

Project Evaluation Report

Gender Responsive Alternatives to Climate Change

Kampot and Pursat Provinces, Cambodia, September 2019



*“Women are in the process of ‘cooking’.
We are not fully cooked (as leaders and women champions).
We need other CC/DRR projects for the food to be fully done”
Woman Champion/Government*

Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

ActionAid Australia (AAA) commissioned an end-of-project evaluation for Gender Responsive Alternatives to Climate Change (GRACC) funded by DFAT, under the Gender Action Platform (GAP), and AAA. The two-year project (July 2017 – July 2019) was collaboratively designed and implemented with country partners in Cambodia, Kenya and Vanuatu. The overall project was managed by ActionAid Australia in partnership with global partners, Huairou Commission¹ and Monash University Gender, Peace and Security Centre², ActionAid Cambodia, ActionAid Kenya, ActionAid Vanuatu and ActionAid International. Additional country implementing partners, Children and Women Development Centre Cambodia (CWDC in Kampot) and Rural Friend Community for Development (RFCD in Pursat). Collectively, they used a gender responsive and human and women's rights-based approach to climate change and disaster risk reduction (CC/DRR).

There were three primary strategies for GRACC in Cambodia. i) Working with key women champions (WC) who represent grassroots women and women who hold local and subnational government positions received extensive capacity building on a broad range of topics: Hazard, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (HVCA), drought readiness, tree planting, early warning system registration, waste and water management, hygiene and healthcare. ii) Building the women's leadership about their country's political and economic processes to effectively advocate for resources to address women's need and priorities. iii) Working with commune, district and provincial disaster management (DM) committees.

The evaluation framework used was the UN Women's Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Equality, Environments and Marginalised voices (ISE4GEMs). The ISE4GEMs approach is grounded in both systems thinking and complexity challenges traditional linear approaches to complex social situations and multifaceted interventions.

GRACC had three project outcomes and key findings for each are summarised below:

Outcome 1: Women have increased capacity and knowledge to prepare and respond to gender related risks of climate change and related crises.

The evaluation found:

- In both provinces where GRACC was implemented women had gained extensive new capacity and knowledge about CC/DRR and could describe, explain, disseminate and implement CC/DRR strategies. They and their communities are more prepared and resilient.
- WC confirmed that their voices are being heard and feel empowered to advocate as community leaders at local and provincial levels with an increased comfort in speaking in public to represent other women's needs and priorities.
- Disaster management committees (local and provincial) believe their communities are more prepared because of the GRACC project.
- Attitudes about women's expanding roles are changing. New understanding about the capacity for women to manage the household and conduct CC/DRR work is shifting positively and seen as beneficial to their communities.
- WC in both provinces are being seen as trusted leaders that have developed safe spaces for women to come together and voice their concerns.
- Women continue to face cultural barriers to their expanding leadership and advocacy roles due to the patriarchal culture that values men's ideas and voices over women's.
- WC approach to CC/DRR was interlinked with other aspects of their lives, particularly expressed as important in relation to their livelihoods.

Outcome 2: Women take collective action to influence and engage in national and international policy, planning and decision making on climate change and related crises.

- WC have increased awareness and knowledge about mechanisms to participate in influencing in their political systems at the local and provincial level.
- WC have increased confidence levels in their leadership and to participate in representation of their needs and advocacy.
- WC expressed a keen interest in continuing to build their leadership skills and engage in further influencing activities at the national and international levels.
- Process for engaging and influencing change at national and international policy, planning and decision making on climate change

¹ <https://huairou.org/>

² <https://arts.monash.edu/gender-peace-security>

and related crises is multi-dimensional and a process which takes a long time to achieve.

- Capacity building activities and actions with WC were undertaken to influence local, provincial, national and international policy.
- Collective organising and action planning raised women's needs and demands resulted in the development of a Women's Charter of Demands.

Outcome 3: Women's voice and leadership in climate change and related crises is enhanced through the establishment of a gender responsive framework on gender, climate and security.

- WC and many government officials felt there were impactful gender responsive activities and actions undertaken to influence local, provincial, national and international policy frameworks.
- Women's Charter of Demands was created and presented at several local and provincial

meetings and. WC continue to advocate for the WCoD to be responded to at different levels

- WC are effectively raising women's needs and demands at different government levels and have been working with commune leadership to include their priorities into the 2020 Community Investment Plan.

