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**UN Sri lanka sdg multi-partner trust fund**

**MPTF OFfice GENERIC final programme[[1]](#footnote-2) NARRATIVE report**

**REPORTING PERIOD: from *August 2020* to *December 2020***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Programme Title & Project Number | |  | Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results[[2]](#footnote-3) | |
| * Programme Title: Assisting vulnerable women-headed households affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting curfew within the Jaffna and Kilinochchi districts. * Programme Number *(if applicable) :* * MPTF Office Project Reference Number:[[3]](#footnote-4) 123976 | | *Country/Region:* Sri Lanka | |
| *Priority area/ strategic results:*    UN Advisory Paper: Immediate Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19 in Sri Lanka - Strategic Priority #3:  Economic Recovery: Protecting Jobs, Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) and Informal Economy Workers | |
| Participating Organization(s) | |  | Implementing Partners | |
| * UN Women | | * Viluthu – Centre for Human Resources Development | |
| Programme/Project Cost (US$) | |  | Programme Duration | |
| Total approved budget as per project document: $ 51,000.00  MPTF /JP Contribution[[4]](#footnote-5):   * *UN Women :* $ 51,000.00 |  |  | Overall Duration *(months):* 4 months  Start Date[[5]](#footnote-6): 13.08.2020 |  |
| Agency Contribution   * *by Agency (if applicable) :* N/A |  |  | Original End Date*[[6]](#footnote-7)*: 31.12.2020 |  |
| Government Contribution  *(if applicable) : N/A* |  |  | Actual End date[[7]](#footnote-8): 31.12.2020  Have agency(ies) operationally closed the Programme in its(their) system? | Yes No |
| Other Contributions (donors)  *(if applicable) :* N/A |  |  | Expected Financial Closure date[[8]](#footnote-9): 30.12.2021 |  |
| TOTAL: USD 51,000 |  |  |  |  |
| Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval. | |  | Report Submitted By | |
| Evaluation Completed  Yes No Date: *dd.mm.yyyy- N/A*  Evaluation Report - Attached  Yes No Date: *dd.mm.yyyy – N/A* | | * Name: Prashani Dias * Title: Programme Analyst/Country Focal Point a.i. * Participating Organization (Lead): UN Women Sri Lanka * Email address: prashani.dias@unwomen.org | |

# List of Abbreviations and Acronyms:

* **CBOs** Community Based Organizations
* **COVID-19** novel coronavirus disease outbreak in 2019
* **GDP** Gross Domestic Product
* **SGBV** Sexual and Gender Based Violence
* **UN** United Nations
* **UN Women** United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
* **UNICEF** United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
* **WHHs** women-headed households
* **WHO** World Health Organization

**List of Annexures:**

* **Annex 01** Case Stories
* **Annex 02** Success Stories
* **Annex 03** Photographs
* **Annex 04** COVID-19 Awareness Leaflet
* **Annex 05** Banners
* **Annex 06** Communications update

# FINAL PROGRAMME REPORT FORMAT

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

* In ½ to 1 page, summarise the most important achievements of Programme during the reporting period and key elements from your detailed report below. Highlight in the summary, the elements of the main report that you consider to be the most critical to be included in the MPTF Office Consolidated Annual Report.

As the COVID-19 pandemic tightened its grip on Sri Lanka, the existing socio-economic inequalities widened and women were disproportionately affected, particularly women headed households (WHH) from previously conflict affected areas. Sri Lanka saw an increase in the number of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) cases being reported along with an increase in care burdens, economic hardships and heightened vulnerabilities as a result of prolonged lockdowns and mobility restrictions. At a time when the Sri Lankan economy was starting to recover from the impact of the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks in 2019, the pandemic hit three main industries of foreign exchange earnings: tea production, garment exports, and migrant workers’ remittance where 70-90% of the workforce are women. Overall, the impact on the informal sector – where most women are engaged – has been severe.

