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**Strengthening women's capacity in disaster risk
reduction to cope with climate change in Viet Nam
(2013 – 2016)**

Final Report

Submitted by: Le Groupe-conseil baastel ltée

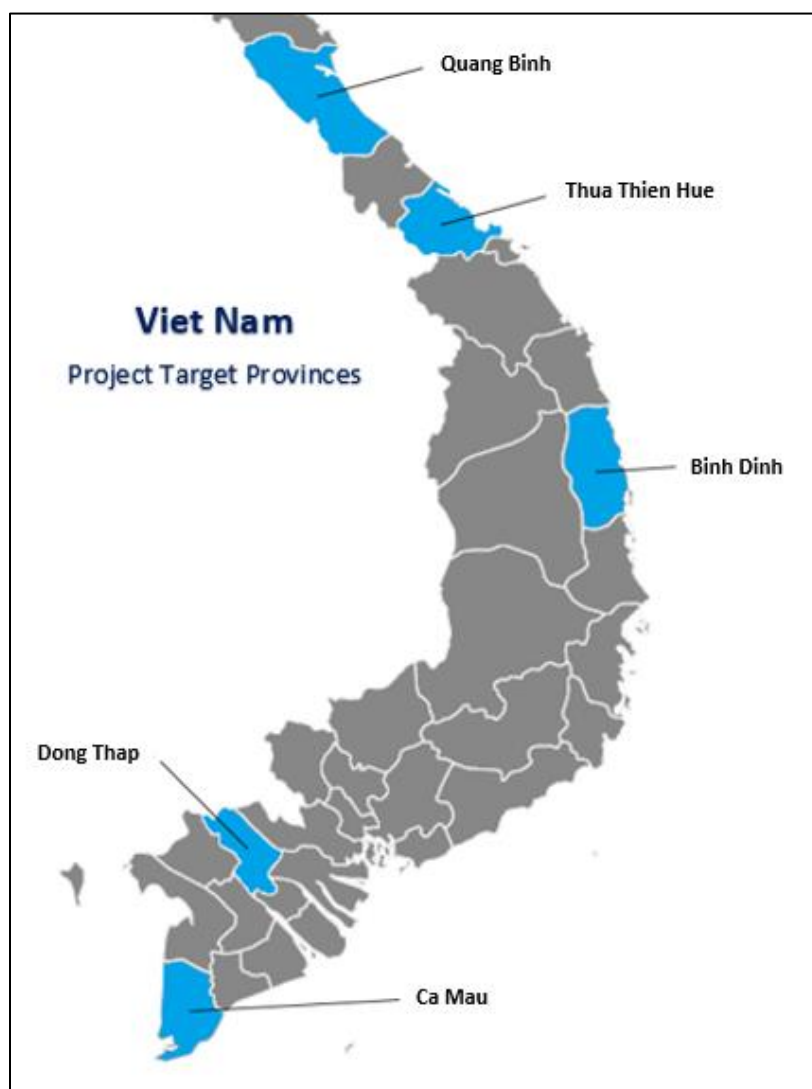
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Provinces	Districts	Communes within the district implementing project activities
Binh Dinh	Van Canh	Canh Thuan, Canh Vinh, Canh Hien communes and Van Canh town
	Hoai An	An Tuong Tay, An Hao Tay, An Nghia, and An Tin
	An Lao	An Hoa, An Quang, An Hung, and An Vinh
	Vinh Thanh	Vinh Thuan, Vinh Hoa, Vinh Son, and Vinh Kim
Quang Binh	Le Thuy	An Thuy, Phong Thuy, My Thuy, Loc Thuy
	Bo Trach	Son Trach, Hung Trach, Thanh Trach, Duc Trach
	Quang Trach	Quang Thuan, Quang Phuc, Quang Hai, Canh Duong
	Tuyen Hoa	Van Hoa, Chau Hoa, Thanh Hoa, Thanh Hoa
Thua Thien Hue	Phu Loc	Loc Vinh, Loc Binh, Vinh Giang, Vinh Hien
	Phu Vang	Phu My, Phu Thuan, Vinh Thai, Thuan An
	Phu Dien	Quang An, Quang Thai, Quang Cong, Quang Ngan
	Huong Tra	Huong Phong, Hai Duong, Binh Dien, Hong Tien
Ca Mau	Phu Tan	Nguyen Viet Khai
	Tran Van Thoi	Khat Binh Tay
Dong Thap	Chau Thanh	Tan Nhuan Dong, An Nhon

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Except as acknowledged by the references in this paper to other authors and publications, the evaluation described herein consists of our own work, undertaken to evaluate the performance of Strengthening women's capacity in disaster risk management reduction to cope with climate change in Viet Nam (2013-2016).

Dr. Melinda MacDonald and Ms. Nguyen Hang

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Executive Summary

With funding from the Government of Luxembourg, UN Women implemented a multi-year project entitled "Strengthening women's capacity in disaster risk reduction to cope with climate change in Viet Nam (2013 – 2016)." The project was implemented in five provinces: Binh Dinh, Thua Thien Hue, Quang Binh, Ca Mau, and Dong Thap, and had a total budget of USD 1,303,000. UN Women served as the executing agency responsible for technical guidance to the Viet Nam Women's Union (VWU), the project's national implementing partner.

The project's overarching outcome was to increase women's participation in decision making in disaster risk reduction (DRR) planning to effectively address climate change adaptation (CCA) and increase resilience of the communities in preparedness and migration and reducing the negative consequences of climate change and natural disasters. Its three expected outputs were: (1) building the capacity of the VWU and members of the Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control on gender equality and DRR in line with Viet Nam's Community-Based Disaster Risk Management Strategy, (2) strengthening the evidence base for advocacy on gender mainstreaming in DRR policy and practice, and (3) gender analysis study of DRR to increase evidence base for advocacy on gender mainstreaming.

The end-of-project evaluation presented in this report was carried out by an external evaluation team which assessed the extent to which the project made progress towards intended and/or unintended results. The evaluation followed the OECD DAC criteria, assessing the project in terms of its relevance, effectiveness (including potential impact), efficiency and sustainability. Its scope covered interventions implemented at community level in the five target locations as well as institutional or policy level activities to influence overall policy on disaster risk management (DRM) and climate change. Information generated from the evaluation will be used by a variety of stakeholders in planning future interventions in DRR/DRM and, specifically, to assist UN Women and its Vietnam Country Office to further refine its approaches to implement future interventions on gender and DRR/DRM.

Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach, including quantitative and qualitative data collection methods (desk review of secondary data, individual interviews, focus groups in two of the participating provinces – Thua Thien Hue and Dong Thap – and in Hanoi, a survey of three other participating provinces, and follow-up validation interviews with key stakeholders). Gender-responsive methods that facilitate participation and inclusion were used to ensure that participants were actively involved in the data collection.

A total of 117 people, the majority of which were women, took part in the data collection. They included 36 people from Thua Thien Hue, 35 from Dong Thap, 20 from the other 3 provinces, and 26 national level stakeholders from 12 different stakeholder organizations. Qualitative and quantitative evidence was analyzed, triangulated, and validated. Limitations included availability of stakeholders, scheduling conflicts, minimal budget permitting only two of the five participating provinces to be visited, limited

budget data, and number of similar projects operating in Viet Nam. Triangulation of the various lines of evidence led to development of 18 findings, summarized below, on the relevance, effectiveness (and impact), efficiency, and sustainability of the project.

Key Findings and Conclusions

Relevance

Data from multiple sources, particularly at the local level, demonstrated that project interventions were relevant and aligned to the needs and priorities of local beneficiaries as well as to related national policies. The lines of evidence demonstrated that UN Women has the trust of government partners, particularly the Vietnam Women Union, government agencies, other UN agencies, and CSOs. This has allowed UN Women to navigate well as a facilitator amongst diverse cultures and interests to mainstream gender equality and human rights into DRM and Climate Change.

Effectiveness

Despite limited funding and complex socio-political issues surrounding DRR/DRM, the evaluation found that the project was effective in increasing women's participation of Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control (CNDPC) and in carrying out capacity building activities. The project also succeeded in forging strong coordination with partners which resulted in more effectively leveraging resources to engage in complementary processes to minimize unnecessary duplication and help increase the knowledge base as part of promoting the engendering of DRR/DRM and women's meaningful participation.

The project's willingness to adjust, in the face of evidence from KAP surveys, baselines, the evaluability assessment and partnerships, was largely effective. Working to balance national priorities, while promoting greater gender mainstreaming and a human rights-based approach to DRR planning, has created a solid foundation grounded on a gender equality and human rights based approach to DRR, management and climate change. However, capacity building appeared to be an issue (despite improvements) which limited the level and depth of women's decision-making as evidenced by a lack of regular participation of VWU members in DRR and DRM meetings and activities.

This approach was largely effective, and succeeded in meeting the local beneficiaries needs, although in some cases the balance between flexibility and direction was not ideal. The project would have benefitted from reporting on more qualitative indicators and presenting performance stories based on local successes that provided greater context for the quantitative results achieved and reported at the output level. Furthermore, work needs to be done with partners to monitor results of interventions and how these results can be sustained going forward to demonstrate exactly how these interventions enhanced women's decision-making in DRR and DRM.

The evaluation found that the project strategies were largely successful in delivering planned activities and outputs on capacity building work, and that progress was made towards the outcome despite limited funding and the complex socio-political issues surrounding gender equality, DRR/DRM, and climate



change. However, despite improvements, capacity is still an issue that limits the level and depth of women's participation in decision-making, particularly at local level.

There is a continuing need to build capacity at all levels, especially at the local levels of the VWU and government. Government officials at large need further capacity building on the relationship between DRR/DRM and gender equality.

In terms of partnership, the project was effective in fostering a sense of ownership among the key partners and stakeholders, particularly VWU. A local champion, in the form of the VWU, is essential to continue to promote and advocate on gender equality, DRR/DRM and CCA. Joint efforts with partners resulted in complementary processes and minimized unnecessary duplication, helping increase knowledge among a range of stakeholders.

Impact is included under effectiveness since in a short project like this one, it is too early to report on impact. Many of the project's indicators have shown signs of positive change, particularly in attitudes expressed by stakeholders during the data gathering for the evaluation. However, it is premature to assess impact or whether changes in attitudes will translate into long-term behaviour or cultural change with respect to gender and DRR planning and responses. The project advocated for the development and implementation of relevant policy frameworks at both international and national levels. Notwithstanding positive examples of partnership development and improvement of the VWU's capacity to contribute to policy change, there have only been limited observed changes in policy or institutional mechanisms stemming directly from project interventions.

The short time frame and the existence of many projects, donors, and other actors working in this area will make it difficult to attribute change (positive or negative) to this project alone. UN Women's strategic advantage in working across diverse stakeholders and facilitating amongst them makes it more realistic to talk about multiple types of contribution than specific intended types of attribution. The project also engaged in a number of responsive activities, such as the livelihoods activities, which were popular but were not part of the original project design but which could have impact. In summary, it is premature to report impact.

Efficiency

The project strategically allocated limited resources (funds, human resources, time, and internal expertise) to achieve most planned outputs and contribute to achieving the project outcome. In some instances, the project management team and implementation were challenged by issues such as high staff turnover, lack of dedicated full-time staff, limited budget, minimal project management capacity building, and monitoring issues. However, notwithstanding these challenges, the project team was able to deliver the main elements of the programme in the local sites and to some extent at the national and policy levels. UN Women increased project efficiency by making good use of relevant TA from multiple stakeholders¹ and experts as well as by funding livelihood activities in communities.

¹, such as CARE International, GIZ, Oxfam, the Red Cross, UNDP,

Comprehensive reporting on the indicators was a challenge for the project. Project managers needed more training and tools to assist them in monitoring their projects and gathering, analyzing, and reporting on their indicators to better track project results, link results to decision making, and contribute to learning and accountability.

Sustainability

Institutionalizing the concepts and processes supported by the project into local and national governance structures will require more time and capacity building (including at the VWU). Although a good foundation has been laid, to be truly sustainable, results need to continue to connect to the policy context in Viet Nam. This is particularly at the local level where lack of capacity and financial resources in local governance threaten the sustainability. Interventions to strengthen the VWU at local levels are integral for institutionalizing long-term results with respect to a strengthened national women's machinery to cope with climate change. The results to date are anchored in the VWU, which is currently working on its national action plan on DRR/DRM and gender. The project is not yet anchored within national institutions such as MARD, but it is beginning to be, with the main initial gain being the embedding of methods and results in capacity building, documentation, and activities.

The project design reflected the understanding that capacity development is a key to sustainability, making capacity building a cornerstone of the project. At the national/institutional level, the project combined efforts with others to integrate gender into national policy. This work should continue, but effort is needed on the exit strategy, especially at the local level. Of particular long-term importance is the opportunity to scale up the livelihood activities model.

Conclusions

This evaluation includes 18 findings and 8 conclusions based on them, 6 recommendations and 12 lessons learned. Overall in conclusion, UN Women is in a unique position to continue facilitating among stakeholders to build on project results, which succeeded in increasing women's participation in DRR/DRM. There is growing ownership by VWU on integrating gender into the DRR/DRM agenda, particularly at the national level. More investment and effort is needed to support the local level. The project has clearly shown that capacity building on gender equality and DRR/DRM has a multiplier effect: gender sensitive DRR knowledge can be the foundation for wider climate change awareness-raising and effective action, and at the same time, this can help enhance women's overall status in their communities since participating women are seen as knowledgeable and decisive in many cases. It is clear that working with diverse partners builds the potential to scale up and institutionalize gains which will also require investment particularly in livelihoods to build women's economic empowerment in the face of disaster risks. Specifically, the evaluation includes 8 conclusions, noted briefly below but in more complete form in Section 6 of this evaluation report.

Conclusion 1: UN Women is in unique position as a trusted facilitator – An opportunity has been built for UN Women to facilitate among the Government of Vietnam, the Vietnam Women's Union, civil society coalitions, partnerships, donors, the private sector and the overall UN System.



Conclusion 2: Project resulted in increased women's participation in DRR/DRM – The project narrowed the gender gap in knowledge about DRR/DRM in its target areas and demonstrated that women can be fully involved in decision making and be change makers.

Conclusion 3: There is growing ownership by VWU on integrating gender into the DRR/DRM agenda – The VWU is now more committed to developing its capacity and promoting integration of gender into DRR/DRM at all levels of the GOV including local level capacity building.

Conclusion 4: Investing in WEE is a form of national insurance for DRR – To meet the needs of women in the most affected areas and contribute to their resilience in the face of disaster risks, VWU can build the livelihoods component including support for national insurance for DRR.

Conclusion 5: Capacity building on gender equality and DRM has a multiplier effect – Trained women can better support their communities in responses to disasters in terms of first aid, helping children and the elderly. An added benefit is enhancing women's status and influence.

Conclusion 6: Working with diverse partners builds potential to scale up and institutionalize results – Tangible results in pilot communities has increased women's participation and can be scaled up to other affected provinces and institutionalized nationally.

Conclusion 7: More effective results monitoring is needed to discern impact – This project could have benefitted from a clearer theory of change, results framework and robust monitoring.

Conclusion 8: Project is aligned with principles and policies of Gender Equality and the HRB Approach – This is in terms of empowerment, participation, non-discrimination and prioritization of vulnerable women and includes women's representation on DRM relevant bodies.

Recommendations

Building on project results and the above findings and conclusions, the evaluation makes six recommendations presented below in brief, and in more detail in Section 7. They were created based on the findings and conclusions and on validation discussions with the key stakeholders.

Recommendation 1: Build on UN Women's facilitation role and influence a range of actors to support inclusion of gender considerations in DRR/DRM policy, planning, and budgets.

Recommendation 2: Support meaningful women's input into local government and Committees for Disaster Prevention and Reduction and Climate Change through increased capacity building.

Recommendation 3: Continue to use the VWU network and strength of VWU capacity to institutionalize changes that provide a greater voice for women's concerns with respect to gender differences in DRR/DRM planning and implementation.

Recommendation 4: Continue to use UN Women influence with government to build on project results aimed at mainstreaming gender considerations and policy associated with international frameworks into national policy.

Recommendation 5: Scale up with further innovative and gender sensitive pilot projects adapted to each locale with inputs from relevant stakeholders and utilizing baselines and methodology which allows for measurement of gender-disaggregated progress.

Recommendation 6: Promote DRR/DRM as a multiplier for gender equality with a range of stakeholders.

Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
CBDRM	Community Based Disaster Risk Management
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
NDPC	Central Steering Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CFSC	Committees for Floods and Storms Control
COP21	Paris Climate Change Agreement
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DIM	Direct Implementation Modality
DMWG	Disaster Management Working Group
DRC	Disaster Risk Centre
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EA	Evaluability Assessment
GOV	Government of Viet Nam
HFL4	Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness
HPPMG	Harmonized Project Programme Management Guidelines
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
KAP	Knowledge Attitude Practice
LAM	Livelihood Activities Model
LOA	Letter of Agreement
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MEDA	Mennonite Economic Development Associates
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIM	National Implementation Modality
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PMU	Project Management Unit
PWU	Provincial Women's Union
RBM	Results-Based Management
TOC	Theory of Change

TOR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-DRMT	United Nations Disaster Risk Management Team
UNF	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
VCO	UN Women Viet Nam Country Office
VWU	Viet Nam Women's Union



1. Introduction

This report presents the results of the final evaluation of the "Strengthening women's capacity in disaster risk reduction to cope with climate change (2012-2016)" project in Viet Nam. The project was financed by the Government of Luxembourg, with the UN Viet Nam Country Office (VCO) as the executing agency responsible for technical guidance to Viet Nam Women's Union (VWU), the national implementing. The project's long-term objectives were to (1) build the capacity of VWU at provincial, district, and communal levels on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Disaster Risk Management (DRM); and (2) promote their participation and leadership in DRR planning and advocacy for more gender-sensitive DRR planning in Viet Nam.

1.1. Project Context

Viet Nam is among the countries worst affected by the negative effects of climate change, particularly in its lowland and coastal areas of the country. In Viet Nam as in other parts of the world, women and girls are disproportionately exposed to disaster risks, experiencing greater vulnerability² due to structural barriers and socio-economic discrimination based on their gender. Women often lack access to resources, skills, and information necessary for disaster preparedness and for securing livelihoods that will enhance their resilience.

Multiple factors contribute to vulnerability to climate change including social inequality, weak resilience, and increased pressure on natural resources. More specifically, the relative vulnerability of individuals and households to natural hazards and climate change is largely determined by their livelihood resilience, the well-being of household members, self-protection, social protection, and governance (Oxfam and UN in Viet Nam). This makes it all the more important for women in Viet Nam to have a say in shaping and carrying out policies that can better protect them, their families, and their communities, yet DRM in Viet Nam has long been dominated by men. However, the situation is beginning to change.

