in activities implemented by the Women Entrepreneur Association of Bangladesh (WEAB). They actively participate in household decision-making, address community challenges, and assume leadership roles. This progress stems from training in gender mainstreaming, hygiene practices, leadership skills, and self-resilience, all of which empower them to apply their knowledge effectively at the community level.

**Output 1.2:** *Women/youth girls participated in the vocational trainings and became self-empowered.*

The soft skill vocational training in livelihood (block printing and handicrafts) has strategically empowered 115 women from both Rohingya refugee communities (80 women from the RRC) and the HC (335 women from the HC). These initiatives have enhanced their leadership, entrepreneurship, and social resilience competencies, facilitating socio-economic recovery. Furthermore, the programs have promoted women's leadership in the context of peace building, contributing to a more inclusive framework for sustainable development.

**Output 1.3 and 1.4:**

No progress has been made under this output result during this reporting period because activities have not started in 2024.

**Output 1.5:** *Entrepreneurship training (HC) Self Resilience Training (on camps) provided to women & young girls in the HC.*

Specialized training in Entrepreneurship Development effectively bolstered entrepreneurial acumen of 118 women (57 women from RRC and 61 from the HC) and cultivated some innovative business ideas aimed at self-employment. Efforts to establish local market linkages are currently underway to ensure the sustainability of these efforts, with a collaborative partnership already forged by WEAB with the Women's Chamber of Commerce in Cox's Bazar and local market stakeholders, complemented by informal market assessments to identify strategies for optimizing product sales. Furthermore, through the efforts of WEAB, the capacities of eight CBOs in the HC were successfully enhanced in critical areas such as PSEA, livelihoods, and networking opportunities.

The participants have developed entrepreneurial mindsets and report clear aspirations for future business initiatives, positioning themselves for active engagement in entrepreneurship and new venture creation. With the expected financial backing through cash grants from the project, they are well-prepared to initiate their businesses in the short term, demonstrating potential for success in their respective markets.

**Output 1.6:** *Mentoring & Coaching to start up new businesses.*



The training program on New Business Creation has enhanced the understanding of 68 women from the HC on entrepreneurship development. By leveraging the acquired knowledge, these participants are now proficient in initiating and managing small businesses. This enhancement in their entrepreneurial capabilities not only empowers individual women but also contributes to the overall economic robustness and resilience of the community as a whole.

**Output 1.7:** *CSOs developed their capacity of self-sustainability and networking.*

WEAB has partnered with eight women-led community-based organizations (CBOs) in Ukhiya and Teknaf, focusing on empowering selected women leaders within these communities. A cohort of 20 women enhanced their expertise in critical areas such as self-resilience, self-confidence, leadership empowerment, and networking capabilities through a comprehensive leadership development training tailored for civil society organizations (CSOs).

As a result, these women are now actively participating in various development initiatives and decision-making processes. They possess the skills to accurately identify community issues and devise effective solutions, positioning themselves as key leaders within their families and broader communities. Additionally, the executive committee, composed of seven members, facilitates robust networking opportunities between our beneficiaries and relevant CSOs. Their efforts are focused on building the confidence of these beneficiaries while addressing the pervasive issue of gender-based violence in their society.

**Output 1.8:** *Beneficiaries' opportunities on finding job on daily wage and/or become partner/supplier is increased through Trade fair.*

No progress has been made under this output result during this reporting period because activities have not started in 2024.

## **6. Women's Federation for World Peace – Bangladesh (WFWP-BD)**

**Output:1.1:** *Skills gap assessment completed, with a specific focus on gender-specific barriers and opportunities for both Rohingya and host community target group.*

The competencies and capabilities of women from 515 RRC and 835 HC were evaluated through a baseline survey conducted in the Rohingya camps (specifically in camps 06, 15, & 16 within the Ukhiya sub-district and camp 22 within the Teknaf sub-district) as well as in the surrounding host communities (Holudiapalong, Rajapalong, and Palongkahlai unions in Ukhiya sub-district, along with Unchiprang in Teknaf sub-district). This assessment was instrumental in informing and shaping capacity enhancement initiatives aimed at fostering income-generating activities and promoting the empowerment of women through the project interventions. Based on this Baseline assessment, the project participants were selected according to the selection criteria from these communities.

**Output 1.2:** *Displaced and host female community is skilled and self-reliance by given Skill development vocational training on Handicrafts preparation and Marketing to be self-employed and startup businesses.*

Supported by WFWP-BD, 200 women (120 women from RRC and 80 from the HC) have significantly advanced their livelihood skills in handicraft production. This includes specialized block printing, batik, and macrame techniques, alongside entrepreneurship training. These women have enhanced their soft skills and improved their socioeconomic conditions within both the RRC and HC. This project has considerably impacted women's empowerment by fostering their participation in the production of block batik and macrame crafts. Furthermore, cash grants for trained participants are earmarked for distribution in 2025 to grow their businesses for these artisanal products.

**Output 1.3:** *Job placement of beneficiaries at daily wage basis.*

No progress has been made under this output result during this reporting period because activities have not started in 2024.

**Output 1.4:** *Women / Youth girls empowered by increasing the capacity development on home gardening, create scope of food, income generation by selling vegetables in the community and become self-employed on Agro business field.*

A cohort of 120 women have increased income through the sale of vegetables grown in their own homes, after participating in home gardening initiatives (48 women from the RRC and 72 from the HC). This engagement has effectively met their households' nutritional requirements while simultaneously improving their socio-economic standing. The training module was made with expert contributions from the Upazila Agriculture Officer, ensuring that it incorporates relevant technical insights. This initiative has significantly advanced women's empowerment within the household context.