With the generous support of the Government of Australia, UN Women in partnership with a district-level partner - Viluthu - provided economic stimulus packages to beneficiaries in the districts of Kilinochchi and Jaffna, which had been affected by the conflict. Accordingly, 1,306 women (including Female Heads of Households) who were severely impacted socio-economically due to COVID-19, were able to support their families through the emergency relief packages provided by UN Women. This emergency-relief initiative supported women in dire situations such as daily income earners compounded by economic hardships. The relief packages were accompanied with awareness material, including details of organisations providing services to survivors of SGBV; and COVID-19 health and safety regulations in line with WHO, UNICEF and the national Gazette. The distribution of awareness-raising material in local languages was well received by the beneficiaries as the availability of such information was timely and crucial to cope within a pandemic context. Through effective coordination with government officials, local communities and suppliers amidst a restricted environment, the project exceeded the original target of 992 vulnerable beneficiaries by reaching a total of 1,306 such beneficiaries.

The project took a participatory and inclusive approach in distributing the economic stimulus packages. Notably, aside from providing such households with the necessities and resources which prevented a decline to extreme levels of poverty, the selection of beneficiaries was unique in that it enabled women’s meaningful engagement and leadership in crisis response. Women community leaders played an active role by agreeing upon criteria for the identification of prospective beneficiaries from their communities as well as mobilizing their informal networks to identify and reach the most vulnerable households. This provided valuable recognition and respect for women leaders having led this relief process in their villages ensuring transparency, and relationship-building among vulnerable women, women leaders and local public officials who supported this relief effort. Further, the involved women leaders have improved their leadership capacity as decision makers and were able to overcome the pressures exerted by traditional male community leaders.

There is improved coordination between local officials and informal community-based organisations or networks, along with improved awareness among local officials on the many sub-sets of the population who are vulnerable and not reached by government funded programmes. The initiative was also unique in its design as it fully targeted and reached a variety of vulnerable female heads of households such as transgender women, female ex-combatants, older single women (without dependents), women with disabilities, and women living in temporary and insecure housing as a result of the conflict, who have otherwise been marginalized in State-sponsored relief efforts, due to the limited social protection systems existing in the country. Notably, the intervention’s impact went beyond the traditional provision of emergency assistance, as it supported transgender women (as single individuals heading a household), to be recognized as prospective beneficiaries of future government services and programmes.

Additionally, the provision of such economic stimulus packages enabled UN Women, to continue to positively engage with beneficiaries on project-related interventions, thus solidifying a rapport with a community of women, while creating an entry point for other interventions.

# Purpose

* Provide a brief introduction to the programme/ project *(one paragraph)*.

Although curfews were lifted intermittently in the Northern Province, restrictions on physical gatherings and inter-district travel severely affected livelihoods of many, particularly daily wage earners and women who faced multiple challenges in accessing economic opportunities with increasing debt burdens. In addition to the struggles of isolation, these added burdens entrapped women further in already vulnerable circumstances, such as female heads of households and women engaged in informal employment, in a cycle of poverty. The closure and/or suspension of markets and modes of public transport and limited social protection systems in response to COVID-19, further exacerbated these challenges. Due to the pandemic’s widespread nature across socio-economic boundaries, a significant portion of Sri Lanka’s foreign assistance was directed towards testing capabilities and the provision of protective equipment. As a result, the most vulnerable Sri Lankan communities with no income, with high debt burdens, with limited access to basic necessities, who are isolated from urban centers and have limited infrastructure to be connected to vital services, did not receive the same attention. Often due to shortcomings in selection of beneficiaries and limitations in systems and resources, the most vulnerable communities fall outside the purview of government relief and response programmes. Within this context, the emergency relief provided to those affected by the COVID-19 pandemic – particularly the most vulnerable – was a timely and necessary intervention.

UN Women received generous support from the Government of Australia for a proposal drafted in-line with the UN Advisory Paper titled: ‘Immediate Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19 in Sri Lanka’. In partnership with a district level implementing partner, Viluthu, and with the objective of reducing care burdens and addressing immediate needs, the project provided economic stimulus packages to beneficiaries in the districts of Kilinochchi and Jaffna, who had been affected by the pandemic.