Within the vulnerability context, reduced poverty, economic growth, and rising inequality are interconnected factors, particularly in Viet Nam. The Approved Strategy on Prevention of Natural Disaster Risk (2007), and the National Target Programme to Respond to Climate Change (2008) addresses the impacts of natural disasters and climate change and mention gender equality as a "guiding principle." however they do not provide an action plan for implementation or targets or activities to address gender inequalities and vulnerabilities³. DRM policies in the VNDRM and CC are addressed

² Vulnerability for climate change is defined as "the degree to which a person, household, social group, business, organization, locality or a sector is unable to cope with, resist or recover from adverse effects of shocks and stresses, including climate variability and climate extreme that are enhanced by climate change" (Oxfam and UNVN, 2009, p. 15).

³ It should be noted that with the support of Japan and organization by UN Women and GOV, during 16-18 May 2016, the Ha Noi recommendations for action on gender and disaster risk reduction was issued at the Regional Asia Pacific conferences on Gender and Natural Disaster Reduction. By July 2017, the Action Plan on preventing natural disaster and climate change adaptation was approved by Vietnam Women Union

separately and the focus of this project is on DRR/DRM. There is a need to address natural disasters and climate change in terms of gender equality in a more comprehensive manner in policies and laws particularly at the community level which are also lacking. Nevertheless, women in the Asia-Pacific region, including Viet Nam, are significant contributors to disaster preparedness, prevention, and overall risk reduction, and play a greater role in risk management and resilience building than is often acknowledged.

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), VWU, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and international non-governmental organizations (NGO), such as Oxfam and CARE, among others, all work to address women's vulnerability to disaster risk and strengthen their role in risk management. The project "Strengthening women's capacity in disaster risk reduction" project, which is being evaluated, is one of several UN and other initiatives seeking to overcome barriers to women's inclusion in DRR/DRM and CCA in Viet Nam. At the national level, the project worked with the Vietnamese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) and the MARD' Disaster Management Center (DMC) (Chair of the CCNDPC) to help increase women's representation within Viet Nam's DRM system led by MARD. They also worked at the provincial level with the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD).

In December 2012, under the framework of the United Nations One Plan 2012-2016, specifically Focus Area 1 on inclusive, equitable, and sustainable growth, UN Women and the Government of Luxembourg signed an agreement for a USD 1,303,000 project entitled "Strengthening women's capacity in disaster risk reduction to cope with climate change (2012-2016)." UN Women, through UN Women Viet Nam Country Office (VCO), was the executing agency responsible for technical guidance to the VWU, the national implementing partner. The project was implemented in five provinces: Binh Dinh, Thua Thien Hue, Quang Binh, Ca Mau and Dong Thap.

Based on a strong gender equality and human rights framework, the project's original **Long-Term Objective** (as approved in the Prodoc) was: To increase women's participation in decision making to effectively address climate change adaptation (CCA) and increase the resilience of the communities in preparedness and mitigation to natural disasters and reducing the negative consequences of climate change and natural disasters.

The specific objectives were:

Specific Objective 1: To enhance the role of women through strengthening their capacity in the context of climate change on DRR and DRM actions;

Specific Objective 2: To enhance early warning messages in order to increase awareness and change behaviour of women and community to better cope with natural hazards; and

Specific Objective 3: To strengthen women's participation in decision making in climate change discussions and particularly in DRR and DRM at local level with their full and formal participation in the Committees for Floods and Storms Control (CFSC).

The project was designed to cover five provinces over four years. The selection of provinces and project locations used three criteria: i) Those that were severely affected by disasters; ii) Those with little donor support for projects; and, iii) Those where the VWU had the capacity to support project implementation. The project began implementation in Binh Dinh in 2013, then moved on to Quang Binh and Thua Thien Hue in 2014, and expanded to Ca Mau and Dong Thap in the Mekong Delta in 2015. For the three provinces in the first period (2013 until the end of 2014), the project targeted 16 communes in four districts of each province.

Between October 2015 and April 2016, the project was implemented in four provinces: Ca Mau, Dong Thap, Quang Binh, and Thua Thien Hue, covering a total of seven districts and 16 communes. It targeted VWU staff and clubs, community members, and CNDPC members (former Committee for Floods and Storms Control). In the revised plan, to sharpen project focus more, the number of targeted communes was reduced from 64 communes in four provinces to the 12 most affected communes in four districts in each province.

Table 1: Targeted locations under UN Women VWU Climate Change and DRR project⁴

Provinces & Dates	Districts	Communes within the district implementing project activities
Binh Dinh (2013)	Van Canh	Canh Thuan, Canh Vinh, Canh Hien communes and Van Canh town
	Hoai An	An Tuong Tay, An Hao Tay, An Nghia, and An Tin
	An Lao	An Hoa, An Quang, An Hung, and An Vinh
	Vinh Thanh	Vinh Thuan, Vinh Hoa, Vinh Son, and Vinh Kim
Quang Binh (2014-16)	Le Thuy	An Thuy, Phong Thuy, My Thuy, Loc Thuy
	Bo Trach	Son Trach, Hung Trach, Thanh Trach, Duc Trach
	Quang Trach	Quang Thuan, Quang Phuc, Quang Hai, Canh Duong
	Tuyen Hoa	Van Hoa, Cau Hoa, Thanh Hoa, Thanh Hoa
Thua Thien Hue (2014-16)	Phu Loc	Loc Vinh, Loc Binh, Vinh Giang, Vinh Hien
	Phu Vang	Phu My, Phu Thuan, Vinh Thai, Thuan An

⁴ Please note that bolded locations are sites visited by the evaluation team.

	Phu Dien	Quang An, Quang Thai, Quang Cong, Quang Ngan
	Huong Tra	Huong Phong, Hai Duong, Binh Dien, Hong Tien
Ca Mau (2015-16)	Phu Tan	Nguyen Viet Khai
	Tran Van Thoi	Khanh Binh Tay
Dong Thap (2015-16)	Chau Thanh	Tan Nhuan Dong, An Nhon

In December 2013, UN Women conducted an evaluability assessment (EA) of the project to further improve the project design and measurability of results. The EA examined the project's theory of change (TOC) and project design, the availability of information, the conduciveness of context, accountability, and resource allocation.

The EA recommended that UN Women should:

- Conduct gender analysis to identify gender issues and the different needs of women and men in DRR in the project areas that can be fed into policy discussions at the national and provincial level;
- Adjust project objectives and design to focus on how VWU can be effective in influencing CFSCs to make DRR plans more gender sensitive by organizing a workshop to review the programme objective, design, theory of change, results chain and indicators measuring success for the new provinces⁵;
- Review communication component of the project and/or review geographical expansion of the project to increase support to women's clubs under VWU to be able to have active discussions and to empower local women through DRR; and,
- Strengthen gender mainstreaming component through reviewing programme design, conducting gender analysis to feed into policy discussions, and supporting stronger advocacy roles of VWU at national CFSC

To respond to these recommendations – and to the early achievement of a key project objective (inclusion of VWU in the Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control – CNDPC (former the Committee for Flood and Storm Control), the national decision-making body for DRR activities in Viet Nam⁶), the project logframe was revised. In consultation with other partners, UN Women and VWU carried out the review in the last quarter of 2014, and a Project Revision Document was completed in

⁵ The project began implementation in Binh Dinh in 2013, then moved on to Quang Binh and Thua Thien Hue in 2014, and expanded to Ca Mau and Dong Thap in the Mekong Delta in 2015.

⁶ This body was previously known as the Committee for Flood and Storm Control (CFSC). In September 2013, the Government of Viet Nam issued Decision 220/PCLBTW authorizing VWU to become an official member of the CFSC – now the CNPDC – at all levels.

early 2015. This included an adjusted logframe, objectives, indicators, and targets aimed at sharpening the project's focus "on developing the capacity of VWU on and DRR and strengthening actions taken on gender mainstreaming into DRR compared to the original logframe."

1.1.1. The Revised Logic Model

The revised logframe (in Annex) includes the following revised long-term outcome and outputs, as well as indicators and means of verification, against which to measure progress:

Outcome:

- Increase women's participation in decision making in DRR planning to effectively address CCA and increase resilience of the communities in preparedness and migration and reducing the negative consequences of climate change and natural disasters.

Outputs:

- Enhance the role of women through strengthening the capacity of VWU on gender mainstreaming and DRR as a part of the Committee for Natural Disaster Prevention and Control
- Increase awareness of women and communities to better cope with climate change and natural disasters through preparedness and mitigation actions at household level
- Strengthen evidence base and discussions at the local and national levels on gender equality and women's participation in DRR in Viet Nam

The key changes of this revision (based on recommendations from the Evaluability Assessment) are:

1. Increase the evidence base for policy advocacy through conducting gender analysis;
2. Strengthen women's club facilitation skills (to raise local women's voice) through capacity building (communication training material developed and trained);
3. Reduce the project sites to increase effectiveness;
4. Stronger engagement of VWU in government programme on community based disaster risk management (CBDRM) or Programme 1002 – VWU has become a key partner with DMC in implementing this programme; and
5. Expanding partnership with DMC – the lead agency in implementing the CBDRM programme, and supporting DMC in developing the Gender Guideline for CBDRM programme (in coordination with NGOs).

The revised TOC envisioned increasing local women's participation and decision-making related to DRR and DRM through improvement of their knowledge and skills (capacity building). This was expected to enhance the culture of prevention, preparedness, and mitigation in communities. Project activities were therefore intended to increase local women and men's knowledge, skills, and awareness (Evaluability Assessment, p. 8).

The project also sought to raise awareness on women's rights in disaster management. With the national law now in place, Vietnamese women can utilize their new rights and responsibilities to advocate for

inclusion and a reduction in their vulnerabilities during and after disasters. This is an ongoing, iterative process. For example, women's presence in the CNDPC is gradually leading to more substantive representation as they begin to speak out with more confidence on issues related to DRM/DRR/A.

1.1.2. Governance and Management Arrangements

UN Women played the role of executing agency responsible for project management working with the VWU as the Government Co-implementing Agency using an annual Letter of Agreement (LOA) signed between UN Women and the VWU (official agreement template). The project also used some principles of the Harmonized Project Programme Management Guidelines (HPPMG) between the UN and the Government of Viet Nam (GOV), but was not governed by them. Since the project did not strictly apply HPPMG, they also did not fully apply two implementation modalities, the National Implementation Modality (NIM) and the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM), but were able to use them in implementing some project activities.

The project contributed to UN Women's Goal, UN Global Impact 5: "Governance and national planning fully reflect accountability for gender equality commitments and priorities." A management and implementation structure was set up for the project at the central and provincial levels in all five provinces where it was implemented. At the national level, the central project management unit (PMU) operated with four staff, a part-time Project Director, a part-time Coordinator, a full-time Project Accountant, and a full-time Administrator/Interpreter. In each province, a Project Manager and Technical Expert, also employed by the Provincial Women's Unions (PWU), worked on the project on a part-time basis. UN Women provided technical and financial assistance to project implementation and management, and supported VWU in project implementation, capacity building, processes monitoring, financial procedures, overall progress, and reporting to the Government of Luxembourg.

1.1.3. Project Resources

In addition to kind human resource contributions from partners, including the Viet Nam Women's Union, project resources came from Government of Luxembourg funding of USD 1,303,000. This covered the 48-month period from January 2013 to December 2016. Following an initial transfer of USD 203,000, three payments of USD 320,000 were made over the three subsequent years. A final instalment of USD 140,000 was made in 2016.

1.1.4. Key Stakeholders involved in Implementation

Three levels of key partners were involved in implementing the project:

(1) Government and Mass Organizations, including VWU at central head quarter office and at local levels. UN Women worked nationally with the VWU central office on strengthening advocacy and capacity building on gender equality and women's empowerment in DRR. Sub-nationally, provincial VWU offices in target provinces implemented activities in specific communes and districts. UN Women also worked

with the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) under the MARD⁷. MARD coordinates Viet Nam's national CBDRM program. UN Women and DMC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in October 2015 outlining the shared objective of strengthening gender equality priorities, promoting gender mainstreaming in the national programme on CBDRM, and consolidating joint work.

(2) UNDP and other UN agencies. UN Women actively takes part in the United Nations Disaster Risk Management Team (UN-DRMT) under the One UN Joint Programming Group on climate change and environment. UN Women coordinates among agencies in mainstreaming gender equality in climate change actions, DRR, and DRM, and works closely with UNDP. UNDP's strong partnership with MARD complements UN Women's strategic partnership with VWU (and recently with MARD) and encourages wider collaboration in supporting gender mainstreaming in DRR in Viet Nam.

(3) NGOs (i.e. CARE, Oxfam etc.). Sharing common objectives with these NGOs on mainstreaming gender in DRR/DRM in Viet Nam, UN Women is a member of the Disaster Management Working Group (DMWG) and Climate Change Working Group (WG), both managed by the NGO Resource Centre in Hanoi. Oxfam, which has substantial DRR experience, coordinates work on CBDRM issues including consolidating and standardizing gender mainstreaming into risk and planning and coordinating joint activities, regular partner meetings, and developing products.

7

2. Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Scope

2.1. Evaluation Purpose

The overall purpose of this evaluation is to assess the extent to which the project has led to progress towards intended and/or unintended results regarding strengthening women's capacity in DRR to cope with climate change in Viet Nam. It is a mandatory, end-of-project external evaluation, undertaken as agreed with the project donor, the Government of Luxembourg.

The evaluation is expected to assist UN Women learn and refine its approaches to gender mainstreaming in DRR and DRM; it will be used by the UN Women VCO for development and implementation of future programmatic interventions on gender and DRR/DRM. The evaluation is also intended for use by VWU to further strengthen its strategic interventions on DRR and CCA.

The primary users of the evaluation include:

- UN Women Viet Nam Country Office
- Government of Luxembourg
- Implementing partners, including VWU
- Disaster Management Center (under the Directorate of Water Resources, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development)

Secondary users include:

- UN Disaster Risk Management Team
- NGO Working Group on Disaster Management
- Other relevant development partners and research institutions.
- The evaluation will also share knowledge generated with stakeholders beyond those listed above to inform their strategies for mainstreaming gender and women's empowerment in DRR/DRM.

2.2. Evaluation Objectives

As per the TOR, the specific objectives of the evaluation were to:

- Assess the relevance of the project in terms of its alignment with national development and gender equality commitments, UN Women's mandate and comparative advantage, and if it meets the needs of the targeted communities;
- Assess effectiveness and efficiency in progressing towards the achievements of project objectives as defined in the intervention;



- Assess the impact and sustainability of the intervention in contributing to transformational change for gender equality and women's empowerment;
- Identify lessons learned, success stories and good practices in order to maximize the experiences gained; and
- Provide actionable recommendations with respect to the UN Women intervention.

2.3. Evaluation Scope

The evaluation covered four years, from January 2013 to December 2016, and disbursement of the total budget of USD 1,303,000. It considered the partnerships UN Women established with the VWU and DMC, and project activities implemented at the central level in Hanoi and at provincial, district, and commune levels in the five provinces of Binh Dinh, Quang Binh, Thua Thien Hue, Ca Mau and Dong Thap.

The evaluation examined implementation at two levels:

- The community level –including how implementation of such activities as the community plan, the training, livelihoods and life skills, have worked; and,
- The institutional or policy level – where the evaluation team assessed the influence of the project on overall policy on DRM and CCA and its engendering in Viet Nam; including level of meaningful participation of women in relevant decision-making bodies.

2.4. Performance Standards

As set out in the TOC, the evaluation team engaged stakeholders in the field on issues related to: training and planning for DRM/CBDRM and other operational issues. In Hanoi, the team engaged with GOV representatives (from government ministries and agencies), NGOs, CSOs, and donors working in this area. The list of stakeholders was discussed with UN Women and is included in Annex D.

The evaluation was conducted in accordance with UN Women evaluation guidelines and the revised UNEG Norms, Standards, Ethical Guidelines, Code of Conduct for Evaluations and Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation in the UN System. The approach was also consistent with evaluation principles identified by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), and their five criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and gender equality.

The evaluation was transparent and participatory, involving UN Women stakeholders and national and sub-national partners in the five provinces where it was implemented: Binh Dinh, Thua Thien Hue, Quang Binh, Ca Mau and Dong Thap. The main groups of stakeholders included were: UN Women staff, VWU PMU; the DMC, sub-national Women's Union in target provinces, NGO partners, UNDP-Disaster Management Center (SCDM II) project, local government in some target communes, and women and men beneficiaries.

This report follows the template included in the UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Reports.

2.5. Evaluation Questions

The TOR suggested the key evaluation questions shown in Table 2, below. All these questions were included in the evaluation, with some adjusted to provide greater focus. The final set of evaluation questions is included in Annex 1. Specific questions for focus groups, as well as survey questions, are also included in Annex 2. Together, these similar questions provided several lines of evidence which were triangulated and contributed to development of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Table 2: Evaluation Questions from TOR

Evaluation Questions	Key Questions
Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is the intervention relevant to the needs and priorities as defined by beneficiaries? • What is UN Women's comparative advantage in this area of work compared with other UN entities and key partners?
Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent has the programme made progress towards planned outcomes and outputs? Which areas or outcomes have progress and least progressed and why? • How effective were the project strategies in achieving expected results? • To what extent did the programme develop and build capacities of partners on gender equality and mainstreaming in DRR? • How effective has the programme been in establishing ownership? • Assess the effectiveness of the activities implemented by partner institutions and their contribution to the outcomes of the programme. • Assess the lessons learned from these partnerships and the possibilities to replicate them. • To what extent has the programme been implemented using a Human Rights based-approach?
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve results? Have resources been used efficiently? • Have programme funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner? • Assess managerial and work efficiency. Were management capacities adequate?



-
- Has relevant international gender, climate change and DRR expertise been sought?
 - How effectively did the programme management team monitor programme performance and results?

Impact

- Are there any immediate impacts (positive or negative, direct or indirect, intended or unintended observed)?
- To what extent was gender equality and women's empowerment advanced in disaster management at household, community and national level as a result of the intervention?
- To what extent has the project created changes in policy and institutional mechanism on disaster management in Viet Nam?

Sustainability

- What steps have been taken to ensure programme sustainability? Are the programme results, achievements and benefits likely to be durable?
 - Are results anchored in national institutions and can they be maintained at the end of the programme?
 - Can the programme approach or results be replicated or scaled up by national partners? What would support their replication and scaling up?
-



3. Evaluation Approach and Methodology

This evaluation was carried out collaboratively with UN Women, with a utilization focus intended to ensure maximum value for UN Women. A human rights-based approach (HRBA) was central to the evaluation, and all activities and results were viewed through a gender equality lens – that is, the understanding that women and men and girls and boys experience issues such as social exclusion and discrimination differently. The evaluation team was also highly sensitive to issues of intersectionality, taking into consideration that the way gender affects people's experience may differ based on age, poverty, ethnicity, social class, and other categories and identities. Given that women and girls suffer disproportionately in natural disasters and their aftermath and that such vulnerability stems from women's social, political, and economic circumstances prior to the disaster, such analysis is critical to understanding and contextualizing project results (UN Viet Nam, 2011).