**Output 1.5:** *The Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) will be implemented to involve in commercial engagement by starting a business and being self-employed.*

The Entrepreneurship Development Program (EDP) is strategically tailored for the local community, aiming for full engagement from 100 women participants to enhance their knowledge and made the mindset to start their own business at HC. By ensuring 100% EDP training participation, the program enhances equitable access to entrepreneurial resources and promotes sustainable growth within the very local level small business sector. The initiative leverages targeted training and resource allocation to bolster the capabilities of women entrepreneurs, ultimately driving some changes in their economic conditions.

**Output 1.6:** *Access to market initiatives & financial programs will be implemented to displaced women/youth girls.*

Twenty (20) women from the HC in Unchiprang, Whykhong Union, Teknaf sub-district, have undergone comprehensive financial literacy training aimed at improving their financial management skills. The training covered critical aspects such as account opening procedures and documentation requirements, as well as the processes for money deposits, withdrawals, and access to loan facilities. This initiative has significantly contributed to their financial autonomy and has fostered entrepreneurial development within the community.

**Output 2.1:** *Awareness on Family planning and relevant issues.*

The awareness-building training in Family Planning increased the knowledge of 60 women (40 women from the RRC and 20 from the HC) about preventing early marriage and family planning. Furthermore, this helped them in decision-making on the issues and enabled freedom of choice at the family level. The training module was made with expert contributions from the Upazila Family Planning Officer-UFPO, ensuring it incorporates relevant technical insights. The participants were equipped with advanced knowledge and targeted strategies to tackle the challenges associated with early marriage, thereby fostering healthier family dynamics and reinforcing the protection of children's rights within their communities.

**Output 2.2 and 2.3**

No progress has been made under this output result during this reporting period because activities have not started in 2024.

**Output 2.4:** *Mental health and psychological wellbeing program will be implemented.*

Eight (8) women have successfully completed a workshop focused on mental health and psychological well-being in the HC of Ukhiya. The participants demonstrated a marked improvement in their understanding of mental health issues. They learned effective strategies for mitigating mental stress and enhancing their overall well-being. This newfound knowledge not only benefits their personal health but also positively impacts their familial obligations and the broader community.

**Output 2.5** *Leadership, Mediation, and Communication Skills program will be implemented.*

No progress has been made under this output result during this reporting period because activities have not started in 2024.

## 5. Impact Story (1/2 page maximum)

### Threads of Leadership on a Young Woman's Path to Empowerment



Photo: Fatima showcased her Block Batik-designed saree as she received Block Batik training from RTMI. Now, she is selling her products in the community.2024 (Credit: Agrajattra)

Seventeen-year-old Fatima (alias), a young Rohingya woman living in the refugee camps of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, is the eldest of five siblings. She once lived a stable life in Maungdaw, Myanmar, till her world became upside down overnight in August 2017, when the military burned down neighboring villages, forcing her family to flee. After an arduous two-day journey on foot, they crossed into Bangladesh, leaving behind their home and everything she knew.

"My mother explained that financial struggles and inadequate rations left her with no choice but to consider my marriage", shared Fatima.

With her father's long absence, Fatima's family faced severe financial hardship. Food shortages and the struggle to meet daily needs were constant challenges. Like many other displaced girls, she was at risk of child marriage — an option her mother saw as inevitable for survival, but Fatima had a different vision for her future.



"This forum is not just about learning and empowering; it is also my most trusted and reliable place where I can share my issues", Fatima expressed.

In 2023, with the generous support of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) and in partnership with UN Women, Agrajattra launched the '100 Women Coalition Forum' under a program focused on socio-economic recovery, participation, and leadership of women and adolescent girls in forced displacement settings in Cox's Bazar. The initiative aims to empower women and girls from both Rohingya and host communities. Each forum consists of 20 members, aged 15 to 30, providing a safe space for women and girls. It serves as a learning and sharing platform, offering awareness sessions on gender equality, child marriage, domestic violence, and human trafficking, as well as livelihood skills training.

Fatima became an active member of the 'Tia Pakhi Women's & Adolescent Girls' Forum', where she found knowledge, solidarity, and strength.

Fatima participated in awareness sessions and learned about the harmful effects of child marriage. She realized that marriage at a young age would deprive her of education, independence, and the opportunity to support her family in a sustainable way. When her mother planned to marry her off due to financial struggles, Fatima turned to her forum for support.

Understanding the urgency of her situation, Agrajattra's field facilitators and project officers visited Fatima's home. They engaged in discussions with her mother and proposed an alternative: enrolling Fatima in a livelihood skill training program. With her mother's consent, she joined a five-day "Block Batik" training, where she learned to design and create intricate patterns on textiles such as sarees, bed sheets, and traditional garments.

"This training not only gave me skills but also a means of financial independence," said Fatima. She now earns approximately 3,000 BDT (26 USD) per month—an income that helps support her family while strengthening her confidence and resilience.

Beyond financial independence, Fatima has emerged as a gender advocate within her community. She regularly conducts awareness sessions, visiting households to educate other women and girls on their rights, the dangers of child marriage, and the importance of self-reliance. She has been transformed from a vulnerable adolescent facing forced marriage into a leader who empowers others.

"I want every girl to know that we have the right to make our own choices." Fatima shares. As a result of the WPHF-supported interventions, a total of 50,947 community members directly benefited from the humanitarian resilience-building and leadership initiatives implemented by six women-led organizations: AGRAJATTRA, Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS), Research, Training, and Management International (RTMI), RW Welfare Society (RWWS), Women Entrepreneur Association of Bangladesh (WEAB), and Women's Federation for World Peace, Bangladesh (WFWP-BD) in 2024. This included 38,195 individuals from Rohingya refugee camps (RRC) and 12,752 members from the host community (HC).

#### 6a. Knowledge Products and Communications/Visibility of Management Entity

In 2024, UN Women enhanced evidence-based programming through a few knowledge products focusing on WPHF projects.

1. Key results and lessons learned generated through three projects supported by the WPHF and implemented in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, from 2020-2022 are captured in a report and video documentary in 2024.