* Provide the main objectives and expected outcomes of the programme in relation to the appropriate **Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) and project document (if applicable) or Annual Work Plans (AWPs) over the duration of the project**.

The project directly responded to the findings and recommendations set out in the “UN Advisory Paper: Immediate Socio-Economic Response to COVID-19 in Sri Lanka”. In particular, it addressed Strategic Priority #3: “Economic Recovery: Protecting Jobs, Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) and Informal Economy Workers”.

The project focused on achieving the following results:

* Reducing burdens of sourcing food in vulnerable communities for the upcoming month (following curfew and lockdowns), making it possible for them to cover other costs incurred with any income earned or to address debts so that they do not get into further debt traps.
* Addressing nutrition concerns in women and children (dependents).
* Addresses immediate needs concerning shortage of food and financial resources for the same beneficiaries.

The project worked towards the following Outcome and Output:

Outcome 4.2: Empowered women-headed households (including military and war widows) have sustainable livelihoods, and access social support services with dignity. (This Outcome is from UN Women’s Annual Work Plan for 2020.)

Output 4.2.4: Vulnerable women-headed households are supported during the COVID-19 pandemic, to reduce care burdens and address immediate needs concerning shortage of food and financial resources.

# Assessment of Programme Results

* This section is the **most important in the Report** and particular attention should be given to reporting on **results / and changes** that have taken place rather than on activities. It has three parts to help capture this information in different ways (i. Narrative section; ii. Indicator based performance assessment; iii. Evaluation & Lessons learned; and iv. A specific story).

**Narrative reporting on results:** From January to December 2013, respond to the guiding questions, indicated below to provide a narrative summary of the results achieved. The aim here is to tell the **story of change** that your Programme has achieved over its entire duration. Make reference to the implementation mechanism utilized and key partnerships.

* **Outcomes:** Outcomes are the strategic, higher level of change that your Programme is aiming to contribute towards. Provide a summary of progress made by the Programme in relation to **planned outcomes from the Project Document / AWPs,** with reference to the relevant indicator(s) in these documents. Describe if final targets were achieved, or explain any variance in achieved versus planned results. Explain the overall contribution of the programme to the Strategy Planning Framework or other strategic documents as relevant, e.g.: MDGs, National Priorities, UNDAF outcomes, etc. Explain who the main beneficiaries were. Highlight any institutional and/ or behavioural changes amongst beneficiaries at the outcome level.

With the generous support from the Government of Australia, 1,306 vulnerable women-headed households in the districts of Jaffna and Kilinochchi were more resilient to withstand the adverse socio-economic impacts brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, WHH were already vulnerable, facing economic and other insecurities, often having to carry a double burden of caring for their children and elderly dependents, while also responsible for generating an income. In the midst of a public health crisis as posed by COVID-19, they were disproportionately impacted, as lockdown measures resulted in the inability to source food or other necessities, lack of access to economic opportunities given that public fairs, markets and other income-generating opportunities were likewise closed. Many such households are already indebted, and the lack of income further constrained the ability of households to withstand such pressures.

Further, lockdown measures leading to confinement at homes has correlated with an increase in reports of domestic violence, with survivors of domestic violence being unable to access support through regular channels. The potential for sexual bribery and other forms of violence and harassment by those in a position of power or authority (such as debt collectors or those involved in provision of relief efforts) is also higher in such crisis situations. It was envisaged that emergency relief packages carried the potential to act an effective prevention measure against violence faced by women and girls, including sexual bribery, as it would enable women to become economically resilient and reduce their susceptibility to such violence.

The project also resulted in women community leaders being meaningfully engaged in crisis response and mobilising the support of communities and informal networks in identifying the most vulnerable households and their needs. Community women leaders have improved their leadership capacity as decision makers and were able to overcome the pressures exerted by traditional male leaders through the capacity building sessions and community discussions that the project conducted to engage them.