With this in mind, a gender analysis tool was utilized to:

- Identify continuing barriers to women's participation and productivity (social, economic, legal, political, and cultural);
- Gain an understanding of women's practical needs and strategic interests and identify opportunities to support both;
- Consider the differential impact of the initiative on men and women and identify consequences to be addressed.

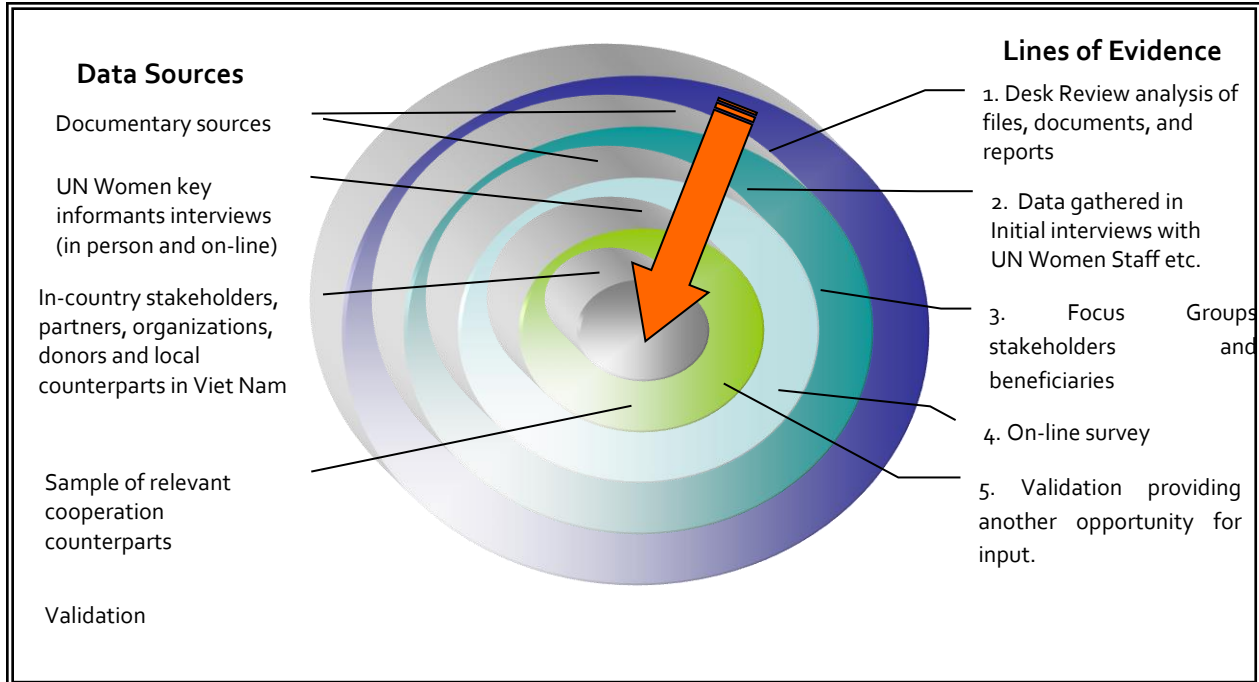
The evaluation team adopted mixed-methods data collection, using both qualitative and quantitative methods and drawing on open and closed questions. Data collection was implemented using a snowball approach – that is, different methods were used to gather data for different lines of evidence in a sequential manner, with what was learned from each line of evidence building on the data gathered from earlier ones.⁸ There were five lines of evidence: (1) Desk review, (2) Key informant interviews, (3) Focus groups, (4) On-line survey, and (5) Validation. All five lines of evidence generated data that permitted the team to assess UN Women's responses and programming in relation to the UN evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. Although the evaluation assessed outputs, the primary focus was on what was achieved at the outcome level. Data from all lines of evidence was triangulated and validated. The team conducted data analysis with the help of the Atlas.ti⁹ software program, providing a robust and neutral standardized basis for formulating findings and conclusions. The process can be understood through the analogy of Concentric Circles, as illustrated in Figure 1, below.

Figure 1: Concentric Circles Methodology

⁸ Note that this is distinct from the snowball or chain-referral sampling approach.

⁹ The purpose of ATLAS.ti is to help researchers systematically analyze data (e.g., text, multimedia, geospatial). It provides tools that let users locate findings in primary data material and weigh and evaluate their importance. ATLAS.ti also helps consolidate large volumes of documents and keep track of notes, annotations, codes and memos in all fields that require close study and provides a transparent base for review and analysis of data.





The sampling approach was purposive. Interviewees in communities included members of the PWU, provincial CNDPC chair, and other officials such as relevant district staff. Focus group participants included training of trainers (TOT), participants from agencies and district levels (DARD, Red Cross, Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, etc.), households that benefitted from livelihood activities, trainees who participated in training activities such as first aid and survival skills training, members of the community such as women’s clubs, and men and women who were not directly involved in the project but live in the communities.

The evaluation team’s purposive sample for the field visits to Dong Thap and Thua Thien Hue engaged stakeholders both at the community and provincial levels. The evaluation team also met with project partners at the central levels in Ha Noi, such as personnel from MARD and other relevant government departments, UN Women, VWU, and CSOs (see list of stakeholders in Annex D). Local interviews and workshops as well as Hanoi interviews and focus groups were used to reflect the local, institutional, and policy levels of the project. The evaluation team leader originally suggested a roundtable discussion to give relevant donors an opportunity to participate in an interactive manner but, after consultation, this was replaced by focus groups with relevant agencies in Hanoi throughout the evaluation.

3.1. Evaluation Steps

3.1.1. Step 1: Inception Phase

Documentation Identification and Preliminary Review - The inception phase began with a preliminary review of documentation primarily identified by UN Women. (See Annex E for the preliminary list of

documents). A broader systematic review of documentation and literature relevant to this initiative was carried out over the course of the evaluation and formed a line of evidence that was included in the data analysis triangulation.

Briefings between Evaluation Team and UN Women - Meetings took place during the preliminary phase in January 2017 with UN Women representatives at headquarters in Hanoi and with representatives of the VWU to discuss the methodology, framing of questions, and expectations about this evaluation and sampling in the field. These collaborative meetings provided the evaluation team an opportunity to discuss the evaluation tools, details about the field missions, and the overall approach to the evaluation, as well as to gather and collect additional necessary key documents and discuss potential risks to the evaluation's outcome, so as to prepare to manage and overcome them.

Methodology Refinement and Drafting Evaluation Matrix - On the basis of the initial document review, the evaluation team refined the methodology in the TOR and created the evaluation matrix (Annex C). The evaluation questionnaire(s) represented standardized and harmonized tool(s) for interviews (both individual and collective). The matrix was built from the original questions provided in the TOR plus additional questions and sub-questions to probe results and issues raised in the documents reviewed. Specific focus group questions were also included (see Annex III in English and Annex IV in Vietnamese). All of the questions evolved from the original questions proposed in the TOR, and added probes and additional questions which surfaced as the work progressed.

3.1.2. Step 2: Data Collection

Data Collection Levels - Data from programme staff, documentation, survey, stakeholder interviews, and focus group discussions formed the lines of evidence which were used to triangulate results achieved by the project. This data collection included in-country, face-to-face and/or on-line survey, as well as telephone, video conferencing, and skype interviews, to help include as many stakeholders as possible. The evaluation team shared its preliminary findings and recommendations with UN Women in Hanoi at the end of the field visits. The methodology took the project's TOC (EA, 2014) into consideration when designing the data collection approach.

Desk Review (Line of Evidence 1) - A desk review of UN Women's relevant documents, strategy, plans, monitoring reports, and donor reports was undertaken. Sources included: programme documentation, work plans, roles and responsibilities, partnership agreements, progress reports, meeting minutes, mission reports, monitoring reports, technical products developed, data collected, important correspondence between key parties, and relevant evaluations of similar programming in Viet Nam. Annex E contains a list of the documents reviewed.

Interviews with Key Stakeholders (Line of Evidence 2) - The evaluation team refined and augmented the questions in the TOR to create evaluation questionnaires adapted for different modalities, i.e., focus groups or interviews. They included additional probes as sub-questions which were discussed with UN Women prior to the interviews. Following agreement with UN Women, the questionnaires were used to carry out key stakeholder interviews. The analysis of responses to the questions contributed to the



evidence for triangulation. Interviews were carried out on project interventions/practices beginning with UN Women programme staff, partner organizations such as the VWU and MARD, both the DMC and the central CNDPC, and others, such as the UNDP-Disaster Management Centre (SCDM II), NGO partners including Oxfam, CARE, Viet Nam Red Cross, French Red Cross and Winrock, and development partners including GIZ and DFAT.

After considering why the provinces were selected, as noted earlier, the evaluation team focused on the length of time that the project had been running in selected locations. To ensure that projects of different lengths could be observed, two provinces were selected for visits using the following criteria:

- One site/province if there are two provinces in one region;
- Project activities in one province selected will have taken place over a longer period of time (approximately 2 years); and
- Project activities in the other province selected will be for a project of approximately 1 year

After the initial document review and discussion with UN Women, Dong Thap and Thua Thien Hue were selected. In these provinces, in depth interviews took place with primary and secondary stakeholders including representatives of provincial CNDPC, Project Implementation Unit staff at PWU, communes/districts local government and relevant agencies, women beneficiaries, and some men involved in the project. For the other three provinces (Binh Dinh, Quang Binh, and Ca Mau) skype/phone interviews were carried out. This was augmented by the on-line survey, to which there were 20 respondents.

The on-the-ground evaluation team consisted of the international evaluation team leader, the local national expert in Dong Thap, and the local national expert in Thua Thien Hue. Both visits included UN Women and VWU representatives. Another team member, with expertise in the area of DRR/DRM, provided subject matter guidance to the team. Annex IV presents the key informants interviewed, selected in consultation with UN Women. They included staff from UN Women, GOV officials, national stakeholders, and interviewees in the provinces.

The locations which the evaluation team visited in the two target provinces are indicated in bold below:

Table 3: Project Locations Evaluated

Province	District	Communes
Ca Mau	Phu Tan	Nguyen Viet Khai
	Tran Van Toi	Khanh Binh Tay
Dong Thap	Chau Thanh	Tan Nhuan Dong

Quang Binh	Le Thuy	Phong Thuy, My Thuy
	Bo Trach	Son Trach, Duc Trach
Thua Thien Hue	Phu Loc	Loc Vinh, Loc Binh, Vinh Giang, Vinh Hien
	Phu Vang	Phu My, Phu Thuan, Vinh Thai, Thanh An

Focus Groups (Line of Evidence 3) - To flesh out and further probe in a dynamic manner issues that surfaced earlier, the evaluation team augmented the individual interviews with focus groups which used questions tailored to the two field visits. For comparative purposes, these questions were consistent with the overall evaluation questions in the TOR, the sub-questions, and the documentation previously reviewed (See questionnaires in the annexes). The basic questions for focus groups were adjusted depending on the composition of the group. Two focus groups were carried out in each of two districts in the provinces of Dong Thap and Thua Thien Hue. In addition, focus groups were conducted in Ha Noi with stakeholders working nationally at the policy level.

On-line Survey for non-Mission Provinces (Line of Evidence 4) - Additional information came from an on-line survey that elicited feedback from stakeholders and partners who were not part of face-to-face field visits. Again, the questions were consistent with those from other lines of evidence so as to provide comparable data useful in triangulation. To increase on-line survey response rates, the following steps were taken:

- An official letter of introduction was written by UN Women and local VWUs outlining the purpose of the evaluation and sent prior to the survey being shared;
- The on-line survey (in Vietnamese, not exceeding 12 questions, and parallel to the earlier questions) was drafted building on earlier learning from the desk review, interviews, and focus groups;
- The survey was distributed to a purposive sample of stakeholders to ensure variety in types of stakeholders; and
- The team conducted follow-up by email and by telephone to potential survey participants to increase response rates.

As shown in Table 4, below, a total of 117 people took part in the data collection. The genders of the 20 respondents to the survey were not indicated. Of those others who noted gender, there were 63 women and 32 men.



Table 4: No. of Interviews, Focus Groups, and Survey Respondents

	Thua Thien Hue	Dong Thap	Survey	National	Total
Local level					
Provincial	6 (4 M)	2			8
District	4 (1M)	5 (3M)			9
Commune	1	2			3
Communities	24 (11M)	24 (8M)			48
			20		20
Central Level					
UN Women				5	5
VNWU	1	2		3	6
DMC				4 (3M)	4
MARD				1 (1M)	1
UNDP				2	2
CARE				1	1
OXFAM				1	1
Canada				4	4
AusAid				3 (1M)	3
GIZ				1	1
Red Cross				1	1
Total	36	35	20	26	117

Validation (Line of Evidence 5) - The final line of evidence was intended to include validation by key stakeholders and also a validation workshop with key stakeholders but scheduling challenges on all sides prevented the workshop from taking place. Therefore, validation of the findings and conclusions has included responses and discussions with readers of the draft final report particularly at UN Women.

3.1.3. Step 3: Data Analysis and Reporting

Data Analysis - As noted above, evidence from the various lines of evidence was triangulated and synthesized using a software programme known as Atlas.ti. The approach integrated data from the first four lines of evidence and supported the drafting of findings, conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned.

Reporting - This draft evaluation report follows the structure identified by UN Women and the UNEG evaluation report guidance. The findings provide the basis for the conclusions and recommendations. UN Women will review the report as part of its quality assurance, share it with partners for their feedback, and develop a dissemination and utilization plan following its finalization.

3.2. Limitations and Challenges

The evaluation had several limitations and challenges. One initial challenge was to address how the project was affected by the revision of the project document and logframe midway through implementation, following the evaluability assessment. It was necessary in the evaluation process to account for this shift in project focus and results.

The availability of key stakeholders due to conflicting priorities was another challenge for the evaluation team, affecting interview and focus group scheduling, primarily in Hanoi. The evaluation timing over Christmas holidays, Tet holiday, and May Day further complicated scheduling. This was exacerbated by the very limited budget both for team days and missions. To some extent, this was overcome by linking missions to those of other projects.

These limitations contributed to the team being able to visit only two of the five provinces for data collection. To address this limitation and ensure that all five provinces were reflected in the evaluation findings, a survey was carried out in the other three provinces, providing valuable data. But despite follow-up with potential respondents, the number of respondents from each province was limited. Overall, there was substantial data available on the project but the data on budgets was limited, making it difficult to demonstrate efficiency in terms of disbursements and use of funds.

Finally, given that many similar national and donor funded initiatives have been implemented on DRR and in Viet Nam, a limitation for the evaluation was that it was difficult to demonstrate attribution above the level of the community and district levels immediately affected by the intervention.



4. Findings

4.1. Relevance

The following evaluation questions address the relevance of the intervention:

- To what extent is the intervention relevant to the needs and priorities as defined by beneficiaries?
- What is UN Women's comparative advantage in this area of work relative to other UN entities and key partners?

Relevance: Finding 1 – Project is aligned and relevant to both local beneficiaries and to the VWU at local and national levels

Data from multiple sources, particularly at the local level, demonstrated that project interventions were relevant and aligned to the needs and priorities of local beneficiaries in pilot sites. In addition, VWU reports at both the local level and the national level that this project is relevant to their local and national mandate. Nationally, this was verified by two data sources - VWU in Ha Noi and by a small sample of national NGO stakeholders with which the evaluation met in Ha Noi.

Overall, with respect to relevance, there was a significant positive response on the suitability of project activities to the specific needs of beneficiaries. However, some respondents identified areas where activities and project materials could be made more relevant and offered suggestions for further work on training materials and on livelihood models.

Information drawn from commune, district, and provincial-level informants through a series of interviews and focus group discussions conducted in February and March of 2017 verified that almost all beneficiaries perceived the project as relevant to their needs. Similarly, survey results obtained from respondents in provinces not covered by focus group discussions were consistent with these views.

Disaster Risk Reduction Plans for Households

The Knowledge Attitude Practice (KAP) Final Report noted that 97.5% of respondents indicated that their localities were affected by natural disasters, with 49.5% reporting that they were severely affected by disasters. In its work, the project understood that almost everyone knew about the disasters and that half of them were severely affected by disasters as the KAP demonstrated. But the problem that needed to be addressed was that the people needed to have formal HH plans about what to do about where to store food and water, sanitation, fortification of buildings etc.

While all survey respondents indicated that the project initiatives were well suited to local disaster risk concerns (see Figure 2), results from interviews and focus group discussions, showed mixed responses. For example, an interview conducted with the Chairman of Tan Nhuan Dong Commune Women's Union

indicated the importance of the information and activities outlined in the DRR plan. Similarly, respondents in the focus group discussion in An Nhon Commune indicated that their view was that there was no need to change the plan. However, it was noted in focus group discussions in Tan Nhuan Dong Commune, and by the Chairman of that Province's Women's Union (PWU), that the DRR planning manual was less useful to residents with limited education, since the content is difficult to read and understand. In the same discussions, it was noted that DRR plan comprehension improved significantly when the content of the manual was carefully interpreted and explained.

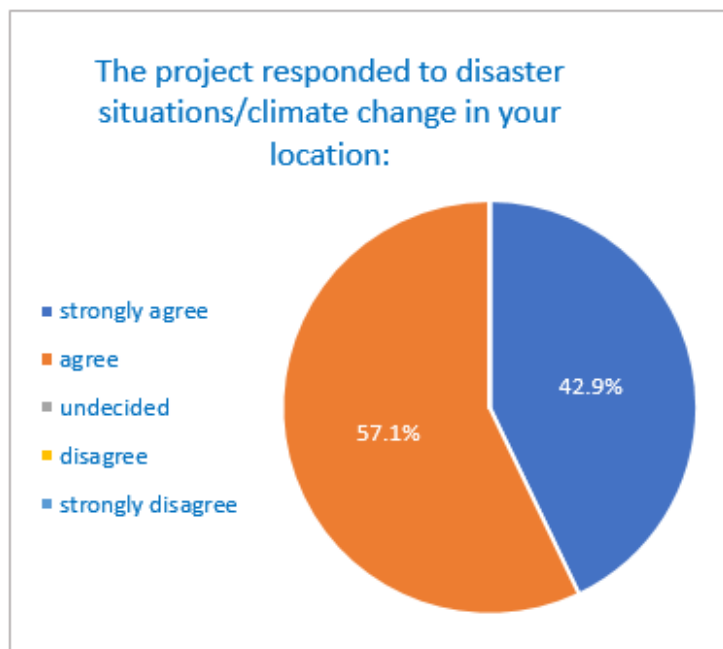
Livelihood Activities Model

In 2015, the livelihood activities model (LAM) was added as a very small-scale pilot with a small budget. The evaluation learned that it was widely regarded as one of the most successful initiatives of the project although this model had not yet been part of the project design. Focus group participants and interviewees indicated that the livelihoods component, which was developed to help off-set the effects of disasters and climate change on women, was popular and expressed their support for promoting and expanding this component. Focus group participants in An Nhon Commune, especially, praised its success in increasing household income, improving the status of women within their families and communities, and noting its support from community and local government. However, respondents also voiced some concerns and offered some comments regarding the suitability and support of LAM in their communities.