**Link:** [WPHF COVID-19 ERW Lesson Learnt Report](#)



#### 6a. Knowledge Products and Communications/Visibility of Management Entity

2. Photos in **Flicker**: UN Women, in partnership with RTM International, implemented a project named "Emergency Support for Socio-economic Recovery and Capacity Building to promote gender equality, women's empowerment, and GBV Awareness among the Rohingya population and the neighboring HC" in six camps and six HC in Cox's Bazar. This project is funded by the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), a UN Multi-donor Trust Fund. Through cooperative livelihood and self-reliance skills training, these women and adolescent girls are acquiring the skills and knowledge necessary to create better futures for themselves. They are transforming their lives and communities through training in tailoring and dressmaking, basic computer skills, entrepreneurship, GBV awareness, and basic literacy. Their journey is a testament to the strength and resilience of both the Rohingya and HC. These are their photos—a story of empowerment, transformation, and hope for a brighter future. An empowered woman can live a beautiful life anywhere in the world. Photos: Courtesy of RTM International.

**Link:** <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjBKV49>

#### 6b. Knowledge Products and Communications/Visibility of Implementing Partners

The WPHF grantees have successfully developed around 36 training modules across various projects, including areas such as soft skills enhancement, block and batik production, food processing, entrepreneurship development, gender-based violence (GBV) awareness, gender-responsive leadership, conflict resolution, and digital marketing, among others. Additionally, the grantees conducted baseline surveys and informal market assessments to gather pertinent data for the project. To promote their activities, they also created a series of social media posts on their organizational pages, some of which are linked herein.

1. [LINK AGRAJATTRA Project Stakeholder Meeting in the HC](#)
2. [LINK AGRAJATTRA 16 Days Activism](#)
3. [AGRAJATTRA 16 Days Activism 2](#)
4. [AGRAJATTRA IWD Event 2024](#)
5. [LINK WFWP-BD IGA Input Distribution](#)
6. [LINK WFWP-BD L-Hub Peer Learning Video](#)
7. [LINK WFWP-BD L-Hub Peer Learning Booklet Draft](#)

#### 7. Capacity Strengthening Activities by UN Country Office/Management Entity

##### *a) For Countries that have implemented Capacity Strengthening Projects with WPHF funding*

N/A

##### *b) Other countries' capacity strengthening initiatives that have benefited WPHF Partners*

In 2024, UN Women made significant progress in strengthening the capacities of humanitarian partners in Cox's Bazar for gender-responsive actions through targeted advocacy, training, and community outreach.

**Partner Capacity Building initiatives:** UN Women's program team executed a range of initiatives focused on enhancing program management, partnership development, and financial capacity-building tailored for WPHF grantees in 2024. These initiatives included training in monitoring and results-based reporting, as well as on gender-responsive communications and visibility. Additionally, the team emphasized gender-responsive procurement practices to ensure equitable opportunities within program implementation.

**The specific training activities facilitated by UN Women included:**

## 7. Capacity Strengthening Activities by UN Country Office/Management Entity

In October 2024, UN Women organized another two-day capacity-building Training on 'Project Management and PSEA' for women-led CSO partners under WPHF in coordination with the PSEA Network under ISCG, Cox's Bazar.



Figure 13: Joint project coordination meeting of six RP, 2024 (Credit: UN Women)

1. Training on Result Based Management (RBM) and Reporting, 21-22 Jan 2024.
2. Training on Accountability to Affected People (AAP), 30 April 2024. Here, 28 participants (W: 18; M: 8), including manager-level and project staff from WLOs, which led to significant improvements in understanding of AAP principles and how to apply this, demonstrated by the increased proportion of participants with "good" to "excellent" knowledge of AAP from 0% at the pre-training stage to 72% at the post-training stage.
3. Training on The Global Standards and Policy Commitment: Key Frameworks and Services, 30-31 Jan 2024.
4. Training on GBV in Emergencies (GBViE), 28-29 April 2024, facilitated by UN Women in collaboration with the GBV Sub-Sector Coordinator, bringing together 28 participants from different local WLOs (W: 25; M: 3) including WPHF grantees enhancing their skills in applying international standards on GBV in Emergencies within their GBV response activities, with post-training evaluations showing that 76% of participants achieved "good" to "excellent" knowledge levels, up from 32% in the pre-training survey;
5. Training on Result Management (RBM) and Reporting, Communications and Visibility, Gender, and Financial Management, 8-9 October 2024.
6. Audit Preparation Meeting on 10 April 2024

In addition, regular meetings were held bilaterally with partner organizations, and joint coordination meetings were periodically organized with the WPHF partners to enable greater learning and collaboration across organizations.

The Gender in Humanitarian Action Working Group (GiHA WG) continued to play a pivotal role in enhancing the gender mainstreaming capacities and skills of humanitarian actors across sectors to address the critical needs of Rohingya refugees and HC women and girls in Cox's Bazar. Contributing to an enhanced, visible role for local Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) led by women in the Rohingya humanitarian response, the agreement was reached on standing representation of four local WROs in the GiHA WG, in alignment with the policy priority placed on ensuring a substantive role for them in humanitarian responses by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). Consequently, four WROs were elected at a consultation workshop supported by UN Women to represent their peers in the GiHA WG. BNPS and RWWS have been selected as peers for other WROs since this consultation workshop in 2024. Furthermore, these WROs initiated plans to establish a Technical Working Group on Women's Leadership, reinforcing their strategic involvement in the Rohingya humanitarian response. With the engagement of the Inter-Sector Coordination Group, UN Women spearheaded consensus building to secure standing representation of local WROs and WLOs on the GiHA WG, compliant with the 2024 Gender Equality Policy (the previous version was endorsed in December 2017) and Accountability Framework of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. In September, UN Women supported a consultation for local WLOs and WROs to validate their commitment, vision, and agree on their representation in the GiHA WG. Altogether, 23

## 7. Capacity Strengthening Activities by UN Country Office/Management Entity

representatives (15 women, 8 men) from 18 local WROs led by women participated in the consultation, which resulted in the election of four WROs led by women to represent local WROs in the GiHA WG including representatives of BNPS and RWWS, following a competitive election process.