The evaluation concluded that the GRACC project outcomes were achieved against the three outcomes. The evaluation has identified that GRACC project has advanced women's knowledge, leadership and collective voices in and enhanced their ability to influence policy and decision making on climate change and related crisis at both a national and global level. The evaluation makes several recommendations which have emerged from the findings and feedback from stakeholders to guide future work.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	0
Executive Summary.....	1
Table of Contents.....	3
Tables.....	4
Acronyms.....	4
1. Introduction / Project Description.....	6
2. Evaluation Objectives and Criteria.....	6
Evaluation Objectives.....	6
Evaluation Criteria.....	7
3. Methodology Overview.....	7
3.1 Our Approach.....	7
3.2 Preparation and Design.....	7
3.3 Desk Review.....	7
3.4 Key Informants and Focus Group Discussions.....	7
3.5 Capacity Building.....	8
3.6 Limitations.....	8
Findings Outcome 1: Women have increased capacity and knowledge to prepare for and respond to gender related risks of climate change and related crises.....	8
Summary Outcome 1.....	12
Findings Outcome 2: Women take collective action to influence and engage in national and international policy, planning and decision making on climate change and related crises.....	13
Summary Outcome 2.....	17
Findings Outcome 3 : Women’s voice and leadership in climate change and related crises is enhanced through the establishment of a gender responsive framework on.....	18
gender, climate and security.....	18
Summary Outcome 3.....	20
5. Conclusion.....	21
6. Key Recommendations.....	21
Annexes.....	22
ANNEX 1: EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS.....	22
ANNEX 2: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS.....	23
ANNEX 3: EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS and GUIDING QUESTIONS.....	23
ANNEX 4: REFERENCES.....	25

Tables

No table of figures entries found.

Acronyms

AAA	ActionAid Australia	GEMs	Gender equality, Environments and Marginalised voices
AAC	ActionAid Cambodia	GRA	Grassroots Academy (Switzerland)
AAK	ActionAid Kenya	HVCA	Hazard, Vulnerability Capacity Assessment
AAV	ActionAid Vanuatu	HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach (Action Aid)
CC/DRR	Climate change/ Disaster risk reduction	ISE4GE M	Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Equality, Environments and Marginalized Voices (UN Women)
CCA	Climate change adaptation	ISE	Inclusive Systemic Evaluation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women	LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
CWDCC	Children and Women Development Centre Cambodia (Kampot)	MOWA	Ministry of Women’s Affairs (Cambodia)
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)	NCDM	National Committee for Disaster Management (Cambodia)
DM	Disaster management	NGO	Non-government organisation
DMC	Disaster Management Committee	PLE	Peer Learning Exchange (Indonesia)
DIPECH O	Disaster Preparedness ECHO programme	PCDM	Provincial Committee for Disaster Management
EoE	Ethos of Engagement Consulting	RFCD	Rural Friend Community for Development (Pursat)
FGD	Focus group discussion	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
GRACC	Gender-Responsive Alternatives on Climate Change		
GBV	Gender based violence		

	(United Nations)	WCoD	Women’s Charter of Demands
ToR	Terms of Reference	WC	Women champions – grassroots and government

1. Introduction / Project Description

ActionAid Australia (AAA) commissioned end-of-project evaluation for the Gender Responsive Alternatives to Climate Change (GRACC). The two-year project (July 2017 – July 2019) was collaboratively designed and implemented with country partners in Cambodia, Kenya and Vanuatu. The overall project was managed by ActionAid Australia in partnership with global partners, Huairou Commission and Monash University Gender, Peace and Security Centre, ActionAid Cambodia, ActionAid Kenya, ActionAid Vanuatu and ActionAid International. There was a Project Steering Committee composed of one person from each partner and community women from each of the three countries.

The GRACC project had three outcomes:

- *Outcome 1:* Women have increased capacity and knowledge to prepare for and respond to gender related risks of climate change and related crises;
- *Outcome 2:* Women take collective action to influence and engage in national and international policy, planning and decision making on climate change and related crises; and
- *Outcome 3:* Women’s voice and leadership in climate change and related crises is enhanced through the establishment of a gender responsive framework on gender, climate and security.

A key strategy for the Cambodian project was to build a network of ‘women champions’ (WC) who represented women from the grassroots level (village and commune) and a fewer number of women who worked with or for government entities within the same provinces., GRACC was implemented in partnership with two provincial-level implementing Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) - Rural Friend Community Development (RFCD) in Pursat (two districts-14 WCs) and CWDC in Kampot (one district-11 WCs).