While the Head of Education and Communication of PWU in Dong Thap noted that the livelihood models are very well suited to local conditions, some survey respondents indicated that livelihood support needs to be more focused on local people living in the most vulnerable disaster areas and on providing them with basic equipment and access to markets. For example, the model implemented in Dong Thap is quite successful however the area selected for the model is not the most vulnerable disaster areas of the province. Focus group participants in Loc Vinh also praised the programme but indicated a need for greater support in providing equipment and access to markets for those involved in LAM and also suggested that additional models be developed.

Field data indicates that the LAM did, indeed, help women increase income and offer the potential to empower women's voices in both family and society. The model successfully provided not just training, but also information and loans to women for livelihood activities and programs to build the capacity of

Figure 2: Relevance of project to local disaster concerns



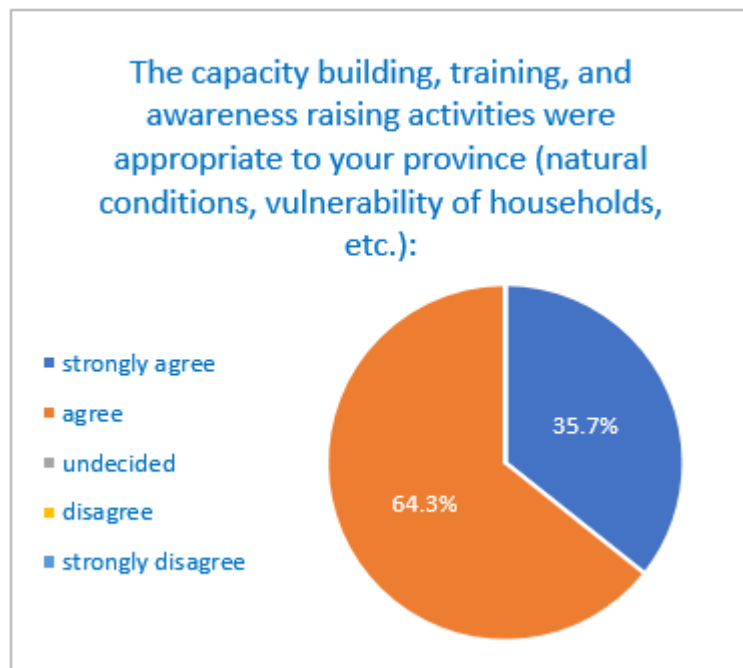
local governments. In addition, Women's Clubs helped women gain knowledge about DRR and climate change. This approach is complementary to a human-rights based approach, but not as a replacement for it. To echo CEDAW Draft General Recommendation No. 35 on the Gender-related dimensions of DRR in a Changing Climate (2016): "while climate change resilience and adaptation programmes may provide new employment and livelihood opportunities in sectors such as agricultural production, failure to address structural barriers faced by women in assessing their rights, could exacerbate existing gender-based inequalities" (paragraph 3). Livelihood programs may be effective as part of an overall strategy to address gender and DRR/DRM and CCA, but there is a risk that a focus on livelihoods as stand-alone programs will result in inadequate attention to dealing with systemic issues.

Communication and Training Initiatives

Although survey responses indicate overall satisfaction with the quality and suitability of capacity building and training activities (see Figure 3), focus group participants indicated a number of areas in which training activities could be improved to better meet their needs.

Concerns were expressed regarding the amount of time dedicated to training activities. An interview with the provincial project manager and technical staff of Dong Thap surfaced their view that the duration of the training of trainers (TOT) was too long. They suggested that the training be shortened to three days. On the other hand, the Head of Education and Communication of Dong Thap's PWU indicated that more time for training should be provided to the technical team and communities in charge of implementing the MARD 1002 program. Meanwhile, focus group participants in Thua Thien Hue suggested that the time for practical

Figure 3: Relevance of training initiatives to local needs



training and skill development is too short, and that greater emphasis should be placed on practical skills, teaching skills, teamwork, presentation and role play skills, and preparation of teaching lessons.

There were also concerns regarding the suitability of training activities and materials to local conditions faced by each community. Interviews with the PWU Head of Education and Communication and technical staff in Dong Thap and with the Chairman of Chau Thanh District Women's Union, as well as a focus group discussion in Tan Nhuan Dong, all indicated that training and communication materials should more comprehensively cover local disasters. These informants thought that more focus on the



local disaster reality and less theoretical content in the training materials would have been more relevant to their needs.

Focus group participants in Loc Vinh, Loc Binh, and An Nhon all suggested that more emphasis should be placed on communication training and more time spent on swimming and water rescue skills, given the propensity to flooding in these areas. The need for more swimming instruction was echoed by the majority of survey respondents.

Respondents also commented on the training documents. The focus group in Tan Nhuan Dong noted that the manual for communicators contained too much information and that the size of the print made it difficult to read. Interviews conducted in Hoa An village echoed these concerns, and suggested that the content of training documents be simplified to make them more accessible to participants. In terms of relevance, the target beneficiaries of these materials are mature women who work on farms and do not have high school educations. Therefore, more suitable pictures and materials using large type would likely better match the needs of local women farmers. Overall, the evaluation evidence from national and local levels indicated that the project was relevant to the needs of local beneficiaries, particularly women, while it also worked in harmony with GOV national objectives. The project played a contributing role, along with many other initiatives, to support the GOV to make its CBDRM strategy gender sensitive. For example, the project provided a training document and training activities with gender equality content to implement MARD Decision 1002 (dated July 2009) which approved the project of "*Community awareness raising and community-based disaster risk management*", as well as the National Strategy for Natural Disaster Prevention, Response and Mitigation to 2020 (2007) and the Implementation Plan for the National Strategy (2009).

At national and local levels, women are now represented on relevant decision-making bodies for DRM. This was highlighted both in Progress Reports and in provincial and national interviews, focus groups, and field survey results. The fruits of this are being reflected in key agreements including:

- Guidelines for implementation of CBDRM at all levels,
- Development of CBDRM training materials for trainers,
- Strengthening of natural disaster prevention responses by agencies' management,
- Creation of development plans, early warning communications for DRR, and
- Development of small scale projects such as strategies, training in first aid and other survival skills and livelihoods which are designed to increase women's empowerment but however this should not remove the onus from duty bearers (GOV, UN etc.) to fulfill their obligations to create an enabling environment to mitigate against climate change and DRR.
- In summary, it is clear that the national VWU should provide strong leadership and policy support liaising with the central government and the UN. For example, at the strategic level, in July 2017, VWU approved an Action Plan on preventing natural disaster and CCA.

Relevance: Finding 2 – UN Women's comparative advantage



The lines of evidence demonstrate that UN Women has the trust of government partners, other UN Agencies and CSOs, which allows UN Women to navigate well as a facilitator amongst diverse cultures and interests to mainstream gender equality and human rights into DRM and Climate Change.

Throughout the project, UN Women has demonstrated its ability to coordinate activities of implementation partners and other key stakeholders, including the VWU, agencies such as MARD, DARD, and Disaster Risk Centre (DRC), and several NGOs working on DRM and climate change initiatives, including Oxfam and Red Cross. This strategic positioning between various organizations has enabled UN Women to work with partners to achieve significant results from partners working together particularly at the national level. The value of UN Women's contributions in coordination was also indicated in responses to the end-of-project survey (see Figure 4) as well as in interviews and focus groups with representatives of these stakeholders. It was also echoed in progress reports.

The revised project logframe reflected a shift from focusing on building the capacity of the VWU system to a more comprehensive approach which includes collaboration with the MARD – the body responsible for disaster management in Viet Nam. This collaboration also expanded to some key NGOs working actively on disaster management, such as Oxfam and CARE International.

UN Women has continued to develop its relationship with MARD, culminating in an MOU with the Disaster Management Centre (DMC) under MARD's Directorate of Water Resources. The MOU outlined the partnership between UN Women and DMC on gender mainstreaming in CBDRM which included: development of gender mainstreaming guidelines for use at the commune level; capacity building for DMC, VWU, and master trainers on gender equality and gender mainstreaming;¹⁰ and development of a common framework on gender mainstreaming in CBDRM for DMC and other stakeholders. This result was verified in interviews with MARD and DMC representatives as well as in a focus group of national level NGO representatives and also in progress reports.

The objective of the MOU was to strengthen gender equality priorities and gender mainstreaming in the national programme on CBDRM and consolidate work done in the past by DMC, VWU, Oxfam, and other stakeholders, with UN Women acting in its role as coordinator and facilitator. This builds on UN Women's comparative advantage as an entity within the UN system. As an active member of the UN-DRMT, UN Women continues to play a unique role in coordinating with other agencies in mainstreaming gender equality in climate change action, DRR and DRM. Interviews with UN Women and UNDP, as well as related project documentation, verified this.

There is limited ground-level data concerning the impact of the project's initiatives on provincial and national beneficiaries. Interviews with PWUs and CSFC representatives focused largely on project relevance at the local level. However, project documents, including progress reports, and interviews at the national level with government, NGOs, and the UN, suggest that UN Women's evolving relationship and policy involvement with provincial and national stakeholders is being perceived by these stakeholders as relevant. As noted in the third progress report, UN Women, working with Lux-

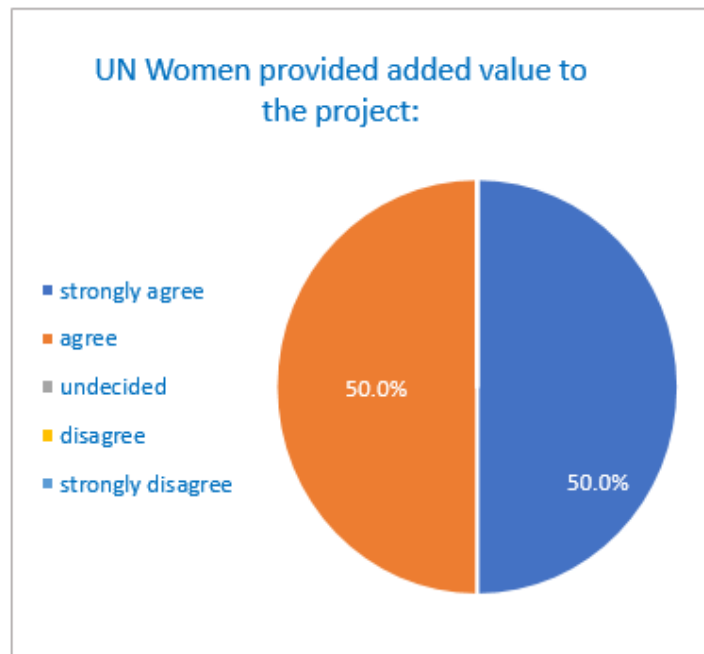
¹⁰ Master trainers are a pool of trainers at the national and provincial levels which train commune level CNDPC members and support them in the implementation of CBDRM.

Development/GOV Project on Climate Adapted Local Development (VIE/033), organized a roundtable discussion among provincial leaders, representatives from various departments, VWUs, technical advisors from the Lux-Development project, NGOs, and local women to address key issues and discuss ways of improving the role of women in DRR/A. This workshop opened further collaboration between UN Women and VIE/033 through partnership with the Thua Thien Hue PWU. This collaboration was verified in interviews with local and national stakeholders.

UN Women has demonstrated close partnerships with NGOs such as Oxfam and CARE International on mainstreaming gender in DRR/DRM, which is a common objective among these organizations. As a member of the DMWG and Climate Change Working Group (WG), UN Women collaborates through an online platform and regular monthly meetings. The benefits of this were discussed in focus groups and reflected in progress reports.

Working with the VWU, the national government and NGO partners, UN Women made efforts towards mainstreaming gender into national DRR and DRM and CCA/CBDRM strategies and program. The relevant project outcome statement in this area is: "Increased women's participation in decision making in DRR planning to effectively address climate change and increase resilience of the communities through preparedness and mitigation reducing the negative consequences of climate change and natural disasters." The project has made progress towards this outcome, but it remains a work in progress.

Figure 5: UN Women's Value-Added



Beginning in 2013, when the VWU became an official member of the CNDPC as a direct result of advocacy supported by UN Women and other key partners, the project has made efforts to open up space for women's voices in decision-making on DRR and DRM planning and implementation at national and sub-national levels. This was reflected in the number of women members of the CNDPC in the project areas. There were variations across localities, but the average ratio was still below 30% according to project progress reports, surveys, and interviews.

While field-work (including survey results) at the community level provided a picture of the project's local relevance, the evaluation team based its assessment of provincial and national relevance on progress reports, local level interviews and national interviews with a focus group of NGO stakeholders in Ha Noi. UN Women's continued and expanding involvement with stakeholders at these levels suggests success in aligning project initiatives to their needs. Many interviews at multiple levels and project

documentation suggests that UN Women has gained some trust from government partners, CSOs, and other UN agencies which allows it to navigate well amongst their diverse cultures and interests. UN Women's comparative advantage also stems partly from its association with CEDAW, which is the international normative human rights framework that guides the work of UN Women and includes draft CEDAW Recommendation 35 on engendering DRM and using a HRBA. This not only adds to UN Women's credibility and authority in this area but also provides an avenue for working with the state and other duty-bearers towards the fulfillment of their obligations under the convention.

Overall, UN Women has a strong comparative advantage in this area, given that mainstreaming gender equality and human rights within DRR/DRM and CCA requires collaboration among a variety of actors. Given the low rate of women in leadership in DRR, UN Women needs to continue its work in strengthening the institutional capacity of the VWU and individual members to function effectively as CNDPC members and promote gender equality in climate change and DRR at all levels. At the same time, continued effort is needed as part of the UN, in partnership with GOV partners and NGOs, to concretize these efforts at the national level. Working with GOV and relevant agencies to mainstream gender into plans and policies is crucial given that gender targets from international agreements to which Viet Nam is a signatory have not yet been met.

4.2. Effectiveness

The following evaluation questions address the effectiveness of the intervention:

- To what extent has the programme made progress towards planned outcomes and outputs? Which areas or outcomes have progressed and least progressed and why?
- How effective were the project strategies in achieving expected results?
- To what extent did the programme develop and build capacities of partners on gender equality and mainstreaming in DRR?
- How effective has the programme been in establishing ownership?
- Assess the effectiveness of the activities implemented by partner institutions and their contribution to the outcomes of the programme
- To what extent has the programme been implemented using a Human Rights based approach?

Effectiveness: Finding 3 – Outputs were largely achieved and there was progress towards outcomes

The evaluation found that the project strategies were largely successful in delivering planned activities and outputs, and that progress was made towards the outcome despite limited funding and the complex socio-political issues surrounding gender equality, DRR/DRM, and climate change. The project was largely effective in achieving Output 1 on capacity development was Output 2 on awareness, though more work is needed on Output 3 on national level initiatives. At the outcome level, early on the project achieved the outcome of the VWU becoming an official member of the CNDPC as a direct result of advocacy by UN Women and others and, especially in project areas, there has been increased women's participation in the CNDPD. But despite improvements, capacity is still an issue that limits the level and



depth of women's participation in decision-making, as evidenced by lack of regular participation of VWU members in DRR and DRM meetings and activities. This was demonstrated in progress reports and also cited in interviews and focus groups. More work is also needed with partners on monitoring the results of interventions and initiatives, to demonstrate exactly how they enhance women's decision-making in DRR and DRM.

As noted in the introduction, the GOV recognized VWU as an official member of the CFSC (later the CNDPC) in 2013. With three years of project implementation remaining, this early success motivated a review of project objectives and the logframe. The specific outputs and associated indicators discussed below were defined in the resulting Project Revision Document.

Specific Output 1 (revised logframe) – Enhanced role of women through strengthening the capacity of VWU on gender mainstreaming and DRR as a part of the Committee for Flood and Storm Control.

The three indicators associated with this output are listed below with their end-of-project target values:

- 80% of trained staff of VWU and CFSC at provincial, district and commune level with understanding of basic concepts and gender issues in CBDRM.
- 50% of trained staff of VWU and CFSC at provincial, district, and commune level use their knowledge on gender and DRR in their work.
- At least eight of the targeted commune CFSCs have current DRR plans which are gender-sensitive by the end of 2016.

Project documents showed that all targets were achieved with respect to this objective; however, there were mixed views regarding the success of this initiative from other lines of evidence. Interviews with the provincial project manager and technical staff in Dong Thap indicate that the project has resulted in greater recognition of PWU and greater influence in committee meetings, and this has led to more active PWU leadership in coordinating DRR activities.

On the other hand, an interview with a member of the provincial CFSC in Thua Thien Hue suggested that gender mainstreaming is still not clearly or comprehensively implemented. This view was echoed in other interviews and focus group discussions in the field, in interviews with other actors in Hanoi, and in survey responses. More specifically, at the province as well as at the district level, the gender mainstreaming content of the training course was implemented by VWU staff while other technical content was provided by DARD staff. The gender mainstreaming in NDR is not institutionalised at the local level yet. The VWU also uses a top down approach which is reported by local stakeholders as not being as effective as approaches which have more local focus.

Specific Output 2 (revised logframe) – Increased awareness of women and community to better cope with climate change and natural disasters through preparedness and mitigation actions at household level.

The three indicators associated with this output are listed below with their end-of-project target values:

- 75% of targeted households have DRR plans in place known to all family members.



- At least 50% of targeted households are practicing at least three disaster preparedness and mitigation measures at household level.
- 85% of women and girls who have received first aid training have the necessary survival skills in order to protect themselves during disasters.

Although data regarding these indicators was absent from the fourth progress report, data obtained from focus group discussions conducted in February and March 2017 provide an indication of DRR plan adoption. Focus group discussions in Loc Vinh commune indicate that 60-70% of households have developed household DRR plans. In Loc Binh commune, the result (roughly 40% of households), was much lower, but it was noted that before the project only about 10% of households were capable of following a DRR plan. Respondents in all focus group discussions demonstrated recognition of the role of women in DRR planning and implementation, which suggested that for households which implement a DRR plan, the plan is known to both adult family members.

Regarding the second indicator, the evaluation found that the rate of disaster preparedness and mitigation measures echoes the rate reported in the evaluability assessment. In the EA, 74.5% of respondents indicated that they pre-emptively obtain information through television or radio, 72.5% strengthen their houses, 67% prune branches, 62% prepare food, clean water, and medicine, and 41.5% evacuate to safer places. While this data does not indicate the number of measures undertaken by each household, it suggests that a majority of households take disaster preparedness and mitigation measures.