### **Webinar**

- Attending the WPHF Window for Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRDs) Information Session focused on Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka on August 14, 2024.
  - Participating in the Live Help Desk session in collaboration with the Women Human Rights Defenders Window on October 26, 2024.
- Attending the CSO-WPHF Dialogue Session on Monday, May 27, 2024.

### **WPHF L-Hub updates**

- WPHF L-HUB 2024 Monthly Updates shared by WPHF
- Global Peer Learning and Mentorship workshop on 4<sup>th</sup> Dec 2024 (online) where Women's Women's Federation for World Peace Bangladesh (WFWP) and Sukhi Manush (co-implementer WFWP) participated in a training on providing self-care to women affected crisis and forced displacement for CSOs and a peer exchange between all CSOs supported through WPHF L-HUB Mentorship Scheme from 7 countries.

## 8. L-HUB Grants (Peer Learning, Mentorship or Joint Advocacy Actions)<sup>13</sup>

### **WFWP-BD**

WFWP-BD in partnership with CSO Shukhi Manush implemented a series of workshops and training sessions as part of the WPHF Global learning Hub (L-HUB) Mentorship Scheme targeting WPHF CSO partners working with displaced women. The workshops and trainings focused on critical areas such as project development methodologies, strategic project design, monitoring, evaluation accountability and learning (MEAL), reporting protocols, effective communication strategies, policy formulation, visibility enhancement, and government engagement mechanisms.

The project has produced mutually beneficial results, fostering long-term impact and sustainability for both WFWP-BD and Shukhi Manush through enhancing their institutional capabilities and staff competencies, enabling 30 members of their personnel to operate more effectively within forcibly displaced populations. It has fostered a proficient partnership characterized by long-term professional relationships in the development sector, particularly within forcibly displaced communities. In total, 87 people engaged in the peer learning project (30 staff of both CSOs and 57 members of other entities and local communities).

Participants also engaged in discussions surrounding digital advocacy on social media platforms, risk management in project implementation, socio-economic recovery strategies, empowerment frameworks for displaced women, sustainable livelihood approaches, participatory decision-making processes, conflict prevention techniques, financial inclusion strategies, and entrepreneurship development tailored to the dynamics of the Rohingya crisis.

### **Outcomes 1 - Enhancement of Institutional capacity**

Both organizations have strengthened their institutional capacity through peer-to-peer learning and mentorship programs, developing sustainable and standardized internal operating procedures. This project has elevated their institutional competency towards programme development, facilitated by a workshop conducted by a

<sup>13</sup> For partners that have also been engaged in the Women Have Wings Awards, please use this section to report on the main results and activities completed as aligned with the Project Document.

national consultant and trainer, which positions them to compete for awards in the humanitarian and development sectors.

In addition to the policy and strategies, various working templates were created, including a Complaint Feedback Register, a Log Frame/Indicator, a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework, a Project-Level Risk Register, a Request for Quotation (RFQ), and Communication Strategies.

Through the learning programs organizational staff (19 staff) have identified knowledge gaps, acquired professional-level skills, learned the work framework, and understood the challenges, risk factors, and solutions associated with working in forcibly displaced communities. The project has made significant progress in boosting staff confidence and self-esteem. Participants have developed into proactive communicators and effective team members, learned socio-economic recovery action plans, and gained valuable knowledge in project management, audit compliance issues, PSEA (all project staff), Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning (MEAL), Complaint and Feedback Resolution Mechanism (CFRM), project impact, evaluation, and sustainability, leading to effective results. The core staff's competence levels in knowledge sharing, learning, and project management range from 60% to 80% on a scale of 100%.

The following are the key area of impacts:

1. **Capacity Building:** Both organizations have enhanced their overall capacity and developed the skills of their core staff (WFWP- 9 staff, Shukhi Manush -7 staff) to deliver services that support the development of youth, girls, and women during emergency crises.
2. **Networking and Communication:** This project has facilitated improved networking and communication between both organizations and their stakeholders, including NGO Platform, ISCG, community level women-led CSOs, other WPHF partners of UN Women, government line departments of education with whom Shukhi Manush works, etc.). This has helped create a secure and healthy professional environment for future collaboration and sustainable relationships.
3. **Shared Networks:** WFWP-BD boasts a wide network in Cox's Bazar, including in ISCG, NGO Platform, CIC offices in 4 RRC (camp 6, 15, 16, 22), HC, the RRC office, and local government liaison offices. Similarly, Shukhi Manush has an extensive network in both the camps and the HC of Cox's Bazar.
4. **Experienced Staff:** WFWP-BD employs professional staff (14 staff) with experience in working with displaced Rohingya youth, girls, and women in camps, while Shukhi Manush has similarly experienced personnel (five staff). Through peer-to-peer learning and mentorship programs, both CSOs have bridged knowledge gaps and enhanced their ideas, skills, and professional expertise.
5. **Joint Collaboration:** Both CSOs have supported each other and grown together on a professional level. They have initiated plans to collaborate on various activities addressing emergency or refugee crisis in the future.
6. **Professional Bonding:** The professional relationship between the two CSOs has strengthened, encouraging them to work individually and as a team. They are committed to prioritizing each other in future projects, fostering a strong professional bond that will lead to mutual recommendations for working in emergency situations within displaced communities. Both agencies are interested in developing joint proposals for the refugee context as well as other emergency responses in the country.

Despite some challenges, the partnership between WFWP-BD and Shukhi Manush will remain strong and is projected to continue to yield positive results. Their achievements will enable them to serve the forcibly displaced Rohingya community more. This collaboration serves as a valuable example for other CSOs, demonstrating that peer-to-peer learning and mentorship programs can be successful models to follow.