Furthermore, it also resulted in the earning of recognition and respect for women leaders in their villages, as they ensured a transparent, and participatory approach in beneficiary identification, selection and distribution of the relief efforts, and strengthened relationships and coordination among vulnerable women, women leaders, and local officials. As such, the project also served to better capacitate these community leaders and local officials to respond to and navigate future crises.

Aligned with the principle of ‘leaving no one behind’, the project also provided women who had not previously engaged in community-based organizations or networks to engage in such mechanisms, which could prove useful in accessing services and resources and act as a support system in times of crisis. For instance, transgender persons (also beneficiaries of this project) affected by intersecting forms of discrimination and stigma and faced with discriminatory laws, lack of information and services in Sri Lanka have had limited access to community-based interventions. A catalytic change brought about by this project is the recognition awarded to transgender women as prospective beneficiaries for services of the government, as this was the first large scale relief distribution initiative that recognised the transgender community. As they were unwilling to disclose their identities to the wider community due to fears of backlash/stigmatisation, the authentication of the beneficiary list was directly initiated by the District Secretary in Jaffna. This opportunity was also utilized to sensitize government stakeholders on the numerous challenges encountered by transgender persons, which encouraged the District Secretary to consider the group for future government benefits.

* **Outputs:** Outputs are the more immediate results that your Programme is responsible for achieving. Report on the key outputs achieved over the duration of the Programme, in relation to **planned outputs from the Project Document / AWPs,** with reference to the relevant indicator(s) in these documents. Describe if final targets were achieved, or explain any variance in achieved versus planned results. If possible, include the number of beneficiaries. Report on how achieved outputs have contributed to the achievement of the outcomes and explain any variance in actual versus planned contributions to the outcomes.

With the generous support from the Government of Australia, 1,306 women heads of households who were severely impacted socio-economically by COVID-19, were able to support their families through the emergency relief packages provided by UN Women. This emergency-relief initiative supported those in dire situations such as daily wage earners, women from vulnerable circumstances and those caught in debt traps. While creating an entry point for other interventions, it enabled UN Women, to return to the above districts once mobility restrictions were lifted and continue to positively engage with beneficiaries.

Please see below for a list detailing the number of beneficiaries reached in each district and their respective divisions:

Table 1: Distribution of Relief Packages

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **District** | **Division** | **Number of Beneficiaries** |
| Jaffna | Chavakachcheri | 141 |
|  | Kopay | 62 |
|  | Point Pedro | 14 |
|  | Sandilipay | 90 |
|  | Uduvil | 60 |
|  | Chankanai | 12 |
|  | Nallur | 16 |
|  | Jaffna | 20 |
| Kilinochchi | Karachchi | 452 |
|  | Poonakary | 439 |
| Total | | 1,306 |

The original target was to reach 992 women headed households; however, due to the enhanced coordination with government officials, local communities and suppliers amidst a restricted environment, the project exceeded this target by reaching 1,306 beneficiaries within the available budget. Subsequent follow-up meetings conducted by the partner revealed that beneficiaries in general were highly appreciative that their continued hardships had been recognised. The beneficiary selection was also widely acknowledged to be fair and transparent.

Relief packages included daily essential items and consumables and were accompanied by the below-mentioned awareness material in local languages, deemed useful to be disseminated as public health guidance on curbing the spread of COVID-19 transmission within households and communities. Further, lockdown measures leading to confinement at homes were detrimental for survivors of domestic violence and Sri Lanka has witnessed an increase in SGBV during the pandemic period. The project envisaged the distribution of awareness materials on SGBV as an effective prevention and response measure against violence faced by women and girls.

1. COVID-19 regulations and guidelines in line with WHO, UNICEF and the government Gazette.
2. SGBV related challenges faced during the pandemic: an overview note on responding to SGBV including information on service providers and first responders.