Focus group discussions in Loc Vinh and Loc Binh indicate that 40-50% and 70% of households, respectively, can now apply survival and safety skills. Prior to the start of the project, this number stood at 10% in the Loc Binh commune. An interview with the chairman of Chau Thanh District Women's Union, noted that the project has had an appreciable impact on swimming and first aid skills. Although these findings do not directly demonstrate the proportion of women and girls with necessary survival skills following first aid training, they do suggest that project interventions have significantly increased familiarity with survival and safety skills.

While the results from the focus group discussions do not conclusively determine whether or not the indicator targets have been achieved, comparisons of DRR plan adoption and competence in survival and safety skills before and after the project's interventions suggest that training initiatives have seen considerable success in the target communes.

Specific Output 3 (revised logframe) – Strengthened evidence base and discussions at the local and national levels on gender equality and women's participation in DRR in Viet Nam.

The two indicators associated with this objective, with their end of target values, are:

- Two high-level discussions held at the national level on gender equality in DRR in collaboration with VWU with participation from relevant ministries and departments.
- One policy brief published providing an evidence base for further work on gender equality in DRR.



The fourth progress report indicates that two policy discussions took place on gender equality in DRR at the provincial level – not the national level – with participation from relevant ministries and departments. The progress report also notes the production of a gender checklist handbook in DRR projects, developed jointly by CARE, GIZ, and UN Women¹¹.

Outcome Level

Capturing outcome level data – for example, on the effectiveness of project partnerships and how they helped achieve the outcome – is more difficult than capturing output level data. The evaluation team found that, overall, the project would have benefitted from reporting on more qualitative indicators and presenting performance stories based on local successes to provide greater context for the quantitative results achieved and reported at the output level. Some of this was done (e.g. through the “Stories of Resilience”), but the project would have benefited from placing more emphasis on qualitative indicators to help capture how capacity and decision-making were: a) related and b) enhanced by the project. Although the project narrative and stories from progress reports provide some insights, there appears to be a gap between achievements of output results and longer-term outcome level results. At the local level, there are examples of women’s increased participation and capacity (i.e. attending community meetings, development of household plans, more life skills training (swimming), and women taking part at the national level, but however it is difficult to conclude what real influence they have at either the local or national level (outcome level). This is due to there still being cultural barriers and the remaining need for the capacity of women leaders to be increased so that others listen to their inputs.

Overall, the logframe and performance management framework (PMF) have some weaknesses in terms of telling the performance story, especially at the outcome level, relying too heavily on metrics such as percentage of women trained, rates of women’s participation, etc. More work needs to be done to demonstrate the depth of participation by women and their leadership on DRR/DRM issues in Viet Nam since these are the areas in which the project sought change at the outcome level. These could be in the form of focused project interventions or case studies.

Nevertheless, the evaluation team found evidence, particularly in interviews and focus groups at both local and national levels, and across partners and stakeholders, that many of the project’s interventions were bringing about positive changes in expressed attitudes. However, it is difficult to capture how this translates into changes in long-term behaviour and in the influence of women on policy and action on DRR/DRM and CCA. Although more evidence is needed and should be tracked going forward with respect to the relationship between capacity building and confidence, it appears that there has been an increased in confidence which can be linked back to capacity building efforts directed at the VWU at multiple levels.

For example, in every meeting women’s union staff at provincial, district, and particularly at commune level, expressed thanks for the project support, and said that they feel more confident in making

¹¹ CARE, UN Women, GIZ, ICMP- Making it Count-Integrating Gender into Climate change and Disaster Risk Reduction: a Practical How to Guide, June 2015



speeches and suggestions at committee meetings. They also report that their suggestions have been taken into account when committees make decisions and that they have gained more trust including having work allocated to them by government authorities during natural disasters but unfortunately not including allocations of needed financial resources.

Finally, it should be noted that there are a number of related projects, donors, and other actors, including the private sector and CSOs, working in this area. For example, the implementation of the GOV's CBDRM programme is being supported by a number of projects, NGOs, and donors. Many of these projects have the same partners and stakeholders, which makes attribution at the outcome level to a single project, particularly difficult.

Effectiveness: Finding 4 – Iterative strategy was largely effective

The flexible project design influenced effectiveness. This project underwent a number of iterations; the evaluation assessment in 2013 led to additional objectives and the adjustment of the project's TOC and some of its objectives. These changes were largely beneficial to the project's achievements and outcomes and placed it on a positive trajectory for achieving its overall planned results. The project's willingness to adjust, in the face of evidence from KAP surveys, baselines, the evaluability assessment, and partnerships, was largely effective, but in some cases the balance between flexibility and direction was not ideal.

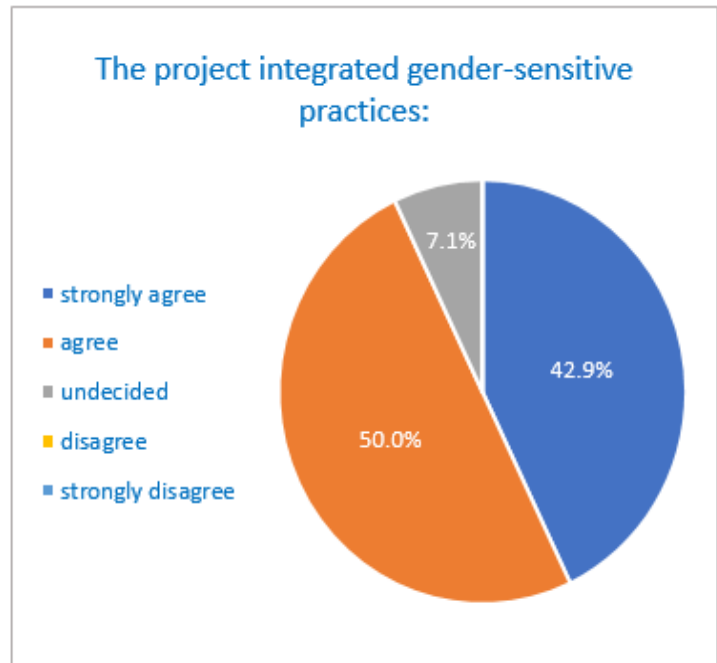
Gender-Sensitive DRR planning and DRM

Compared to the project baseline, the evaluation found improved understanding that, to be effective, household, community, and national plans and laws on DRR should be implemented in a gender-responsive manner. The project's progress towards implementing gender-sensitive practices was widely recognized by end-of-project survey respondents (see Figure 6), while key informants and focus group participants noted the importance of involving women in DRR planning (thus demonstrating enhanced awareness of the role of women), and also suggested that there had been an increase in the participation of women in commune-level DRR planning and DRM measures.



Although interviewees indicated increased awareness of gender-responsive measures in DRR planning among those who have participated in training activities and among active members of Women's Unions and Women Clubs (WCs), they also noted that men are more aware of the results of discussions on gender equality and DRR. Men who are actively engaged in social activities demonstrate better understanding of gender issues and the role of women than those who do not participate. It was also shared in field discussions in Loc Vinh that as a result of project interventions, women and a few men report that several men now pay more attention to their wives perspective by listening to them to better inform themselves about DRR, protection of property during disaster events, and the importance of supporting vulnerable households during such events.

Figure 5: Integration of gender-sensitive practices



Respondents in the field noted that the project has resulted in a clearer and more equitable division of labour between men and women in disaster preparedness and mitigation efforts in pilot sites. Respondents also noted that women are taking a more active role not only in the development of DRR household plans, but also in participating and gaining recognition of their views in meetings. In Thua Thien Hue, particularly, it was noted that women are now invited to attend all DRR meetings. However, what is less clear is the level of their participation at these meetings and how exactly they contribute to overall decision-making.

The project's communication initiatives in Quang Binh and Thua Thien Hue, for raising awareness on disaster preparedness and the resilience of women, were demonstrably effective in achieving expected results for specific output 2 of the revised logframe. Communication events were held in 32 communes in these provinces, delivered through local women's clubs under the VWU. Progress reports indicated that distribution of leaflets containing information on DRR, disaster preparedness, and the role of women in DRR/DRM, as well as role plays, presentations, and performances, together improved DRR and awareness of an estimated 3,000 people including women, men, children, and the elderly. This was corroborated by interviews and focus groups.

According to the fourth progress report, radio programmes developed by UN Women and broadcast via radio and commune loudspeakers before and during storm season have resulted in the increased awareness of roughly 6,000 people in Quang Binh and Thua Thien Hue on disaster preparedness and response. Interviews conducted in the field in February and March 2017 also indicate that loudspeaker

broadcasts were effective in providing information to commune residents, and several respondents stated that loudspeakers are especially effective for members of the commune who have difficulty reading printed documents. Although the totals are not clear, increased awareness was also reported by a significant number of interviewees and also mentioned in the focus groups.

The progress report also noted the success of an exhibition, entitled "Stories of Resilience: Women living with disasters," that was organized by the Viet Nam Women's Museum. According to interviewees, the exhibition was widely appreciated and credited with increasing the awareness of an estimated 2,000 people on disasters and women's resilience. Although not inherently scalable, such initiatives could be replicated and may offer potential for changing public perceptions of the role of women in DRM.

Effectiveness: Finding 5 – Project contributed to capacity building on GE and mainstreaming in DRR

The project helped build capacity of the VWU at all levels, including building the capacity of project participants in project pilot sites, with respect to gender and DRR/DRM. However, interviews and focus groups demonstrate a continuing need to build capacity at all levels, especially at the local levels of the VWU and government. In addition, government officials need further capacity building on the relationship between DRR/DRM and gender equality, especially since there is a lot of turnover within government.

Overall, field data including interviews, focus groups and survey responses have verified that the project has been effective in developing the capacities of staff and leaders of various agencies, including VWU and DMC, and in coordinating agencies to work together to achieve progress towards a common understanding of gender mainstreaming in DRR/DRM. As noted in the second progress report, a session on DRR/DRM concepts, climate change, and gender mainstreaming, was held at the annual workshop for VWU leaders after VWU became an official member of CFSC in October 2013. This marked the first time the integration of gender and DRR/DRM was featured at a central VWU meeting. 160 VWU leaders from 63 provinces and municipalities attended this workshop. Later, as part of a gender analysis study in DRR/DRM, 70 provincial, district, and commune level officials received training in gender analysis to improve their capacity on gender mainstreaming in DRR. As an indication of the positive response to this training, 85% of the trained officials subsequently participated actively in focus group discussions. Having been trained, these officials are expected to further incorporate gender mainstreaming in CBDRM and DRR/DRM in their localities.

However, interviews in the field and at central level reveal a need for further capacity development, particularly at local levels, on gender equality and on how gender equality relates to DRR/DRM. This was particularly the case at the local level, but more work is also needed at the central level to deepen knowledge and increase confidence and understanding. Some respondents, for example, reported that while women had achieved representation, they still faced obstacles, partly due to persistent stereotypes and attitudes and partly due to the need for women representatives to build their knowledge base and their overall confidence, not only to speak out but also to lead in this area. This will require more capacity building, including training and mentoring.



In recognition of the fact that capacity development is an on-going process, in late March 2016, 26 leaders and staff from the DMC office in Hanoi participated in training on gender mainstreaming in DRR conducted jointly by UN Women, VWU, and Oxfam. Although gender mainstreaming is one of the key principles of the CBDRM national programme, this marked the first exposure to training in gender mainstreaming for some DMC staff and leaders. Such training activities are helping to better inform DMC officials in developing gender mainstreaming guidelines for CBDRM. This learning has contributed to other activities including working together on the Hanoi Recommendations for Sendai. In interviews and focus group discussions, concern was expressed that, due to high turnover, training of DMC staff and leaders should be ongoing. Staff changes at MARD in responsibility for DRM was also a complicating factor both for DMC and the project.

In addition to direct involvement with training initiatives on gender mainstreaming in DRR, UN Women has coordinated with NGOs to develop a consistent definition of gender mainstreaming in DRR. In this way, UN Women is joining efforts with relevant NGOs to provide a more cohesive picture of gender mainstreaming to inform MARD in developing their official guidelines on mainstreaming gender in the CBDRM programme. Interviews with representatives of MARD and a focus group with these CSO partners in Hanoi provided evidence that they all consider it useful to work with UN Women to integrate gender into DRR/DRM planning and decision-making. These stakeholders expressed the view that working in concert with UN Women and the VWU, has helped build on the strengths and collective histories of the various partners.

Effectiveness: Finding 6 – Project fostered development of partner ownership

The project's management structure and initiatives helped to foster a sense of ownership among the key project partners and stakeholders. Combining these principles of local ownership and alignment has helped to create a solid foundation, but more work needs to be done to strengthen partner's ownership at the policy level. Finally, a local champion, in the form of the VWU, is essential to continue to promote and advocate on gender, DRR/DRM and CCA.

With project support, the VWU is developing an action plan on DRR and climate change to consolidate initiatives from pilot projects and set out its strategy on DRR/CCA. Demonstrating increased ownership by the VWU, the action plan builds on the results of the last four years and institutionalizes DRR/CCA work within VWU.

At the sub-national level, it was also noted in the EA that both CNDPC and the Red Cross consider this project as belonging to VWU, with the degree of involvement of CNDPC and Red Cross varying across provinces and districts. Interviews with VWU project management also indicated a sense of ownership and continued commitment to striving to meet the needs and contribute to the resilience of women in the most affected areas. Specifically, the VWU expressed a desire to continue the project's livelihoods component, which they view as a crucial intervention in the promotion of local, poor women's economic empowerment in the face of disaster risks. According to VWU leadership, given the lack of affordable national insurance related to disaster risks and climate change, the livelihood component is a key mitigating factor helping these women and their communities offset the negative effects of disasters related to climate change.

The livelihoods activity was widely regarded, by the VWU and participants in the target localities, as one of the project's most popular initiatives. Focus group participants in An Nhon commune praised it for increasing household income, improving the status of women within their families and communities, and generating increased support from community and local government. However, some respondents voiced concerns and offered comments regarding the suitability and support of LAM in their communities. Focus group participants in Loc Vinh, although praising the programme, indicated a need for greater support in providing equipment and access to markets and value chains for those involved in LAM, and also suggested that additional models need to be developed. Notwithstanding that this was a small initiative, given its economic benefits and visibility, it is not surprising that many community members appreciate livelihood programmes and have many comments and suggestions related to them.

Interviewees and focus group participants indicated that community consultation on development of DRR and DRM plans (involving both men and women) was an effective way to increase community ownership of these plans. In addition, the relief operations outlined in these plans were seen as relevant to their local contexts – not generic. Women also felt that the consultations helped increase their profile in the community since they were part of the consultations and decision-making.

Overall, as reflected in project progress reports, as well as in interviews with VWU and NGO partners, it appears that the VWU is committed to developing its capacity and promoting the integration of gender into DRR/DRM at all levels of governance in Viet Nam. This is evidenced specifically by its work, mentioned above, on a VWU action plan on gender and DRR/DRM. The evaluation team observed in interviews and focus groups that VWU members at all levels seem to have embraced this subject matter.

Although beyond the direct scope of the UN Women project, nationally, the VWU has demonstrated growing ownership in this area in a number of ways that can be partly attributed to their experience with the project. One example is the VWU's participation in an inter-governmental task force which was a joint UN–Government–NGOs Rapid Needs Assessment in early 2016 to respond to a severe drought and saltwater intrusion in affected areas of the country. Concretely, along with UN Women, the VWU secured support for emergency measures from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the Government of Korea. As a result, 11,500 hygiene kits were distributed to meet the sanitary needs of women and girls in 11,500 of the most affected households, increased awareness of women on hygiene practices, and included women in ensuring that humanitarian services were effectively delivered. Though not technically part of the project, this demonstrates VWU decision-making, initiative, and ownership on gender and DRR/DRM and CCA.

Effectiveness: Finding 7 – Partners contributed to programme effectiveness

Overall, project progress reports, interviews, and focus groups with a variety of project partners confirm that joint efforts resulted in more effectively combining of resources and engaging in complementary processes. This minimized unnecessary duplication and helped increase knowledge among a range of stakeholders related to the promotion of gender integration and women's meaningful participation in DRR/DRM. The evaluation team interviewed a cross section of project partners at national and local levels including the VWU, government departments (MARD, DMC etc.) and partner NGOs. They expressed

their view that joint efforts have contributed to the effectiveness of the project as well as to overall progress on gender and DRR/DRM and CCA.

Overview of Partnerships

The revised project logframe reflects a shift in focus from building the capacity of the VWU system to a more comprehensive approach that includes collaboration with several other partners. Findings from the evaluation document review, focus groups, interviews, and online survey responses all confirm that UN Women engaged with a variety of relevant stakeholders and was well aligned with its key partners. Beginning with UN Women's national executing partner, the VWU, and other partners, such as MARD, DARD, DMC/MARD, and CSOs or NGOs working in DRM and climate change (e.g., Oxfam), UN Women used a collaborative approach including technical assistance, informed by evidence from baseline data and KAP surveys to ensure relevance to partner needs in Viet Nam.

Beyond its main partners, the project consulted a variety of other national stakeholders such as the CNDPCs, radio stations, and the local Red Cross (particularly at provincial, district and commune levels). For example, following the evaluability assessment, project partners were invited to a workshop to review project results statements, objectives, outputs and outcomes, and project activities. This approach helped ensure that the project's activities and objectives remained relevant to the overall context with respect to DRR/DRM and climate change in Viet Nam. This also demonstrates close collaboration and an understanding that a variety of parties can play different roles to achieve an overall objective – in this case, mainstreaming gender into DRR/DRM and CCA.

UN Women's project partnerships helped to enhance key interventions and deliverables and contributed to an effective participatory and evidence-based approach. Specifically, the project was informed by KAP and baseline surveys in pilot provinces as well as by the evaluability assessment. Other project deliverables such as the gender analysis, and joint needs assessment were carried out in collaboration with key project partners and stakeholders such as Oxfam which helped ensure the project's continued relevance to the needs of its target groups, partners, and stakeholders. Overall all the NGO partners who took part in the national focus group for the evaluation or were interviewed individually were positively disposed to working with UN Women in this project particularly because of UN Women's support for partnering and cooperating with the wide array of other stakeholders.

Issues related to local capacity on gender and DRR and climate change, as well as issues related to maintaining effective partnerships, represent both an opportunity and a challenge for UN Women. At the central level, capacity building is being carried out by the VWU to improve gender mainstreaming in DRR/DRM and climate change in government ministries and agencies. However, the capacity and resources of these bodies are limited, as are those of project partners at local levels.