**Additional funding was mobilized (peer learning & mentorship funding for institutional development in 2024).**

#### AGRAJATTRA

AGRAJATTRA, currently a grantee of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), has been selected to spearhead a new project under the L-HUB 2024 Peer learning Awards set to launch in 2024 for implementation in 2025. This is for a grant allocation of \$8,000, designated for the initiation of a peer learning initiative centred on the principle of solidarity with the aim to facilitate the exchange of experiences and knowledge with another CSO.

| 9. Risks and Mitigation   |   |  |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Risk Area</b> (contextual, programmatic, institutionally, briefly describe)  | <b>Risk Level</b><br>4=Very High<br>3=High<br>2=Medium<br>1=Low | <b>Likelihood</b><br>5=Very High<br>4=Likely<br>3=Possible<br>2=Unlikely<br>1=Rare | <b>Impact</b><br>5=Extreme<br>4=Major<br>3=Moderate<br>2=Minor<br>1=Insignificant | <b>Mitigation</b><br>Mitigating measures undertaken during the reporting period to address the risk   |  |
| Alterations in the political dynamics or civil unrest stemming from socio-political challenges could significantly affect UN Women's capacity to execute its mandate for advancing gender equality within the context of the Rohingya refugee humanitarian crisis in Cox's Bazar. | 4   | 4  | 4   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhance collaboration with humanitarian partners to unify messaging that promotes women's participation, representation, and leadership in civic engagement and public affairs. This advocacy involved the Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC), law enforcement agencies, and relevant government stakeholders, particularly within the context of Cox's Bazar.</li> <li>2. Provide targeted support to local women-led and women's rights Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to bolster their initiatives focused on gender equity and women's leadership.</li> <li>3. Identify and capitalize on funding opportunities for pioneering initiatives that strengthen collaborations with Women-Led Organizations (WLOs) and Women's Rights Organizations (WROs). Emphasize projects that promote women's engagement, representation, and leadership within these networks, ensuring they are tailored to enhance systemic support and capacity-building for these entities.</li> </ol> |  |
| Extended periods of severe weather conditions that hinder operations or fulfilment of the program: such as cyclones, flash floods, and fire incidents, particularly in refugee camp environments and other potential hazards.   | 3   | 4  | 4   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitor meteorological conditions in real-time and collaborate with the Area Security Management Team (ASMT), Operations Management Team (OMT), and the Emergency Response Preparedness Working</li> </ol>  |  |

| 9. Risks and Mitigation  |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
|  |   |   |   | <p>Group. Send updated information to partners.</p> <p>2. Ensure that all UN Women staff are aware of contingency plans, business continuity plans, and emergency preparedness plans (and structural limitations). "Coordinate with RPs and guide UN Women Gender Volunteers to implement continuous emergency preparedness measures, including dissemination of early warning messages, alerts and advisories.</p> <p>3. Engage closely with other UN Agencies to ensure that humanitarian response funding adopts a humanitarian-development nexus approach for sustained support to women and girls.</p> <p>4. Maintain close relationships and engagement with the Disaster and Emergency Response Working Group (the LCG group for Disaster Risk Management) under MoDMR.</p>  |
| Challenges in securing long-term, flexible funding versus short-term smaller project funding and/or limited channels for mobilizing sustained interest for increased resourcing impact resource availability and/or delivery of programmes in Cox's Bazar. | 4 | 5 | 5 | <p>1. Regularly engage with key development partners and donors (e.g., provide annual updates, host meetings on the importance of GE, participate in donor events, follow up bilaterally with donors interested in funding UN Women's work, etc.).</p> <p>2. Implement the Resource Mobilization and Partnership Strategy and review it annually. Finalize the annex on Cox's Bazar in the Resource Mobilization and Partnership Strategy within 2024. Complement this with thematic strategies.</p> <p>3. Localization and capacity-building of WLOs/WROs on resource mobilization.</p> <p>4. Advocacy through GiHA, ISCG and other platforms focusing the localization agenda.</p> <p>5. Increase the visibility of UN Women's and partners' efforts and disseminate them to the broader community.</p> <p>6. Build on the Functional Analysis conducted in 2023 focused on Cox's Bazar (led by HQ) to inform the streamlining and rationalization processes in a protracted crisis in line with "Principles and Core Commitments." Finalize an "Operational Workplan" to define the operational principles of UN Women's humanitarian action and minimum coordination and programmatic offers in all</p> |

| 9. Risks and Mitigation  |   |   |   |  |
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|  |   |   |   | <p>humanitarian contexts where UN Women has a presence.</p> <p>7. Continue discussions with RO/HQ Humanitarian Division in Geneva on resource mobilization for the Rohingya refugee response.</p>  |
| <p>Ineffective management of partnership agreements, funds and commitments and/or lack of adequate reporting could negatively impact relationships and future resource mobilization efforts of WLOs/WROs.</p>                    | 3 | 3 | 3 | <p>1. Conduct partner orientation at the beginning of the projects, focusing on partnership clauses, financial management, result-based reporting, communications and visibility, procurement, PSEA, fraud awareness, etc.</p> <p>2. Monitor partnership agreement deadlines and remind partners accordingly by ensuring all information, including financial management, is accurate and outcome/output-oriented.</p> <p>3. Undertake quality assurance of reports before submitting. Seek clarification from partners if needed. Organize briefing sessions for staff to share common observations on report challenges, and feedback to improve donor reporting. Organize results-based management (RBM) and reporting refresher sessions for partner staff.</p> <p>4. Regularly update donors on contextual changes and their impact on programme implementation, documented in minutes and donor reports, as relevant. Use fast-track procedures when relevant, including for humanitarian funding.</p> <p>5. Conduct regular partner and activity implementation and report back with feedback or action taken.</p> <p>6. Assist partners in developing standard policies in accordance with the RBCA (risk-base capacity assessment).</p> |
| <p>The Joint Response Plan (JRP) is experiencing declines in funding, which presents challenges for gender-responsive programs within the humanitarian-development nexus, particularly during the ongoing protracted crisis.</p> | 4 | 4 | 4 | <p>1. Engage with other UN Agencies/partners on programmatic challenges and identify areas/entry points for reprogramming to support affected communities, focusing on women, girls and gender-diverse groups, using a twin-track approach (mainstreaming and targeted interventions).</p> <p>2. Continued focus on humanitarian assistance in the context of the Rohingya refugee crisis, maintaining a diversified funding base to ensure continuity of gender equality programming.</p> <p>3. Continue to support women's organizations, including WROs/WLOs, in advocating for and</p>   |