There were two primary strategies for GRACC in Cambodia, the first being capacity building on a broad range of interrelated topics (e.g. Hazard, Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (HVCA), and drought readiness). This new knowledge was incorporated in the women’s existing traditional knowledge and experiences on responding to disasters. Empowered individually and collectively through these trainings, the women united into a network of CC/DRR experts and advocates who disseminated preparedness information, conducted home CC/DRR audits and preparedness tips. The second set of strategies were building the women’s leadership and knowledge around their country’s CC/DRR, political and economic processes to leverage commune budget allocations. These learning exchanges generated a written action plan with input and agreement by the WC in both provinces.

Building on the learning exchanges and action plan, women were oriented on how to gather and process data from other women in nine communes within the two provinces. This data and priorities were synthesised into a Women’s Charter of Demands (WCoD) in Khmer and English (see Outcome 2 for more details). The WCoD was presented at multiple workshops such as the National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) and Provincial Committee for Disaster Management (PCDM) as well as other local meetings.

2. Evaluation Objectives and Criteria

The primary purpose of the end-of-project evaluation was to “assess the extent to which the project advanced women’s leadership and collective voices in Cambodia, Kenya and Vanuatu and enhanced their ability to influence policy and decision making on climate change and related crisis at both a national and global level. The evaluation should assess the extent to which women’s power has been enhanced in ways valued and described by community women.” The evaluation objectives and criteria were:

Evaluation Objectives

- To review the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability and impact of the project by reviewing the project outcomes achieved as a result of project outputs and project approach.
- To assess the project achievements, strengths, weaknesses and implementation constraints with a view to identifying any lessons and good practice that can be incorporated into future ActionAid programming and shared in the sector.

Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria and questions for each country level report were done in a consultative manner with AAA, Evaluation Working Group and country GRACC teams. The criteria had common questions across countries while still reflecting the unique context of each location. The evaluation criteria links to the key research questions are outlined in Annex 1. The key questions asked have enabled the evaluation to arrive at conclusions based on the evaluation criteria.

3. Methodology Overview

The evaluation was conducted from the 31 May – 14 June 2019 with two evaluators, Drs. Ellen Lewis and Hurriyet Babacan. It included a desk-based document review, key informant interviews, focus group discussions (FGD) and observation in two provinces – Kampot and Pursat and in the capital Phnom Penh. A participatory approach was used and data was collected using ethical human research conduct.

3.1 Our Approach

The evaluation framework adopted in this project is UN Women’s *Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Equality, Environments and Marginalised voices (ISE4GEMs)*³. The ISE4GEMs approach is grounded in both systems thinking and complexity. Systems thinking—which is a form of analysis—challenges traditional plan-predict-act-evaluate logic and is required when dealing with complex social situations and multifaceted interventions. Using a systems approach differs from other types of analysis in that it does not adhere to the traditional focus of separating individual parts of what is being studied to gain understanding. The GEMs framework considers the interrelationships between gender equality, environments and marginalised voices (human and non-human) using systemic thinking. As ISE4GEMs evaluators there is a strong commitment to gender equality, diversity and human rights, combined with a desire to create a more equitable society that recognizes, validates, and values socially constructed and structural differences.

3.2 Preparation and Design

Evaluation criteria, indicators and key questions were created with input from relevant key informants. In Phnom Penh an inception meeting was held to introduce the ISE4GEMs, answer questions, review timeline, processes and interview instruments. ISE4GEMs tools were adapted and applied including first and second order boundary analysis, stakeholder analysis, vulnerability assessment, planning tool and facilitators’ field guide meeting planner.

3.3 Desk Review

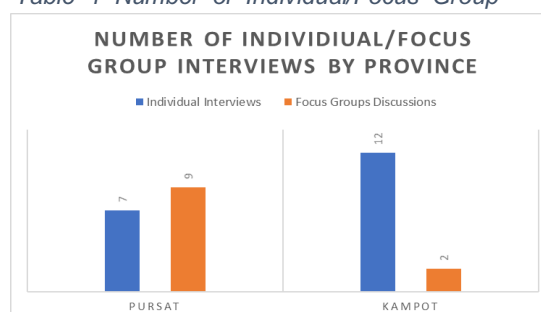
The desk review included: AAC project funding proposal, six-month and annual project reports, MEL Framework AAC, baseline study, staff consultation notes, SWOT and gender analysis. Also reviewed were several 2018 studies: a baseline study conducted by Dr. Sreang Heak and a country report by Monash University’s Gender, Peace and Security Centre.