* **Qualitative assessment:** Provide a qualitative assessment of the level of overall achievement of the Programme. Highlight key partnerships and explain how such relationships impacted on the achievement of results. Explain cross-cutting issues pertinent to the results being reported on. Has the funding provided by the MPTF/JP to the programme been catalytic in attracting funding or other resources from other donors? If so, please elaborate. For Joint Programmes, highlight how UN coordination has been affected in support of achievement of results.

Sri Lanka is at risk of an economic recession, potentially a decrease of up to 8 per cent in annual GDP if the COVID-19 crisis continues for longer than expected. The Government of Sri Lanka has responded to the crisis by establishing a limited cash transfer response. However, a large number of families, particularly those belong to vulnerable categories, have fallen through the cracks of these ad-hoc assistance programmes, given the limited social protection systems existing in the country and limited resources. The partnership of the Government of Australia, UN Women, local government bodies in the respective districts, and Viluthu enabled vulnerable 1,306 households in Jaffna and Kilinochchi to be more resilient to the socio-economic shocks and constraints exacerbated by the pandemic context, in the short term. This partnership was effective in swiftly mobilizing resources and ensuring it reached those in need within a short window, during a crisis setting.

The initiative was unique in its design as it specifically reached a variety of vulnerable women heads of households including as widows, ex-combatants, persons with disabilities, young women, elderly women, and transgender women. The empowerment of women community leaders to identify the most deserving beneficiaries, enabled them to address the resistance of traditional male leaders in the community and to prioritize beneficiaries according to set criteria and in a transparent manner.

UN Women through its previous interventions had established good working relationships with local government entities in Kilinochchi. This along with the partner’s strong field presence were key to initiate a successful collaboration with the government, which led to the project’s successful implementation. Throughout its implementation period, the project worked closely with the local government, particularly in engaging the District Secretary within the processes of beneficiary selection and approval, overseeing of distribution, and ensuring transparency at all stages. This relationship with the government proved valuable, in enabling the recognition of vulnerable groups including transgender persons as recipients of government support in the future.

**ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:**

Using the **Programme Results Framework from the Project Document** **/ AWPs** - provide details of the achievement of indicators at both the output and outcome level in the table below. Where it has not been possible to collect data on indicators, clear explanation should be given explaining why.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Achieved Indicator Targets** | **Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)** | **Source of Verification** |
| **Outcome 4.2[[9]](#footnote-10) (UN Women Annual Work Plan 2020)**  **Empowered military and war widows have sustainable livelihoods, and access social support services with dignity.**  **Indicator: N/A**  **Baseline: N/A**  **Planned Target: N/A** | 1,306 women (including women heads of households) who were severely impacted socio-economically by COVID-19, were able to support their families through the emergency relief packages provided by UN Women. This emergency-relief initiative supported those in dire situations, including daily wage earners, women from vulnerable circumstances and those caught in debt traps. |  | Progress report by Viluthu |
| **Output 4.2.4: Vulnerable women-headed households are supported during the COVID-19 pandemic, to reduce care burdens and address immediate needs concerning shortage of food and financial resources.**  **LKA\_D\_4.2.4A** # of vulnerable women provided with emergency relief packs (disaggregated according to district).  **Baseline** Value : 0 | Year : 2019 **Target** Value : 962 | Year : 2020 | Status: Target exceeded.  A total of 1,306 beneficiaries were reached, with the following breakdown:  Jaffna district: 415  Kilinochchi district: 891    Beneficiaries received relief packages in the districts of Jaffna and Kilinochchi to strengthen resilience and support to mitigate the severe impact of COVID-19 pandemic. | In coordinating with government officials, UN Women, local communities and suppliers amidst a restricted environment, the original target of 992 was exceeded to reach a total of 1,306 beneficiaries maximizing on the available budget. | Progress report by Viluthu |

**iii) Evaluation, Best Practices and Lessons Learned**

* Report on any assessments, evaluations or studies undertaken relating to the programme and how they were used during implementation. Has there been a final project evaluation and what are the key findings? Provide reasons if no programme evaluation have been done yet?