| 9. Risks and Mitigation  |   |   |   |   |
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|  |   |   |   | <i>working on gender mainstreaming in DRR and climate change actions.</i> |
| 10. Delays and Adaptations/Revisions   |   |   |   |   |
| N/A  |   |   |   |   |
| 11. Lessons Learned <sup>14</sup>  |   |   |   |   |
| Identify Challenge/Describe  | What are the factors/reasons contributing to this challenge?  | How was the challenge addressed? What was done differently, or what will be done to address the challenge?  | Key Lesson Learned  |   |
| The border security dynamics between Myanmar and Bangladesh have become increasingly complex   | This situation highlights the persistent difficulties associated with law enforcement, humanitarian assistance, and interagency collaboration in addressing border security and the welfare of displaced communities. These have significantly impacted program implementation in Cox's Bazar.  | The national government oversees this matter, while the UN facilitates collaboration and coordination on a global scale.  | To strengthen operational synergy, it is essential to enhance collaboration between UN Women, the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), the Area Security Management Team (ASMT), and local law enforcement agencies. This coordination should include a robust mechanism for real-time monitoring of evolving situations, leveraging additional information channels to facilitate timely updates. Security protocols and other relevant measures must be implemented in accordance with these insights. |   |
| Recent upticks in firearm-related incidents within the Rohingya refugee camps have significantly heightened security concerns. This escalation disrupts the movement of humanitarian staff and impedes operational activities within the community, raising the potential for spontaneous gunfights to occur in various locations at any time. | In the Rohingya refugee communities, there are ongoing conflicts between organized groups driven by differing agendas and ideologies. These internal confrontations highlight the complexities of power struggles and resource competition within these groups, reflecting broader regional dynamics and the precariousness of the refugee situation. | <p>The Armed Police Battalion (APBn) is the principal law enforcement agency tasked with managing security operations within refugee camps. Its responsibilities are executed in the field, where it implements strategies to ensure the safety and order of the camp environment.</p> <p>In the aftermath of the nationwide civil unrest during July and August 2024, the Armed Police Battalion (APBn) was temporarily withdrawn from operational camps for several</p> | Current and prospective grantees will be required to incorporate firearm-related incidents as potential risks within the risk matrix of their proposals submitted to UN Women. They are encouraged to adhere to the proposed risk mitigation strategies should such incidents occur in the future.  |   |

<sup>14</sup> A lesson learned is a systematic reflection of challenges (or successes) that have occurred during the reporting period which has resulted in a change, adaption, or improvement as a result of the challenge, or a planned change or adaptation in the future.



| 11. Lessons Learned <sup>14</sup>   |  |  |   |
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|   |  | days. This withdrawal created an environment of heightened concern among humanitarian staff, exacerbating the already precarious situation during that period.   |   |
| Psychosocial trauma during and after the nation-wide civil unrest in mid-2024 among UN Women and partner staff  | The security situation has deteriorated significantly, leading to a nationwide internet outage that lasted for several days. Mobile network disruptions occurred intermittently, affecting service for hours on multiple days. These communication breakdowns, coupled with the loss of family, relatives, and acquaintances, have resulted in substantial psychological trauma among staff members who were immobilized in Cox's Bazar due to movement restrictions imposed from their duty stations. | UN Women facilitated a series of mental health and wellbeing sessions led by specialized psychologists, catering to both individual and team settings for its staff. Additionally, two distinct psychological support sessions were conducted for personnel from partner organizations in Bangladesh, targeting trauma reduction through expert-led strategies.  | During emergencies, prioritizing mental health and wellbeing is crucial. UN Women to emphasize the implementation of comprehensive wellbeing measures for both its staff and partner organizations. This approach has proven highly effective and has received positive feedback, particularly from partner organizations that support individuals separated from family members in crisis scenarios.   |
| Government restrictions to CSOs with no NGOAB certifications to work in the Rohingya refugee crisis   | Two current grantees, WEAB and WFWP, possess legal registrations but have not obtained the required NGOAB certificates, which are newly mandated for operations in Cox's Bazar refugee response by the government. Consequently, these organizations were unable to initiate their activities in 2023, and by April-May 2024, they had made limited advancements in program implementation.  | UN Women maintained strong coordination with the relevant ministry via its country office and the UN Resident Coordinator's office in Bangladesh.<br><br>With technical assistance, these partners successfully applied for registration with the NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB). This application facilitated their acquisition of governmental authorization to operate, contingent upon the timely submission of requisite documentation. | In the context of Cox's Bazar, it is essential for organizations to possess a valid NGOAB registration, as this will be a prerequisite for engagement with UN Women in forthcoming funding cycles. This stipulation will be incorporated into the Call for Proposals and subsequent to the information sessions held with prospective organizations, the focus will be on initiatives specifically related to the operations involving refugees in Cox's Bazar. |
| The limited program and financial management capabilities of small Women-Led Organizations (WLOs) can lead to inefficiencies in project execution, thereby increasing the potential for fraud and compliance risks. | The inefficiencies observed among the partners stem from their constrained project and financial management capabilities. Furthermore, deficiencies in quality policies, the implications of those policies, and vulnerabilities in monitoring and internal  | UN Women conducts regular and periodic training sessions, meetings, and field visits to enhance the capacity of programmatic and financial operations. This includes thoroughly assessing existing policies and management strategies to identify inefficiencies and formulate new, effective  | It's essential to conduct targeted orientation sessions, comprehensive training programs, strategic partnership, and regular field visits to continue the ongoing capacity-building initiatives with grantees.  |