3.4 Key Informants and Focus Group Discussions

In total, 77 respondents (45F/32M) were interviewed, in two provinces. There were 19 individual interviews and 11 FGD conducted. (See Annex 2 – Key Informants and FGD). Data collection instruments were developed including questions for women, men, key informants and FGD. Adjustments were made following testing in the field. (See Annex 3 – Evaluation Instruments). The evaluation and consent forms were reviewed, interpreted and signed.

The data analysis process used inductive and deductive approaches to enable linkages with the project principles, aims and the outcomes. Inductive methods enable the evaluators to move from specific situational analysis to more generalised learning, while the deductive methods enable the use of generalised knowledge to gain more specific

Table 1 Number of Individual/Focus Group



³ <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/9/ise4gems-a-new-approach-for-the-sdg-era>

insights. Data analysis processes included data reduction, data coding, initial data interpretation, consultation, and reinterpretation. A data analysis software, NVivo was used to theme the data.

3.5 Capacity Building

Central to an ISE4GEMs approach is to build capacity as part of transformative change. The evaluators presented ISE4GEMs workshops and on gender responsive evaluation. A short presentation was given to the AAA Program Officer for Cambodia on analysing data using the ISE4GEMs. A presentation was given to AAA staff with initial findings and draft recommendations. Finally, a findings workshop was presented and discussions were facilitated with key AAA, AAC, AAK, AAV and AA International.

3.6 Limitations

Several logistical and practical factors presented some limitations. All efforts were made to meet with and talk to as many relevant informants as possible during the evaluation. All of interviewees did not speak English and AAC country staff served as the interpreter. Central to using staff interpreters was the familiarity with the key informants, especially the women as well as knowledge of project concepts. The evaluation team raised a concern about potential bias into the evaluation by using staff interpreters, but the decision was made collectively to proceed and mitigate biases through clarification during the interpretation. Most of the interviews were audio taped and to ensure rigour in the evaluation process, selected samples were sent to external translators for verification.

Time frames were also a limitation with the launch of the evaluation on 29 May 2019 and final data collection on 17 July 2019. This was a window of seven weeks to conduct the evaluation across three countries in dispersed geographical locations. While the evaluators worked within the constraints of the time limits of the funding body, this limited opportunity for greater engagement, intersectional data analysis and report writing.

The evaluation criteria relating to efficiency was not able to be assessed at the country level. The evaluators note this as a limitation that could not be achieved due the short time frames and constraints of data and assessment required.

4.0 Findings

This section has the main findings of the evaluation presented under each project outcome and responding to the evaluation criteria. The evaluation team reported only the findings that share a high level of confidence.

Findings Outcome 1: Women have increased capacity and knowledge to prepare for and respond to gender related risks of climate change and related crises

1.1 How have women participants become more resilient to climate change risks?

The evaluation found that all WC expressed increased resilience due to their new knowledge about CC/DRR and their expanding roles as change agents of adaptation and preparation in their communities. The evidence that was identified of CC/DRR activities included installation of water management practices: storage tank, conservation, awareness about safe drinking water; planting drought resistant rice and vegetables; removing debris that might cause damage during storms, and food storage. WC can actively contribute to early warning system dissemination activities and developing village disaster/resilience response plans.

This resilience was seen by WC as being essential to better respond to emergencies for their family as well as their community. WC articulated increased agency as community leaders because they now hold knowledge and training that other village members may not. Several WC noted that they previously would not have considered it their responsibility to respond to community crises, but now they are a 'go-to' person for CC/DRR specialised knowledge and support, increasing their own resilience and their community's. WC extended roles crosses cultural norms and they now have friendships with women in government positions who have higher educational and literacy levels and different social standing. This solidarity gives them 'strength' to face any potential challenges but also has created 'safe spaces' to discuss broader personal challenges (e.g. family matters).

Two WC mentioned not being able to afford costs of adaptation such as purchasing water storage tanks or the ability to store food as a perceived diminishment of leadership for not being able to role-model gained practical knowledge. Resources (financial and tangible) were identified as barriers to being prepared. WC expressed a strong connection and understanding between livelihoods activities and CC/DRR responsiveness, increasing their resilience to CC risks. WC, particularly grassroots women identified washing of salt by rains, drought affecting crop yields, fruit trees dying, not able to catch fish and flooding not enabling bamboo harvesting. Two WC in government identified social issues such as migration out of village for work (e.g. garment factory or overseas), food security and poverty leading to microloans which people cannot pay.