Since the project was focused on emergency relief provision and was of a relatively short duration, no formal evaluations were included in the workplan. However, the project identified and documented beneficiaries who were able to overcome certain economic and social constraints through with the relief assistance provided through this intervention.

* Explain challenges such as delays in programme implementation, and the nature of the constraints such as management arrangements, human resources etc. What actions were taken to mitigate these challenges? How did such challenges and actions impact on the overall achievement of results? Have any of the risks identified during the project design materialized or were there unidentified risks that came up?

The provision of relief was impeded by travel and other restrictions that were in effect to control the pandemic. Virtual means of engagement was not an option due to the lack of digital literacy and infrastructure at rural locations, and therefore, awareness on health precautions such as social distancing and sanitary standards were provided to women community leaders involved in beneficiary selection, while protective personal equipment and sanitary items were in place at all project locations. As a mitigation measure, the project operated with small groups while the project staff worked on a roster.

The women community leaders (attached to CBOs) who initiated the beneficiary selections required a sensitization and capacity building sessions, particularly when approaching vulnerable communities. Albeit this being an added requirement, intensive and focused capacity building programmes were initiated for women leaders at community locations to mitigate the impact on implementation, particularly in terms of delays in relief distribution. The engagement of sensitised women leaders in the selection process was instrumental in approaching the most deserving beneficiaries who had fallen through the cracks of other ongoing relief interventions.

The project activities were halted, and the implementation timeline was extended to accommodate the period of General Elections in August 2020 to ensure a non-partisan approach to provision of the relief. Implementation recommenced swiftly after the election.

* Report key lessons learned and best practices that would facilitate future programme design and implementation, including issues related to management arrangements, human resources, resources, etc. Please also include experiences of failure, which often are the richest source of lessons learned.

1. Lessons Learnt:
   * Ex-combatants and transgender women were not open to their identities being disclosed due to various risks associated with such disclosure. In response, the project included these beneficiaries under the general criteria of beneficiaries mobilized by the women leaders. This is noteworthy for future interventions that may engage communities from vulnerable and stigmatized circumstances.
2. Best Practice:
   * The importance of engaging government stakeholders throughout the lifecycle of the project, particularly on the engagement of vulnerable beneficiaries in order to avoid any conflict. This further ensured trust and transparency in the process by the community.
   * The documented success of involving women leaders from the community to mobilise and approach beneficiaries, who were most in need of the economic stimulus packages.
3. Experiences/Challenges:
   * Some women leaders encountered resistance from traditional male leaders in the community who were unhappy with women leading the selection process. Therefore, in future initiatives, the women leaders can be made aware of and capacitated to respond to possible resistance from male leaders and to have a pro-active approach with possible strategies of managing such pressures.
   * Amidst COVID-19, a very tight schedule for delivery of relief packages was maintained to avoid any delays that was physically challenging for the core team that successfully completed as planned.

**iv) A Specific Story (Optional)**

* This could be a success or human story. It does not have to be a success story – often the most interesting and useful lessons learned are from experiences that have not worked. The point is to highlight a concrete example with a story that has been important to your Programme.
* In ¼ to ½ a page, provide details on a specific achievement or lesson learned of the Programme. Attachment of supporting documents, including photos with captions, news items etc, is strongly encouraged. The MPTF Office will select stories and photos to feature in the Consolidated Annual Report, the GATEWAY and the MPTF Office Newsletter.