| 11. Lessons Learned <sup>14</sup>   |  |   |  |
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|   | control systems constitute the primary factors contributing to these challenges.   | policies. Additionally, UN Women facilitates ongoing information dissemination and collaboration with robust partners and sectors, such as the NGO Platform and the PSEA Network, to strengthen capacities within civil society organizations (CSOs) specifically for developing PSEA and other policies.   | Regular monitoring visits is crucial for collecting valuable data for results reporting. This would facilitate meaningful dialogue with partners, ensuring they are well-informed and aligned with our collective goals.   |
| Lack of dedicated capacity-building and monitoring funding for partners from WPHF.  | UN Women Bangladesh did not obtain any supplementary funding for capacity-building and monitoring from the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF). As a result, effective capacity-building initiatives for responsible parties (RPs) are lacking, given that this office relies solely on non-core donor funding. | UN Women recommended that responsible parties (RPs) allocate a shared budget for program orientation, meetings, and training sessions. Additionally, they should organize joint initiatives, with UN Women playing a facilitative role in capacity-building efforts. UN Women integrated the staff involved in these RPs into various other donor-funded training programmes to enhance their engagement and promote experiential learning opportunities. | Targeted budget allocations for capacity-building initiatives and program monitoring is critical to ensure effective implementation of the program.<br><br>UN Women must prioritize the allocation of budgets within the upcoming program cycle through effective collaboration with the WPHF Secretariat. |
| 12. Innovations and Best Practices <sup>15</sup>  |  |   |  |
| <p>In 2024, establishing robust synergies among the six Civil Society Organization (CSO) grantees proved to be highly effective. The grantees actively exchanged insights regarding their experiences, challenges, and accomplishments. A collaborative budgeting approach was implemented for both program orientation and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) trainings, facilitating joint training sessions that not only optimized costs but also enhanced the learning experience for all participants from the six CSOs. Additionally, six coordinated monthly meetings were organized, bringing together key program staff from UN Women and partner organizations to ensure alignment and foster collaborative efforts in program execution.</p> <p>Through robust collaboration and strategic networking facilitated by UN Women, WFPW-BD has successfully formulated a new Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) tailored for refugee contexts, set to be implemented in 2025.</p> <p>BNPS successfully established bank accounts with local financial institutions for 130 women participating in the project. This initiative enabled these beneficiaries to receive their first cash grants for income-generating activities (IGA) through these accounts, thereby playing a crucial role in enhancing their socio-economic empowerment within the community. Additionally, WFPW-BD facilitated the opening of bank accounts for 20 women, ensuring they have access to essential banking services for future financial transactions. Furthermore, seven women have been registered on the government lists for widow allowances, the Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) program, disability allowances, and maternity benefits facilitated by AGRAJATTRA as part of the project.</p> |  |   |  |

<sup>15</sup> A best practice is strategy, approach, technique, or process that has proven to work well and deemed to be effective or appropriate for addressing a problem based on experience, evaluation or in comparison to other practices, and is therefore recommended as a model. It is also a practice that has been tested and validated and has potential to be replicated and there is value in sharing with others working in similar contexts, sectors, or with similar target groups.

### 13. Auditing and Financial Management

BDO LLP, acting under the auspices of the UN Board of Auditors (UN BOA), conducted an audit of the project expenditures reported by AGRAJATTRA, BNPS, and RTMI for the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) covering the period from January 1 to December 31, 2023, in the year 2024. The audit was performed in accordance with the terms specified in the relevant Project Cooperation Agreements (PCAs), Letters of Agreement (LOAs), Partner Agreements (PAs), and associated project documentation.

In their assessment, BDO LLP concluded that the expenditures reported are a fair representation of the financial activities during the period, in all material aspects. The audit findings confirmed that the reported amounts are consistent with UN Women's accounting policies, comply with the approved project budgets and objectives, adhere to the relevant regulations set forth by UN Women, and are substantiated by adequately approved vouchers and supporting documentation.

The audit, finalized on 26 May 2024, was executed in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). BDO LLP upheld the IESBA Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants, ensuring independence and fulfilling all relevant ethical responsibilities. The audit process involved a thorough risk assessment for material misstatements, an evaluation of internal controls pertinent to the audit's scope, and ongoing communication with RP's management about the audit's scope, timing, and findings. While the audit provided reasonable assurance, it does not inherently guarantee the identification of all material misstatements. BDO LLP ultimately issued an "Unqualified" opinion for these entities.

Additionally, the UN Women Internal Audit for 2023, which was carried out in 2024, audited three WPHF partner organizations, namely BNPS, WFWP-BD, and RTMI. The office received a "Satisfactory" rating from the audit.

### 14. Next Steps and Priority Actions

1. **Women-led CSO capacity-building:** UN Women will continue capacity-building initiatives with women-led civil society organizations (CSOs), focusing on critical areas such as policy formulation and its implications, financial and programmatic management, results-oriented reporting, and strategic communications and visibility. These efforts will be executed through a series of targeted training sessions, workshops, and coordination meetings to enhance organizational effectiveness and impact.
2. **Strengthen peer-learning mechanism through effective coordination:** The UN Women will maintain a collaborative framework among the existing six Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) grantees throughout the program's duration, which is set to conclude in 2025. This framework will include joint monthly coordination meetings, collaborative field visits, and exchanging essential documents, training manuals, and guidelines. For example, AGRAJATTRA developed a Complaint Feedback Response Mechanism Guideline, which was shared with other partners for usage with acknowledgement to AGRAJATTRA. Any new grantees incorporated within the designated timeline will also be included in this collaborative approach. The peer to peer community support programme would be emphasized in next cycle of the WPHF programme.
3. **Enhance monitoring of programme partners:** UN Women will continue to monitor partners' field activities through field visits, physical asset verifications, and meetings in 2025 providing constructive feedback for the identified gaps during the implementation and technical support and guidance to end-line survey questionnaires and reports.
4. **JRP reporting for LSDS:** UN Women is a strategic partner within the Livelihood and Skill Development Sector (LSDS) for the Joint Response Plan (JRP) 2025-26 under the Inter Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) in the Rohingya Response Programme in Cox's Bazar. This collaboration includes components from the current Women

#### 14. Next Steps and Priority Actions

Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF) livelihoods initiative. In 2025, UN Women will provide the necessary livelihood data and comprehensive reports to the LSDS as part of this partnership.