Achievements of Joint Activities

In addition to its activities at the local level, the UN Women project has advocated for development and implementation of relevant policy frameworks at national and international levels. Nationally, for example, along with UNDP, UN Women provided comments on the new law on disaster risk and on the national policy. As part of its alignment with national systems, as mentioned above, UN Women also

signed an MOU with the DMC under MARD in October 2015 around gender mainstreaming in CBDRM. UN Women and DMC's partnership was developed with the overall objective of strengthening gender equality in CBDRM around a number of deliverables, namely:

- Development of gender mainstreaming guidelines for use at the commune level;
- Capacity building for DMC, VWU, and master trainers¹² on gender equality and gender mainstreaming; and
- Development of a common framework on gender mainstreaming in CBDRM for DMC and other stakeholders.

In addition, a gender analysis was commissioned by UN Women and CARE "to contribute to a more evidence-based dialogue within the DRR and CBDRM community in Viet Nam" (pg. 3). According to the report, this was the first national study in Viet Nam to analyze gender-specific roles of women and men with respect to DRR. The study builds on findings in a policy paper by the UN and Oxfam, and reviews the types of policies and interventions needed to address issues related to gender and climate change, looking at key issues, barriers, and potential best practices.

As noted above, UN Women with financial support from the Government of Japan, collaborated with the GOV and the UN to hold a conference on Gender and DRR in Hanoi with focusing on gender mainstreaming in the implementation of Sendai Framework at national and local level. The outcome of the conference provided list of actionable recommendations for government to promote gender in the implementation of Sendai. The fact that the GOV with MARD's leading role co-chair this conference help to increase Viet Nam's position in the regional agenda in DRR as gender champion. They were invited to speak about gender and DRR recommendations at the ASIAN Ministerial meetings on DRR in New Delhi in November 2016. This collaboration provided an opportunity for advocacy and follow-through on these issues within national DRR policy agenda.

Effectiveness: Finding 8 – Project compliant with human rights-based and gender equality approaches

By working to address national priorities while promoting gender mainstreaming and a HRBA to DRR planning, the project has contributed to a solid gender and human rights foundation for work on DRR/DRM and climate change in Viet Nam. The project has a strong gender equality and overall human rights framework, and a strong link to international commitments in these areas.

Links to International Agreements

The various lines of evidence pursued in the evaluation all confirmed that both the project content and its approach reflected relevant human rights and gender equality principles. In particular, they were aligned with international commitments in the area of gender, DRR/DRM, and climate change. The project responded directly, for example, to one of the guiding principles of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015-2030), which states: "A gender, age, disability and cultural perspective

¹² Master trainers are a pool of trainers at the national and provincial levels who train commune CNDPC members and support them in the implementation of CBDRM.

should be integrated in all policies and practices” and “women and their participation are critical to effectively managing disaster risk.” The project also reflected the recommendation of the 2016 Hanoi Conference on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction for Asia and the Pacific on the need to address gender equality in DRR plans for the implementation of the Sendai Framework.

The project's emphasis on providing women with avenues to raise their voices and participate in a meaningful way in decision-making on DRR/DRM and CCA is also consistent with the CEDAW Draft General Recommendation No. 35 on the Gender-related dimensions of DRR in a Changing Climate (October, 2016), which affirms that “gender inequalities constrain the influence and control that women and girls have over their lives as well as their access to education, health, adequate housing, social protection and employment” (paragraph 3). The General Recommendation states that “several cross-cutting principles and provisions” of the CEDAW Convention “are of primary importance for guiding legislation, policies, plans of action, programmes, budgets and other activities in relation to DRR in a changing climate.” These principles and provisions include equality and non-discrimination, prioritizing the most marginalized women and girls, participation and empowerment through the allocation of resources and through access to avenues for meaningful participation of diverse groups of women, and accountability and access to justice. The project is aligned with these elements in its promotion of women in decision-making bodies, in non-traditional training, and in reconstruction.

Paragraph 6 of the General Recommendation addresses the vulnerability of women and girls, noting that this is “socially and culturally constructed” and thus can be altered. This echoes the project’s perspective that women’s participation in the design of disaster reduction and climate resilient initiatives advances both gender equality and sustainable DRR and CCA. The General Recommendation does not cover all dimensions of CCA and mitigation, but project activities reflected the focus on the obligation of State parties and other stakeholders under the Convention to take effective measures and on the need to “develop synergies” between gender equality and DRR/DRM and CCA.

The project also responds to the General Recommendation’s call for better understanding of the gender dimensions of DRR and the impacts of climate change through participatory gender impact assessments to inform appropriate strategies and policies. In line with this call, the project conducted a gender in DRR analysis to explore themes related to gender and DRR/DRM in Viet Nam. The report surveyed 1,400 respondents from 14 communes in 7 provinces as well gathering data from depth interviews and focus groups.

4.3. Impact

The following evaluation questions address effectiveness overall and possible impact from the intervention:

- To what extent was gender equality and women’s empowerment advanced in disaster management at household, community, and national levels as a result of the intervention?

- To what extent has the project created changes in policy and institutional mechanism on disaster management in Viet Nam?
- Are there any immediate impacts (positive or negative, direct or indirect, intended or unintended) observed?

Impact: Finding 9 – Project produced signs of positive change in GE and women's empowerment

Many of the project's indicators show signs of positive change, particularly in attitudes expressed by stakeholders during the data gathering for the evaluation. However, it is difficult to assess at this point whether changes in attitudes will translate into long-term behaviour or cultural change with respect to gender and DRR planning and responses. Changes of this kind will require much more time.

The project has resulted in improvements in gender equality and women's empowerment at all levels as conveyed in progress reports, survey responses, interviews, and focus group discussions at both the local and central level.

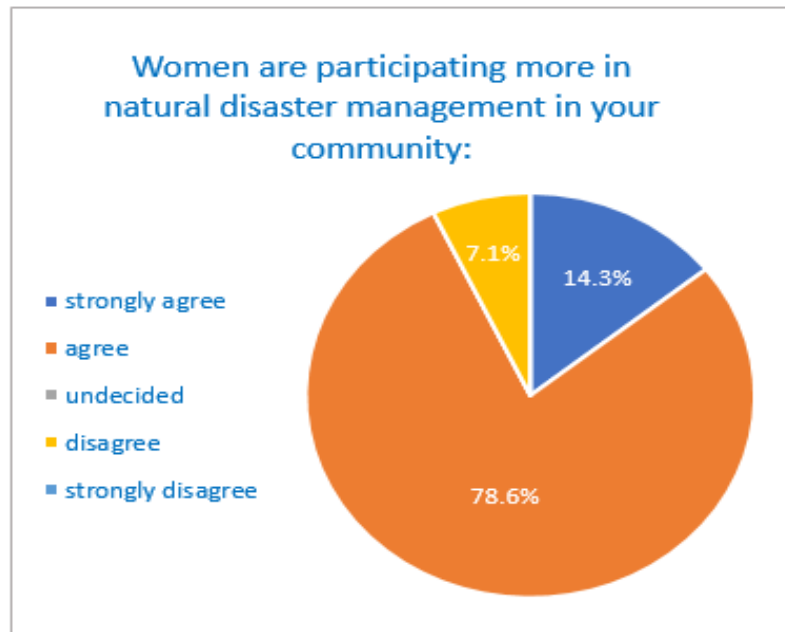
At the household level, focus group participants and survey respondents indicated widespread improvement in the participation of women in DRR and DRM activities (see Figure 6). Focus group discussion participants universally noted the importance of DRM division of labour between men and women, and several discussed the positive effect of this recognition on the influence and status of women in the community.

Also at a local level, radio/loudspeaker broadcasts before and during the storm season increased the awareness of approximately 6,000 people in Quang Binh and Thua Thien Hue project sites on disaster preparedness and responses. As described above, these broadcasts, which were aired on the Women's Programme of the Voice of Viet Nam, supported by the local district government, focused on women's "Stories of Resilience" in relation to DRM. The broadcasts were reported to be a popular way of enhancing understanding of gender equality and improving awareness of an estimated 2,000 individuals in these provinces, a finding echoed in interviews and focus groups, especially in terms of the impact of "Stories of Resilience."

Several other accomplishments were identified at the commune level. During the reporting period for the fourth progress report, eight gender-sensitive commune-level DRR plans were developed, with a reported increase in women's representation in commune-level CNDPCs in all eight communes targeted for CBDRM implementation by UN Women. The increase was from an average representation of 16% in 2015 to 24% in 2016.

At the provincial level, the project was instrumental in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment through strengthening interprovincial cooperation among VWU leaders. During the reporting period of the fourth progress report, the project supported VWU efforts in developing their first Action Plan on DRR and Climate Change through consultation between its members on strengths and weaknesses in their DRR/DRM activities. Fifty-one provincial VWU leaders from 45 provinces and municipalities participated in workshops to identify key challenges and best practices, discussing the role of VWU within CNDPC at a variety of levels to identify measures and strategies to further strengthen

Figure 6: Participation of women in community DRM



VWU's position in the Committee. In addition, an estimated 200 CNDPC and VWU officials from four provinces were trained on the importance of gender mainstreaming in DRR.

In interviews, VWU representatives described the participatory approach to developing the Action Plan on DRR and Climate Change. Interviewees from the VWU and NGO stakeholders (both at the local and central levels) indicated that there is a need to continue capacity development on gender and DRR/DRM and CCA.

Impact: Finding 10 – Influence on policy and institutional mechanisms in DRR/DRM is evolving

The project has advocated for the development and implementation of relevant policy frameworks at both international and national levels. For example, UN Women (along with UNDP) provided comments on the Law on Natural Disaster Preparedness and Response, reviewed national policy documents in the gender analysis, and supported the inclusion of the VWU as a member of the CNDPC. This latter marked a significant step towards the inclusion of women's concerns on DRM, and is particularly notable due to the early achievement of this project objective. But, notwithstanding positive examples of partnership development and improvement of the VWU's capacity to contribute to policy change, there have only been limited observed changes in policy or institutional mechanisms stemming directly from project interventions.

Interviewees from within the VWU, as well as other stakeholders including UN Women, NGO partners, and UN colleagues, all indicated that further capacity-building of the VWU at central and local levels is necessary to strengthen its inclusion in decision-making on DRR/DRM and ensure a continued significant

impact moving forward. To be seen as credible, more engaged participation and leadership on this issue, based on increased knowledge and expertise within the VWU, will be required.

As noted above (Finding 2, page 22), the partnership between UN Women and DMC was developed with the overall objective of strengthening gender equality in CBDRM around a number of deliverables. This requires ongoing assistance to the organizations involved (particularly given high turnover of staff) to implement gender equality and gender mainstreaming. Despite the existence of Viet Nam's gender equality law, which means that gender is supposed to be mainstreamed into government departments, this remains a challenge.

UN Women's coordination of the Regional Conference on Gender and DRR and the resulting Hanoi Recommendations on gender-responsive implementation of the Sendai Framework helped to promote the development of national targets and indicators on women's involvement in DRR and DRM. As reported both in the progress reports and the evaluation focus group with MARD, there was an improved understanding of the importance of strengthening integration of gender.

In the international arena, as a member of UN-Disaster Management Team in Viet Nam (UN-DRMT) under the One UN Joint Programming Group on Climate Change and Environment, UN Women plays a key role in mainstreaming gender equality into DRR/DRM and climate change action. In this role, UN Women has worked closely with the UNDP on DRR and DRM activities in Viet Nam, as well as with government and non-government organizations to promote the benefits and relevance of capacity building on gender equality, DRR/DRM, and climate change. In this role, UN Women demonstrated its strategic advantage.

The above examples illustrate the project's contributions on capacity building and technical assistance. The long-term result of these contributions should be to place the VWU in the lead on policy change, demonstrating a move over the long toward term local ownership, consistent with the Paris Declaration.

The evaluation found evidence of some positive changes in this area, in terms of actions on the part of the Viet Nam government and strengthening of the VWU. Examples include:

- The work of UN Women and DMC (under MARD) on developing guidelines for gender mainstreaming in CBDRM;
- UN Women/VWU participation in the Joint Needs Assessment with government, UN, and NGOs; key priorities for women and children in most affected households were considered because of UN Women/VWU advocacy;
- Project support to VWU's efforts to institutionalize its DRR/DRM engagement; 51 provincial VWU leaders participated in workshops marking first nation-wide consultations for provincial VWU representatives in CNDPCs; interprovincial discussion took place on strengths and weaknesses in DRR/DRM activities;
- Sharing of recommendations on how to strengthen VWU's participation in CDNPCs with VWU at central level, as inputs to VWU's Action Plan;



- Consultation meeting in March 2016 towards developing guidelines on gender mainstreaming in CBDRM to gather inputs/comments from government, UN, NGOs, to be piloted in June 2016; and
- VWU leader joining the high-level government delegation conference on DM for first time, highlighting issues of women and girls, despite limited involvement in the technical negotiations.

Impact: Finding 11 – Multiple factors affecting impact in the future

Since many projects, donors, and other actors work in this area, it is difficult to attribute change (positive or negative) to this UN Women project alone or to report on particular types of immediate impacts. UN Women's strategic advantage is the ability to work across diverse stakeholders and facilitate amongst them; it is therefore more realistic to talk about multiple types of contribution than specific intended types of attribution. The project also engaged in a number of responsive activities, such as the livelihoods activities, which were popular but were not part of the original project design.

The number of projects, donors, and other actors working on gender, climate change, and disaster preparedness initiatives in Viet Nam makes it difficult to attribute observed impacts directly to interventions by the UN Women project. Indeed, a number of interviewees expressed confusion regarding which project interventions were associated with which organizations or donors. As discussed above (Finding 3, page 16), this has been an issue throughout the project. While some of the difficulty in attributing results to interventions are intrinsic to the complexity of the project environment, activities could have been better reported on, using high-quality indicators to ascertain the impact of specific project initiatives. This has implications for assessing both sustainability and impact, since results monitoring is meant not only as a form of accountability but also as a method for evidence-based management and decision-making.

One of the main impacts of the project emerges from its participatory and inclusive process, which included the voices of diverse stakeholders on a number of relevant issues, such as on the development of standardized guidelines for gender mainstreaming CBDRM. This was approached in an inclusive manner in partnership with MARD and NGOs which are experienced in this area. Given that achieving the project outcome will require diverse experience, technical expertise, and influence, the participatory and inclusive approach adopted is critical in strengthening the linkages between project activities and sustained impacts.

UN Women was able to bring together a diverse group of relevant stakeholders. Few other actors have the trust and credibility to convene such diverse stakeholders and facilitate a discussion on integrating gender into CBDRM in Viet Nam, or to advocate for integrating gendering into DRR/DRM and CCA in international fora. This sentiment was expressed by most interviewees, including those from the NGO national focus group in Hanoi, who all felt that the project was able to demonstrate, concretely and practically, that working with UN Women and the VWU provided a unique opportunity to influence policy at the central level while working to build capacity of Viet Nam's women's machinery at all levels. Many interviewees expressed the belief that working with VWU and the national machinery was a catalyst for change and encouraged work with multiple stakeholders.



4.4. Efficiency

The following evaluation questions address the efficiency of the intervention:

- Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve results? Have resources been used efficiently?
- Assess managerial and work efficiency. Were management capacities adequate?
- Has relevant international gender, climate change, and DRR expertise been sought?
- How effectively did the programme management team monitor programme performance and results?

Efficiency: Finding 12 – Efficiency of delivery was mixed

The project was largely efficient in strategically allocating limited resources (funds, human resources, time, and internal expertise) to achieve most planned outputs and contribute to achieving the project outcome. However, efficiency was also constrained in some instances by limited resources, gaps in capacity, delays in funds disbursement, staff turnover, limited technical assistance, and limited monitoring and/or a lack of reporting on monitoring missions.

Responsiveness

Evidence from the evaluation indicated that UN Women demonstrated a responsive ability to redirect project resources to meet pressing local concerns. For example, in response to drought and saltwater intrusion in early 2016 in Ca Mau, the local VWU requested support for the provision of water tanks for roughly 250 poor female-headed households in Khanh Binh Tay and Nguyen Viet Khai. After review with VWU, UN Women repurposed some project funds, amounting to 20,000 USD, to respond to the emergency needs of the most severely affected women and communities.

These changes were communicated to the Embassy of Luxembourg and support was subsequently received. At the request of local government, whose immediate focus was on addressing the impact of the disaster and supporting the affected population some project activities were also postponed in Ca Mau due to these events.

Capacity Building

The evaluation team found that, notwithstanding the challenge of limited VWU capacity, the project was successful in carrying out initiatives. For example, multiple stakeholders at local and national levels reported in interviews and focus groups that training influenced participants who joined CBDRM Technical Assistance Groups to demonstrate increased responsibility to carry out community based disaster risk assessments and develop disaster reduction plans. Increased awareness on gender and access to tools contributed to the following:

- Representation and participation of an increased number of local women during the consultation for the disaster risk assessment



- Conducting of separate meetings with women and men and involvement of vulnerable groups such as persons living with disability, children, elderly and ethnic minorities
- Identifying different vulnerabilities and capacities of women and men in disasters
- Developing a hazard map of the commune with participation from both women and men.

Efficient Use of Resources and Partnerships

A hallmark of the project was UN Women's work with others active in the same area. Working together with others, UN Women was efficient in capitalizing on various partners strengths in order to achieve results. For example:

- The guideline on how to develop a gender sensitive household DRR plan is being finalized with DMC. Commune facilitator groups were trained to guide targeted households to develop their DRR plans.
- UN Women worked closely with NGOs including Oxfam and CARE International on pursuing common objectives on mainstreaming gender in DRR and DRM in Viet Nam.
- UN Women is a member of the DMWG and the Climate Change Working Group (WG) managed by the NGO Resource Centre in Hanoi.

Communication

Several examples illustrate how the project strategically and efficiently allocated resources to achieve results, especially with respect to efficient communication reaching marginalized people without access to televisions. A variety of radio programs provide information via loud speakers in communities. For example:

- The project developed a radio programme on disaster risk preparedness and responses developed, broadcast on Women's Programme of the Voice of Viet Nam (VoV) in Thua Thien Hue and Quang Binh provinces.
- A radio soap opera, broadcast through commune loud speaker systems before and during storm season, consisted of four stories over 20 episodes. These introduced the audience to problems that may occur before, during, and after natural disasters, focusing on floods and storms, consequences of insufficient preparation, and how to minimize adverse impacts of natural disasters.
- Radio programme provided useful information for women and communities on actions which need to be taken for early preparedness before storm season, and also promoted development of early and proactive disaster preparedness culture in the community. Changes in behaviours and practices of women and households were measured in the post KAP survey.

In addition, a large number of booklets showing ways of dealing with local disaster situations in clear pictures, were reported by local people as being useful for them. More particularly, communication materials and booklets for women's clubs were find useful for local communicators to do communication activities about CCA/DRM as well as gender equality and mainstreaming. Some communication



materials, such as the handbook for communicators, unfortunately were delivered to communicators only after they had completed their activities.