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| --- |
| **Problem / Challenge faced:** Describe the specific problem or challenge faced by the subject of your story (this could be a problem experienced by an individual, community or government).  Rajeshwari\* is from Manipai, in the district of Jaffna in the Northern Province of Sri Lanka which was heavily impacted by the nearly 30 years of armed conflict, which concluded over a decade ago. She is 70 years old and lives by herself in a small temporary dwelling that does not have electricity. Her husband is missing since 1989 and her only son has passed away.  She has a permanent injury and swelling to one eye caused by an explosion during the conflict and is living with a permanent impairment in her vision and always prefers to cover that side of the face. Rajeshwari has no source of income and lives by the support of neighbours and relatives. However, this support is not always regular, and it is a constant struggle for her to meet her daily needs. She is saddened by her circumstances, in having no one to care for her at this time in her life.  During the lockdowns imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was even more difficult to live. She did not receive much relief support during this time because she is an older single woman and was not considered by any relief support initiative. During the lockdown, she was compelled to keep the food that her neighbours had given her, for days at an end, and to consume though they became stale and spoilt.  **Programme Interventions:** How was the problem or challenged addressed through the Programme interventions?  Rajeshwari was selected as one of the beneficiaries in the project by the women leaders in the community and received the emergency relief package that relieved her from the dire constraints.  She said she was very happy when she learned that she was selected as a beneficiary and had started to cry when she received the relief package. She was very emotional in conveying that some of the items included in the relief package were things she has not seen in many years. It included household food items selected by the women leaders as important in a relief pack such as rice, wheat flour, tinned fish, dhal, rice flour, curry powder, soya beans, tea, sugar, cowpea, garlic, and salt, along with sanitary items such as soap. She concluded that this relief support will help her continue to live and that there was no question as to the sufficiency of the relief pack.  **Result (if applicable):** Describe the observable ***change*** that occurred so far as a result of the Programme interventions. For example, how did community lives change or how was the government better able to deal with the initial problem?  The observable change is the ability of vulnerable households to withstand the socio-economic pressures imposed by COVID-19 and preventing such households from declining to extreme levels of poverty, as expressed by beneficiaries in receiving the emergency relief packages, given that many have fallen through the cracks of the limited State response. The selection process adopted by the project enabled the women leaders in the community to identify prospective beneficiaries for the emergency assistance, ensuring this was a participatory and inclusive process. Thereby, women leaders were made decision makers and the process was perceived by the target beneficiaries as transparent and fair. The coordination with local government officials throughout the project strengthened the relationships within and between communities and local officials. The government too can consider similar strategies or use these existing networks in future interventions.  **Lessons Learned:** What did you (and/or other partners) learn from this situation that has helped inform and/or improve Programme (or other) interventions?  The meaningful engagement of women community leaders in their communities is a successful approach to ensuring that those worst-affected by crises are not left behind in response initiatives, as women play an integral role within their communities and can be mobilised swiftly to identify and reach those most in need. Additionally, effective coordination among the government and other stakeholders in crises is possible when communities are fully involved and transparent, consensus-driven approaches are adopted. It can also lead to added results as observed in this intervention whereby transgender individuals are recognised as potential beneficiaries in future government initiatives.  \*Named changed to protect her identity.  A picture containing indoor, person, cluttered  Description automatically generated  Caption: Rajeshwari\* in her temporary dwelling making use of the provisions in the emergency relief pack, distributed as part of an Australian-funded emergency relief effort conducted by UN Women and Viluthu, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic’s impact on vulnerable women-headed households, in collaboration with local government in Jaffna and Kilinochchi districts. Credit: Viluthu.  \*Photograph has been blurred and name has been changed to protect her identity. |

1. The term “programme” is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document; [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](http://mdtf.undp.org). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. The MPTF/JP Contribution is the amount transferred to the Participating UN Organizations – see [MPTF Office GATEWAY](http://mdtf.undp.org) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](http://mdtf.undp.org/) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities. Please see [MPTF Office Closure Guidelines](http://mdtf.undp.org/document/download/5449). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Financial Closure requires the return of unspent balances and submission of the [Certified Final Financial Statement and Report.](http://mdtf.undp.org/document/download/5388) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Note: Outcomes, outputs, indicators and targets should be **as outlines in the Project Document** so that you report on your **actual achievements against planned targets**. Add rows as required for Outcome 2, 3 etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)