5. **Fund analysis for grantees:** The Regular Cycle program requires a comprehensive funding analysis, primarily due to fluctuations in the USD conversion rate and the residual balance from the previously closed grantee, RTMI, for the fiscal year 2024. UN Women will liaise with WPHF to address these financial considerations appropriately.

6. **Localization: Advocacy for women-led CSOs in crisis management:** UN Women is actively advocating for women-led civil society organizations (CSOs) involved in the refugee response in Cox's Bazar. Through its Gender in Humanitarian Action (GiHA) initiative, which serves as a technical lead under the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG), UN Women is conducting a comprehensive mapping of women-led organizations (WLOs) in the region, following the IASC definition. GiHA aims to enhance the capacity of these WLOs and facilitate networking among humanitarian actors to identify funding opportunities and potential areas of collaboration. This aligns with the WPHF objectives focused on the capacity-building of WLOs. Moving forward, UN Women will maintain its commitment to localization in its next programming cycle by prioritizing partnerships with WLOs.

7. **Disability inclusion and diversity:** UN Women emphasizes the disability and diversity inclusions in programme designs and implementation overall. Moving forward with WPHF and other funding, UN Women will orient RP's to emphasize this on their proposals and implementation accordingly to ensure LNOB.

8. **Resource mobilization with WPHF for next-cycle programme management:** As previously outlined in discussions with WPHF, UN Women will coordinate with the WPHF Secretariat to enhance resource mobilization efforts for Climate Security funding and to advance the Regional Myanmar Response Programme.

9. **Coordination strengthens with the WPHF National Steering Committee-NSC:** UN Women serves as the Member Secretary of the National Steering Committee (NSC), which was established in 2022 to oversee the management of the WPHF Regular Cycle funding for the period of 2022-2025. The NSC is co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh and the Secretary of the Ministry of Disaster Management of the Bangladesh government. During the most recent NSC meeting on 1 December 2023, it was recommended that the committee meet biannually, a proposal that was unanimously agreed upon by UN Women and the other committee members. The upcoming round of WPHF funding, currently under review, will also be facilitated through the NSC's oversight.



## ANNEX A: Summary of WPHF Results (by Indicator)

For each WPHF Outcome which is relevant to CSOs supported during the reporting year, report against the Impact Level (WPHF Outcome) Indicator.

Note for how many CSOs this is relevant (Column 2) and provide a very brief summary the results (Column 3), presenting both the numeric value and summary. If an outcome is not relevant to your country, enter N/A in both CSO and summary columns.

| WPHF Indicator   | Relevant for How Many CSOs (number) | Summary Result (1 short paragraph)  |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Outcome 6: Peacebuilding and Recovery</b>   |                                     |   |
| 6.1 Number/Types of plans and/or policies in peacebuilding contexts influenced by women or civil society organizations | 1 (WFWP-BD)                         | Two of the WPHF grantees, BNPS and RWWS, were elected in 2024 to represent local WROs on the GiHA WG, in which capacity they contributed to GiHA WG discussions and contributions to the JRP 2025-2026 to ensure more systematic gender mainstreaming through a twin track approach, ensuring gender responsiveness and pursuing a gender transformative approach across sectors.   |
| 6.2 Number/Percentage of women with increased agency as a result of economic productive resources                      | 3 (BNPS, RTMI, WFWP-BD)             | 242 women (97 women in RC and 145 women in the HC) started new income-generation activities (IGAs) on different IGA trades and 120 women in home gardening (48 women in RC and 72 women in the HC) aiming at economic resilience and community development.   |
| 6.3 Number/Percentage of women participating in political and decision-making processes                                | 3 (AGRAJATTRA, BNPS, RWWS)          | Through the leadership development initiatives, cumulatively, 651 women and girls from the Rohingya refugee (259 women and 36 girls) and host community (313 women and 43 girls) significantly advanced their leadership capabilities in 2024. Against increased insecurities, gender-based violence (GBV) incidents, and the arrival of tens of thousands of Rohingya fleeing the armed conflict in Myanmar, the self-mobilization of Rohingya women to assert their rights and leadership demonstrated the most progress. Continued prioritization by the interim Government of non-integration and repatriation, barring Rohingya from pursuit of formal work and maintaining dependency on declining aid, heightened stress and risks for exploitation and abuse, especially among women. Amid men's forced recruitment, Rohingya women exercised agency and leadership, many assuming sole responsibility for their families, some organizing into groups to protect their camps from violent groups. A high number of women pursued protection and empowerment services despite mobility restrictions. By positioning women and young women as pivotal agents of social change, the program enhances their leadership |

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|  | <p>skills and fosters advocacy for GBV prevention. Consequently, this approach has initiated immediate effects while paving the way for sustained progress in gender equity and the deconstruction of entrenched harmful social norms. Furthermore, leadership development and decision-making processes enhances their self-confidence and empowers them to advocate for their own welfare and that of their peers in areas of household, community and service providers. Additionally, it aims to strengthen women's ability to understand power dynamics within host communities and refugee camp governance structures, thereby facilitating their meaningful contributions to social cohesion initiatives and conflict resolution at household and community level.</p> |
|--|---|