Livelihood Activities Models

As noted above (Finding 1, page 8), LAMs were heralded in interviews and focus groups as very successful project initiatives; however, some concerns were raised about the selection and funding of these models. Some focus groups and interviewees indicated that increased funding was necessary, both for specific models, and to ensure wider participation in livelihood activities matched to each local reality. For example, in Dong Thap, they reported the model as being quite successfully implemented, however the selected area for the model was not the one that was most vulnerable to the natural disaster. The Project Revision Document states that poor and near-poor households should receive financial support for livelihood activities. Although the VWU reports that funding was channeled through one beneficiary and reached a wide range of stakeholders, some interviewees in Loc Vinh reported being unaware of this which is an example of differing perceptions and the need for improved communication.

Efficiency: Finding 13 – Project overcame management challenges

Some of the issues faced by the national and local project management teams included: high turnover, primarily part-time staff not fully dedicated to the project, limited budget, minimal project and financial management staff, capacity building and monitoring. However, notwithstanding these challenges, the project team was able to deliver the main elements of the programme in the local sites and to some extent at the national and policy levels.

This project was implemented through the National Execution Modality in which the local implementing agency is responsible for project management and outcomes. All project staff, excluding the central level Accountant and Translator/Administrator, are VWU staff, working on a part-time basis. The project was implemented both at the national level working on policy and supporting the work of multiple stakeholders and at the local level where two part-time staff members carried out project management. With the exception of some workshops and training activities, project activities were implemented within VWU branches at all levels. Government agency staff were invited to participate to increase their awareness of these issues.

This arrangement is in line with policies on aid effectiveness, such as the Paris Declaration, the Accra Accord and the Busan Partnership, which promote the importance of national ownership. However, national ownership needs to be balanced against the reality that many national institutions have insufficient capacity – as was the case for the VWU, especially at local levels. Insufficient capacity is a key obstacle to national ownership. In this project, there is a need to further strengthen and improve the capacity of the local level to implement national development strategies. There needs to be more grounding of national policies at the provincial, district and local levels in institutions including in the VWU at those levels. More capacity needs to be built with respect to gender equality and DRR which tends to be stronger at the national level than locally.

The project experienced high staff turnover of financial and administrative staff which put a strain on project management. After the project's revision for example, bottom-up planning provided

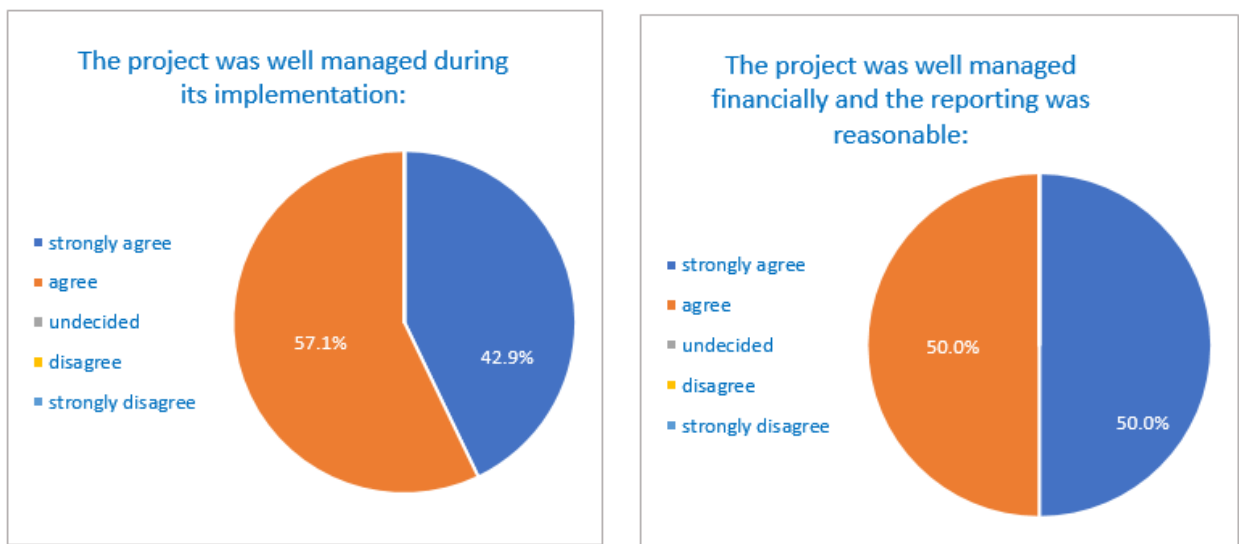


opportunities for greater responsive to the needs of communities, which tended to lead to the disbursement of scant project resources, both financial and managerial, to multiple partners. A better balance could have been struck between responsiveness and direction. Also, disbursements were a challenge for the project due to the fact that UN Women and VWU at the national level could not disburse or pay unless all the financial documents were completed which was often not the case. Improved financial staffing was needed.

An additional challenge was the sharing of project management by the two bureaucracies of UN Women and the Viet Nam Women's Union. This led to some implementation delays. There were also concerns that project support was spread too thinly both before and after the project revision. Prior to the revision, concerns were raised that the number of targeted communes stretched project resources, and indeed the Project Revision Document decreased the number of targeted locales for the second phase from 64 to 12 communes. After the revision, in addition to the decrease in geographical scope, more emphasis was placed on bottom-up planning. While this achieved results and praise from respondents in interviews and focus groups in the field, it entailed sharing resources among a variety of project activities. It was difficult for this project to efficiently contribute to a wide outcome and, even with the decreased geographic scope, the relatively small budget of USD 1.3 million was small relative to the large number of activities carried out at multiple levels in Viet Nam.

In terms of efficiency, several participants in interviews and focus groups reported that there were delays in funds disbursement. Nevertheless, as indicated by the two charts below, which illustrate survey responses from three of the five locations, the project was considered to be well managed by these respondents. This was also reported in the interviews and focus groups in the two field locations.

Figure 7: Project Management



Efficiency: Finding 14 – Relevant technical assistance was utilized from multiple stakeholders

UN Women identified a number of partners who provided technical expertise and assistance to the project, including CARE International, GIZ, Oxfam, the Red Cross, UNDP, and a number of experts who were consulted to develop information for KAP, the EA and the Gender Analysis and Gender Guidelines.

UN Women has been working closely with Oxfam in consolidating and standardizing gender mainstreaming steps in risk assessment and planning. This was efficient since Oxfam has worked in this domain in Viet Nam for several years and has a great deal to contribute.

UN Women provided technical support in several areas. For example, in 2015, a leader of the VWU was represented for the first time in the government delegation at the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Sendai. This was as a result of UN Women and VWU advocacy with MARD, the President's office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This was important, since discussions at the conference focused on the new international normative framework on DRR for the 2015 to 2030 period. UN Women provided technical support to the VWU leader during official discussions. Although her participation in technical negotiations was limited, her presence helped to highlight women and girls in DRR in the official statement of the Viet Nam Government.

In the future, to maximize both effectiveness and efficiency, more mentoring and technical assistance would help to foster in-house expertise at the VWU. This sentiment was echoed in interviews with stakeholders from the UN, government, VWU, and NGOs. Multiple stakeholders reported that the project benefitted from expert-driven studies such as: KAP, the evaluability assessment, project revision document, and the gender in DRR analysis. Stakeholders consulted through several lines of evidence also reported that these helped steer project activities and contributed to the project's mid-term corrections.

Efficiency: Finding 15 – Project faced some monitoring challenges

Based on the progress reports, monitoring missions, and interviews with project managers, it is evident that reporting comprehensively on the indicators was challenging. Project managers needed more training and tools to assist them in monitoring their projects and gathering, analyzing, and reporting on their indicators to better track project results, link results to decision making, and contribute to learning and accountability.

Four comprehensive annual progress reports were provided for each of the four years of implementation. With respect to monitoring, the first progress report indicated that three monitoring missions were conducted by UN Women together with VWU. The first was to Hue City to plan project activities with Thua Thien Hue and Quang Binh Women's Unions (4-5 April 2013); the second was to Binh Dinh province to monitor first aid and swimming classes for local women and girls (27-29 May 2013); and the third was to Binh Dinh to monitor the women's club activity at the commune level as well as the forum held with local women and provincial authorities on gender in DRR and DRM (1-3 August 2013). The rationale and benefits of these missions were well described in the first progress report.

Since UN Women's standard donor reporting format does not require information on frequency of monitoring, this is not shared in subsequent reports. Nevertheless, UN Women and the VWU reported that monitoring missions to the target communities were conducted by the PMU and a UN Women staff



during the final year of the project only. The third progress report mentioned the results of a monitoring mission and stated that indicators were examined and revised.

These are the types of useful inputs which monitoring can provide and which were likely reported in separate monitoring reports. Although it is not a corporate requirement to share these reports, additional monitoring feedback on project results from knowledgeable observers of the project often provides beneficial feedback for project managers.

The project used several means of verification for monitoring achievement of the project's outcome and three outputs. For example, for the outcome level, the project used approved commune DRR plans, project monitoring data bases, the CBDRM database at DMC, and related government documents. At the output level, the means of verification included a variety of sources, including pre- and post-training evaluations, interviews, monitoring reports, commune DRR plans, household plans, etc.

4.5. Sustainability

The following evaluation questions address the sustainability of the intervention:

- What steps have been taken to ensure programme sustainability? Are the programme results, achievements and benefits likely to be durable?
- Are results anchored in national institutions and can they be maintained at the end of the programme?
- Can the programme approach or results be replicated or scaled up by national partners? What would support their replication and scaling development and partnerships

Sustainability: Finding 16 – More time needed to fully embed changes

Institutionalizing the concepts and processes supported by the project into local and national governance structures will require more time and capacity building (including at the VWU), aimed at generating more locally owned sustainable results. Although a good foundation has been laid, to be truly sustainable, results need to continue to connect to policy context in Viet Nam, particularly at the local level where lack of capacity and financial resources in local governance threaten sustainability.

As mentioned above, one of UN Women's strengths in successfully achieving project results and ensuring that results extend sustainably into the future has been its ability to cultivate key partnerships and build upon partner capacity. These partnerships offer the potential to achieve results beyond the immediate resources of the project, although some stakeholders have expressed concerns about sustainability without further investment.

Interventions to strengthen VWU at local levels, particularly in knowledge and decision-making on DRR/DRM and climate change, are integral not only to the project's capacity-development component but also to institutionalizing sustainable results within the country. These interventions have been critical to enhancing the enabling environment, as VWU has vast networks and coalitions with other parties in

Viet Nam from the local to national levels, including inroads into the government apparatus that is critical for the institutionalization of results at the policy level.

Issues related to local capacity on gender and DRR and climate change, as well as maintaining effective partnerships, represent a funding challenge for UN Women, since its local partners, including the VWU, have limited resources. Without further funding and other investments, several interviewees felt that the sustainability of results would be at risk.

In Thanh Hoa Province, 45 leaders and heads of departments from central and provincial VWUs, from six disaster-prone provinces, participated in a conference on gender equality in DRR/CCA. Participants acknowledged the importance of the VWU in promoting the involvement of women in DRR/CCA, and identifying the need for systematic capacity building and guidance on DRR/CCA within the VWU system. This was a knowledge-sharing opportunity for provinces not receiving project support, which demonstrated the importance of VWU capacity-building in achieving results beyond the immediate reach of UN Women's targeted locales.

The benefits of this workshop include capacity building for the VWU and VWU's commitment to continue working on the DRR Action Plan at the national level. Also training and communication materials and the guideline on gender mainstreaming in CBDRM (DMC) will be used by the government and other stakeholders.

In summary, many steps have been taken to ensure sustainability but they will not bear fruit unless they are embedded in institutions such as the VWU which can continue to promote change in DRR, DRM, and CCA at all levels. A strong relationship has been forged between UN Women and the VWU which can be built upon working with other partners such as NGOs. These relationships can continue long after this project.

Sustainability: Finding 17 – Strengthening the VWU is crucial for sustainability

Interventions to strengthen the VWU at local levels, particularly with respect to knowledge and decision-making capacity on gender, DRR, DRM and climate change, are integral for institutionalizing long-term results in the country with respect to a strengthened national women's machinery to cope with climate change. The results to date are anchored in the VWU, which is currently working on its national action plan on DRR/DRM and gender. The project is not yet anchored within national institutions such as MARD, but it is beginning to be, with the main initial gain being the embedding of methods and results in documentation.

The production and distribution of several key documents are central to the sustainability of the project methods and results key aspect of project sustainability. For example, a guidebook, *Making it count – Integrating gender into climate change and disaster risk reduction: a practical how-to guide*, developed jointly by UN Women, GIZ, and CARE International, was published in September 2015 and aims to provide DRR practitioners with key questions and considerations for integrating gender into DRR projects and activities. Another important document is a handbook on DRR and DRM communication activities was developed for commune-level facilitators. It includes preparedness checklists, household preparedness plans, and other DRR content refined over the course of the project. VWU intends to



disseminate this handbook to facilitators in all locations. A document capturing project results, best practices, and lessons learned through visual documentation of stories from the field will be used by VWU in training and advocacy work as they continue work on DRR/DRM issues across Viet Nam.

With respect to the integration of project findings into DRR policy, VWU organized a policy dialogue as a forum to discuss current issues surrounding gender equality and DRR. A policy brief produced jointly with other UN bodies and NGOs will be developed based on the findings discussed in this evaluation report and studies by a variety of other organizations. That policy brief is planned to present recommendations to MARD and other relevant ministries aimed at improving their implementation of gender mainstreaming in DRR/DRM policies and programmes. For sustainability in promoting gender in the DRR, the VWU needs to be active and take a strong leadership role. Distilling the lessons learned from the project in documents and embedding the project's methods and results in institutions, such as MARD and the DMC, lays the groundwork for continued progress in alignment with the project framework. By collaborating with other actors in the production of these documents, a shared understanding among actors may be reached regarding implementation of DRR/DRM activities. Such shared efforts promote sustainability of results.

Sustainability: Finding 18 – Opportunities exist to scale up for the future

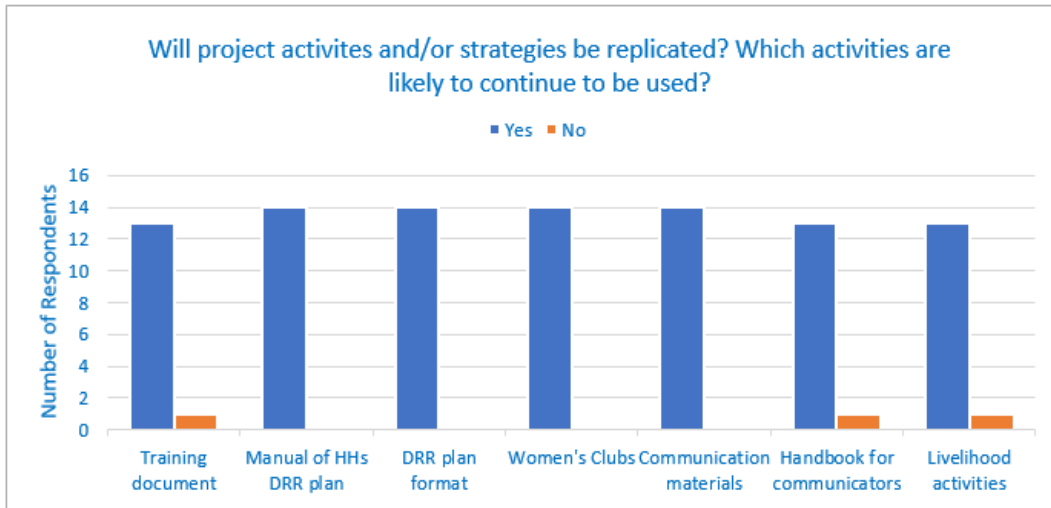
The project design reflected the understanding that capacity development is a key to sustainability; as such, capacity building was featured as a cornerstone of the project. At the national/institutional level, the project combined efforts with others to integrate gender into national policy and law and help support an official Guideline on Engendered DRM e.g. with DMC. This work continues, but effort is needed on the exit strategy, especially at the local level. Of particular long-term importance is the opportunity to scale up the LAM. CEDAW Draft Recommendation 35 presents a number of options that could help the project scale up. These include contributions to promoting global norms on gender and national policy, e.g., engendering disaster risk preparedness and reduction and climate change and utilizing a gender equality and HRBA. Using national systems is critical. Thus, the main challenge is effective implementation of such norms and policies at national and local levels of governance.

In discussing replication possibilities, survey respondents indicated that they intend to continue with activities and strategies implemented during the project (see Figure 7). However, interviewees also indicated that the need for further funding is a potential risk to sustainability. Interviews in target communities showed particular interest in continuing and expanding on the LAMs – which has definite potential for scaling up. The VWU felt that, given the lack of affordable national insurance related to disaster risks and climate change, the livelihood component could be key to helping poor women and their communities mitigate negative effects of disasters related to climate change. The LAM component was piloted in a small number of communes and could be scaled up using lessons learned from these pilot initiatives.



In order to help women lead small and medium-sized enterprises to market and introduce value chains, which are pro-poor and gender-sensitive, private sector partners dedicated to development are needed. One such potential partner is the Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA). MEDA has worked with the poor around the world and in Southeast Asia, recently opening a project on women

Figure 8: Replication of project activities



entrepreneurs for SMEs in Myanmar. Specialized in working with viable, locally-owned small businesses linked to value chains, MEDA may be an ideal partner for helping to mentor and replicate the LAM. SNV is another possible partner. As funding modalities change, there is an increasing emphasis on alignment with private sector investments that work hand in hand with development goals.

Overall, the project reported that livelihood projects can be a good tool to help women and other vulnerable groups better cope with natural disasters. They can also have unintended positive results, such as providing women with more respect from their families and communities – which in turn enhances their overall effectiveness in decision-making. But although LAMs are popular with both donors and recipients, and can contribute to adaptation to climate change, “failure to [also] address structural barriers faced by women in assessing their rights could exacerbate existing gender-based inequalities” (Para 3, CEDAW General Recommendation).

Another potential area for scaling up is UN Women's contributions to promoting global norms on integrating gender into DRR/DRM and CCA. Gender relations are a normative focus of UN Women. Particularly in developing countries, such as Viet Nam, gender relations are likely to be affected by the changing climate and associated policies, as women face gender-specific vulnerabilities and poorer women, more marginalized women, such as ethnic minority women, the elderly, and those living with disabilities, face increased barriers that limit their ability to adapt to a changing climate which is increasing their vulnerability and risk.

As noted in the introduction, gender issues were largely absent from international policy discourse on DRR/DRM and CCA until recently. However, this has been changing thanks to lobbying and the increasing

involvement of gender specialists – such as UN Women – in this field. As a signatory of the Sendai Framework (2015-2030), the GOV is expected to carry the standards of that framework into national laws and policies. Reporting under the Sendai Framework is against targets and indicators to be tailored to each member's specific national context. Although Viet Nam achieved many targets and indicators in the 2005 to 2015 reporting period, gender-related targets and indicators were mostly among the unachieved ones. Currently, Viet Nam is working toward implementing the recommendations of the Asia and the Pacific Regional Conference on Gender and DRR on the inclusion of gender equality into the DRR Plans for the implementation of the Sendai Framework at the regional, national and local levels – an objective which is aligned with the UN Women project. These are currently being reformulated with the help and expertise of UN Women. Support for such initiatives should contribute to the sustainability of project strategies, activities, and results. National NGO partners indicated that they will continue to support initiatives similar to this project which will facilitate the likelihood of sustainability.

5. Summary of Findings

Relevance: Finding 1 – Project is aligned and relevant both to local beneficiaries and to the VWU at local and national levels

Data from multiple sources, particularly at the local level, demonstrated that project interventions were relevant and aligned to the needs and priorities of local beneficiaries in pilot sites. In addition, VWU reports at both the local level and the national level that this project is relevant to their local and national mandate. Nationally, this was verified by two data sources - VWU in Ha Noi and by a small sample of national NGO stakeholders with which the evaluation met in Ha Noi.

Relevance: Finding 2 – UN Women has a comparative advantage as a facilitator

The lines of evidence demonstrate that UN Women has the trust of government partners, other UN Agencies and CSOs, which allows UN Women to navigate well as a facilitator amongst diverse cultures and interests to mainstream gender equality and human rights into DRR/DRM and climate change.

Effectiveness: Finding 3 – Outputs were largely achieved and there was progress towards outcomes

The evaluation found that the project strategies were largely successful in delivering planned activities and outputs, and that progress was made towards the outcome despite limited funding and the complex socio-political issues surrounding gender equality, DRR/DRM, and climate change. The project was largely effective in achieving Output 1 on capacity development was Output 2 on awareness, though more work is needed on Output 3 on national level initiatives. At the outcome level, early on the project achieved the outcome of the VWU becoming an official member of the CNDPC as a direct result of advocacy by UN Women and others and, especially in project areas, there has been increased women's participation in the CNDPD. But despite improvements, capacity is still an issue that limits the level and depth of women's participation in decision-making, as evidenced by lack of regular participation of VWU members in DRR and DRM meetings and activities. This was demonstrated in progress reports and also cited in interviews and focus groups. More work is also needed with partners on monitoring the results of interventions and initiatives, to demonstrate exactly how they enhance women's decision-making in DRR and DRM.

Effectiveness: Finding 4 – Iterative strategy was largely effective

The flexible project design influenced effectiveness. This project underwent a number of iterations; the evaluation assessment in 2013 led to additional objectives and the adjustment of the project's TOC and some of its objectives. These changes were largely beneficial to the project's achievements and outcomes and placed it on a positive trajectory for achieving its overall planned results. The project's willingness to adjust, in the face of evidence from KAP surveys, baselines, the evaluability assessment, and partnerships, was largely effective, but in some cases the balance between flexibility and direction was not ideal.

Effectiveness: Finding 5 – Project contributed to capacity building on GE and mainstreaming in DRR



The project helped build capacity of the VWU at all levels, including building the capacity of project participants in project pilot sites, with respect to gender and DRR/DRM. However, interviews and focus groups demonstrate a continuing need to build capacity at all levels, especially at the local levels of the VWU and government. In addition, government officials need further capacity building on the relationship between DRR/DRM and gender equality, especially since there is a lot of turnover within government.

Effectiveness: Finding 6 – Project fostered development of partner ownership

The project's management structure and initiatives helped to foster a sense of ownership among the key project partners and stakeholders. Combining these principles of local ownership and alignment has helped to create a solid foundation, but more work needs to be done to strengthen partner's ownership at the policy level. Finally, a local champion, in the form of the VWU, is essential to continue to promote and advocate on gender, DRR/DRM and CCA.

Effectiveness: Finding 7 – Partners contributed to programme effectiveness

Overall, project progress reports, interviews, and focus groups with a variety of project partners confirm that joint efforts with partners resulted in more effectively combining of resources and engaging in complementary processes. This minimized unnecessary duplication and helped increase knowledge among a range of stakeholders related to the promotion of gender integration and women's meaningful participation in DRR/DRM. The evaluation team interviewed a cross section of project partners at national and local levels including the VWU, government departments (MARD, DMC etc.) and partner NGOs. They expressed their view that joint efforts by partners have contributed to the effectiveness of the project as well as to overall progress on gender and DRR/DRM and CCA.

Effectiveness: Finding 8 – Project compliant with human rights-based and gender equality approaches

By working to address national priorities while promoting gender mainstreaming and a HRBA to DRR planning, the project has contributed to a solid gender and human rights foundation for work on DRR/DRM and climate change in Viet Nam. The project has a strong gender equality and overall human rights framework, and a strong link to these international commitments.

Impact: Finding 9 – Project produced signs of positive change in GE and women's empowerment

Many of the project's indicators show signs of positive change, particularly in attitudes expressed by stakeholders during the data gathering for the evaluation. However, it is difficult to assess at this point whether changes in attitudes will translate into long-term behaviour or cultural change with respect to gender and DRR planning and responses. Changes of this kind will require much more time.

Impact: Finding 10 – Influence on policy and institutional mechanisms in DRR/DRM is evolving

The project has advocated for the development and implementation of relevant policy frameworks at both international and national levels. For example, UN Women (along with UNDP) provided comments on the Law on Natural Disaster Preparedness and Response, reviewed national policy documents in the

gender analysis, and supported the inclusion of the VWU as a member of the CNDPC. This latter marked a significant step towards the inclusion of women's concerns on DRM, and is particularly notable due to the early achievement of this project objective. But, notwithstanding positive examples of partnership development and improvement of the VWU's capacity to contribute to policy change, there have only been limited observed changes in policy or institutional mechanisms stemming directly from project interventions.

Impact: Finding 11 – Multiple factors affecting impact in the future

Since many projects, donors, and other actors work in this area, it is difficult to attribute change (positive or negative) to this UN Women project alone or to report on particular types of immediate impacts. UN Women's strategic advantage is the ability to work across diverse stakeholders and facilitate amongst them; it is therefore more realistic to talk about multiple types of contribution than specific intended types of attribution. The project also engaged in a number of responsive activities, such as the livelihoods activities, which were popular but were not part of the original project design.

Efficiency: Finding 12 – Efficiency of delivery was mixed

The project was largely efficient in strategically allocating limited resources (funds, human resources, time, and internal expertise) to achieve most planned outputs and contribute to achieving the project outcome. However, efficiency was also constrained in some instances by limited resources, gaps in capacity, delays in funds disbursement, staff turnover, limited technical assistance, and limited monitoring and/or a lack of reporting on monitoring missions.

Efficiency: Finding 13 – Project overcame management challenges

Some of the issues faced by the national and local project management teams included: high turnover, primarily part-time staff not fully dedicated to the project, limited budget, minimal project and financial management staff, capacity building and monitoring. However, notwithstanding these challenges, the project team was able to deliver the main elements of the programme in the local sites and to some extent at the national and policy levels.

Efficiency: Finding 14 – Relevant TA was utilized from multiple stakeholders

UN Women identified a number of partners who provided technical expertise and assistance to the project, including CARE International, GIZ, Oxfam, the Red Cross, UNDP, and a number of experts who were consulted to develop information for KAP, the EA and the Gender Analysis and Gender Guidelines.

Efficiency: Finding 15 – Project faced some monitoring challenges

Based on the progress reports, monitoring missions, and interviews with project managers, it is evident that reporting comprehensively on the indicators was challenging. Project managers needed more training and tools to assist them to monitor their projects and gather, analyze, and report on indicators to track project results, link results to decision making, and contribute to learning and accountability.

Sustainability: Finding 16 – More time needed to fully embed changes

Institutionalizing the concepts and processes supported by the project into local and national governance structures will require more time and capacity building (including at the VWU), aimed at generating more locally owned sustainable results. Although a good foundation has been laid, to be truly sustainable, results need to continue to connect to policy context in Viet Nam, particularly at the local level where lack of capacity and financial resources in local governance threaten sustainability.

Sustainability: Finding 17 – Strengthening the VWU is crucial for sustainability

Interventions to strengthen the VWU at local levels, particularly with respect to knowledge and decision-making capacity on gender, DRR, DRM and climate change, are integral for institutionalizing long-term results in the country with respect to a strengthened national women's machinery to cope with climate change. The results to date are anchored in the VWU, which is currently working on its national action plan on DRR/DRM and gender. The project is not yet anchored within national institutions such as MARD, but it is beginning to be, with the main initial gain being the embedding of methods and results in documentation.

Sustainability: Finding 18 – Opportunities exist to scale up for the future

The project design reflected the understanding that capacity development is a key to sustainability; as such, capacity building was featured as a cornerstone of the project. At the national/institutional level, the project combined efforts with others to integrate gender into national policy and law and help support an official Guideline on Engendered DRM e.g. with DMC. This work continues, but effort is needed on the exit strategy, especially at the local level. Of particular long-term importance is the opportunity to scale up the LAM. CEDAW Draft Recommendation 35 presents a number of options that could help project scale up including contributions to promoting global norms on gender and national policy, e.g., engendering disaster risk preparedness and reduction and climate change and utilizing a gender equality and HRBA. Using national systems is critical. Thus, the main challenge is effective implementation of such norms and policies at national and local levels of governance.



6. Conclusions

Conclusion 1: UN Women is in unique position as trusted facilitator

With the trust of all stakeholders, UN Women is in a unique position. Beyond convening successful and effective civil society coalitions and partnerships, UN Women needs to continue to facilitate among these coalitions and other partners including the GOV, related ministries and departments, the private sector, and the UN system. UN Women is making strong contributions to promoting global norms on gender and national policy and now on integrating gender into DRR/DRM and climate change. The main challenge is effective implementation of such norms and policies at the national and local levels in Viet Nam. Coordination and partnership in policy dialogue with government, on-going technical assistance for VWU, and continued cooperation with CSOs and other actors working in this area have been successful strategies for UN Women, which continues to be a trusted partner and collaborator with, and among, relevant actors.

Conclusion 2: Project resulted in increased women's participation in DRR/DRM

When they have access to adequate knowledge and resources, women can be effective change-makers on disaster prevention and response in their families and communities. This extends to livelihoods training and other skills development such as first aid and swimming. Prior to project implementation, the gender gap in knowledge on DRR/DRM was related to women's lack of opportunity for full involvement in decision-making and response beyond their gender stereotyped roles. The project made an important contribution to closing this gender gap by opening avenues for women's meaningful participation.

Conclusion 3: There is growing ownership by VWU on integrating gender into the DRR/DRM agenda

As reflected in interviews and progress reports, the VWU indicated commitment to developing its capacity and promoting the integration of gender into DRR/DRM at all levels of governance in Viet Nam. Nationally, the VWU has demonstrated its growing ownership in this area in a number of ways – such as its participation in the Joint Needs Assessment in early 2016 to respond to severe drought and saltwater intrusion in affected areas of the country. However, more capacity development is needed to strengthen the VWU at local levels, particularly as it concerns knowledge and decision-making on DRR/DRM and climate change. This has been critical for sustainability and enhancement of the enabling environment.

Conclusion 4: Investing in WEE is a form of national insurance for DRR

In order to continue to meet the needs of women in the most affected areas and contribute to their resilience, the VWU has expressed desire to continue the project's livelihoods component. This component is seen as a crucial intervention in the promotion of local, poor women's economic empowerment in the face of disaster risks. Specifically, especially given the lack of affordable national insurance related to disaster risks and climate change, the livelihood component is seen as a key

mitigating factor for helping these women and their communities offset the negative effects of disasters related to climate change.

Conclusion 5: Capacity building on gender equality and DRM has a multiplier effect

Capacity building at local levels and awareness-raising on gender issues are essential, as is the need to promote knowledge on DRR/DRM and climate change. This is important not only for women, but also for communities as a whole, since trained women are better able to support their communities in responses to first aid, helping children and the elderly. Gender sensitive DRR knowledge can be the foundation for wider climate change awareness-raising and effective action, since they have co-benefits. It can also help enhance women's overall status in their communities since participating women are seen as knowledgeable and decisive.

Conclusion 6: Working with diverse partners builds potential to scale up and institutionalize results

Despite the small financial investment, this project has contributed to tangible results in the pilot communities that have increased women's participation in decision-making to effectively address CCA and increase resilience to natural disasters. This work can be scaled up to other affected provinces and its approaches institutionalized nationally by UN Women and VWU and their combined partner networks. When relevant partners and stakeholders combine their resources and engage in complementary processes, unnecessary duplication of resources is avoided and change is more effectively facilitated.

Conclusion 7: More effective results monitoring is needed to discern impact

The project would have benefited from a clearer TOC and results framework and a more robust monitoring system that more readily accounted for higher-level results.

Conclusion 8: Project is aligned with principles of GE and human rights-based approach

The project is aligned with gender equality policies and the HRBA in terms of empowerment, participation, non-discrimination, and prioritization of vulnerable women. This includes the principles found in CEDAW Draft General Recommendation 35 on gender and DRR/DRM with respect to CCA. The project integrated GE into its design and achieved some significant gains (particularly at the local level). Women are now represented on relevant bodies for DRM. However, more work needs to be done since, although the national law and national policies address gender equality, in the past there has been weak implementation of such policies in Viet Nam. In addition, gender-responsive skills and expertise, which often rest with individuals rather than being systemically entrenched in governance structures, need to be further developed.



7. Recommendations

These recommendations were created based on the findings and conclusions from the evaluation and on validation discussions of possible recommendations for the future with the key stakeholders at national and regional level and including the perspective of national level CSOs.

Recommendation 1: Build on UN Women's facilitation role

With respect to DRR/DRM, building on UN Women's unique position and trust of stakeholders, UN Women needs to continue to facilitate coalitions and partnerships among the GOV, its ministries and departments, CSOs, the UN, and private sector.

Recommendation 2: Support meaningful women's input

Local government and Committees for Disaster Prevention and Reduction and Climate Change at all levels must include meaningful women's input supported by increased capacity building. As a prerequisite to ensure effective gender based DRR planning, statistical data should be collected about composition of groups, and especially the location and needs of vulnerable people (including women) in the community, before, during, and after disasters.

Recommendation 3: Continue to use the VWU network and strength of VWU capacity to institutionalize changes

The VWU network has valuable experience and wide networks that can be used to enhance preparedness and timely responses to disasters. National government and CSOs should support the VWU and corresponding networks and initiatives at all levels, in order to provide a greater voice for women's concerns with respect to gender differences in DRR/DRM planning and to facilitate women's leadership building in DRR/DRM. National and local government institutions, together with VWU, should provide further guidance on the practice of inclusive planning and reporting systems at the central and local levels.

Recommendation 4: Continue to use UN Women influence with government to build on project results

UN Women should work with the GOV to continue to mainstream gender considerations and policy associated with international frameworks into national policy. UN Women should build on its unique position and project results to influence state actors as follows: (1) Provide adequate budgetary allocations which specifically target the needs of women in emergency and disaster recovery situations; (2) Engage in context-specific gender analysis and capacity building for all levels of planning on DRR/DRM to ensure relevant policies, targets and that capacity is available to implement such policies; (3) Ensure policy consistency at the national level is consistent with international bodies and treaty obligations; and (4) Work with UN Agencies, Government, private sector and CSOs to ensure that national policy is guided by clear international guidelines.

Recommendation 5: Scale up with further innovative and gender sensitive pilot projects adapted to each locale

Expansion of pilot projects specific to the needs of each locale, with inputs from relevant stakeholders, and utilizing baselines and methodology which allow for the measurement of gender-disaggregated progress, should be encouraged by UN Women and the VWU with government, CSOs, private sector, and donors. Project impacts are still evolving and need further attention. A multitude of stakeholders need to take responsibility for scaling up, particularly government agencies designed to serve communities across the country. Opinions on DRR/DRM should be collected from both women and men, including those who have multiple vulnerabilities, such as the disabled, ethnic minorities etc. Their inputs should be utilized in DRR/DRM planning and support risk-reduction activities and humanitarian relief after disasters to better meet the needs of these populations.

Recommendation 6: Promote DRR/DRM as a multiplier for gender equality

Community-based adaptation and DRR actions can be a useful entry point to address gender equality. Linking to gender-responsive livelihood models, for example, could be an effective way to address Women's Economic Empowerment challenges related to climate change. Creating opportunities and conditions for women to be involved in management and decision-making in disaster prevention and control measures (especially in non-traditional areas such as infrastructure) helps to erode gender stereotypes in other areas. Promoting the practical co-benefits of gender equality and DRR/DRM can help promote change in attitudes and policies and implementation of an engendered DRR/ DRM plan.

8. Lessons Learned

Lesson 1: Understanding the diversity of vulnerability (health, scarcity of resources, inadequate institutions) and risk (including using sex disaggregated data) should improve efficiency.

Lesson 2: Capacity building of partners and awareness raising on gender and gender mainstreaming are essential. For example, tangible gender inclusion and gender informed resources for national and local partners (including funders and capacity builders) are useful as part of building the capacity of women whose abilities are underutilized including when dealing with disasters

Lesson 3: When provided with full knowledge, women can be effective change-makers in preventing and responding to disasters affecting their families and communities.

Lesson 4: Equal participation of women and men (50% - 50%) in disaster prevention and management, especially in needs assessment, is an effective way to increase ownership and effectiveness of relief operations.

Lesson 5: Gender sensitive plans, including for micro-credit, are useful tools for effective investment planning and mainstreaming and can help vulnerable women better cope with natural disasters.

Lesson 6: Women are not just a vulnerable group but can be a valuable resource for information and guidance in managing disasters partly because of their comprehension of impacts on all members of primary and extended families and the community at large. **Lesson 7:** Although CSOs are an important stakeholder group, state actors alone have the ability to adopt and implement treaties and frameworks, the power to legislate national policies, and the resources to effectively implement them.

Lesson 8: Government commitments to gender equality often lead to good policies but inadequate implementation on gender and DRR.

Lesson 9: It is important that women be fully engaged in decision processes and not merely be present as token representatives which again requires ongoing capacity building.

Lesson 10: In disseminating information to women, it is important to use methods accessible to women and considerate of women's communication methods and networks.

Lesson 11: Through empowerment of women's networks on DRR/DRM, women are better able to bring about positive change in local risk management at both the community and household level.

Lesson 12: Although project sources demonstrated that women have knowledge surrounding DRR/DRM, their contributions are often limited since they are sometimes ignored. Thus, substantial capacity building of government officials and CSOs to include women must continue.



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