“I promote saving water and explain how to use a water basin in order to spray their plants and harvest on time. In the rainy season, I promote which rice seeds to choose that can completely absorbed the water. I ask permission to check their house. If there is a hole or a wall is broken, they must fix it so rain and wind can’t get in wet season. The old generation say that having bad karma, a storm can destroy them. I say please don’t rely on karma. Think about safety. When it is winds and storms, don’t stay under the tree and don’t use phone. I encourage them to plant mango trees around their house to provide shelter from the storm and they can eat or sell the fruits too.”

~ Grassroots Woman Champion

1.2 How have women become empowered to take action in relation to CC/DRR and their concerns being heard?

The evaluation confirms that the project has successfully increased the WC empowerment to act by advocating for their own and their village’s CC/DRR priorities. The increased knowledge gained through the human and gender rights-based approach and community development has been effective in creating knowledge about being able to influence, motivate and speak for themselves and others. While CC/DRR was an entry point for GRACC, women leaders have gained strong insights into taking a gendered lens, identifying human rights-based action. Social norms are shifting away from the belief that women cannot do ‘big things’ and cannot be involved with decision-making both in the private sphere of their homes and the public sphere. Some women have been invited to speak at various public events because of their increased knowledge, confidence, public speaking skills and as knowledge brokers for CC/DRR. One WC advocated for a road to be built so the school could be evacuated safely, and it was built.

The evaluation identified several aspects to women’s empowerment: Becoming a WC increased the women’s self-perception of being leaders and key sources of critical CC/DRR knowledge; community and provincial perception of WC leadership abilities has increased their social status and voice (“before I was a normal woman, now they respect me” (Grassroots WC)); new levels of influence reflected in increased access to decision-making and being involved with development planning processes. WC literacy levels was noted as a limiting factor to their CC/DRR efforts and therefore to their empowerment.

However, evidence also confirmed that women’s voices although more expressed are still rendered secondary or invisible in public forums and in decision-making. Many WC confirmed that women’s status as leaders was not initially encouraged or valued and provided examples of how their voices are not heard, or their concerns being dismissed. Two WC gave an example of where they were asked to stop speaking and sit down at a commune meeting when trying to advocate for CC/DRR expenditures. WC are being recognised by local authority due to the GRACC activities that created new and increased exposure.

“I see the leadership in my own family has changed, before it was up to my husband. I have become the head of the household. If my husband doesn’t agree, I have enough confidence to negotiate with him.”

~ WC Kampot

1.3 How has the levels of awareness about CC increased?

Table 1 Pursat WC Level of CC/DRR Knowledge

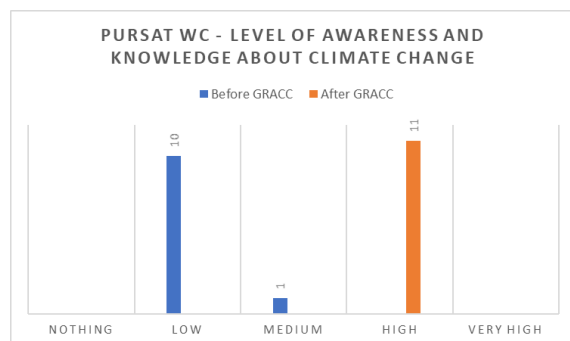
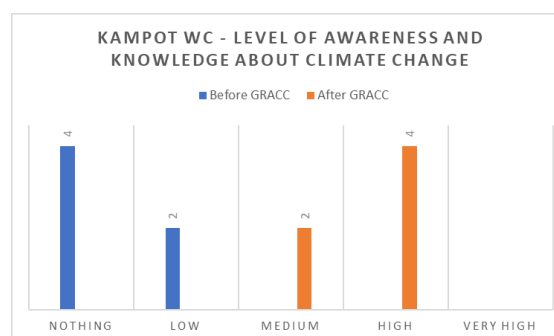


Table 2 Kampot WC Level of CC/DRR Knowledge



The evaluation found that awareness about CC has increased significantly overall. Variations about the depth and level of understanding depended on the WC’s own self-perceptions. The commitment and interest in addressing issues relating to CC/DRR were uniformly expressed by the WC and the government officials and appears to be still growing in both provinces. Despite high levels of gender inequality in Cambodia, evidence indicates that WC are an important human resource in increased community disaster preparedness and response at the grassroots level. According to local leadership, WC now have proven skills in community mobilisation as reflected by the proliferation of CC/DRR knowledge in the communities where they have conducted awareness presentations.

Of the WC interviewed, 100% stated that they had increased levels of awareness in CC/DRR. Each WC was asked to rate their CC/DRR knowledge *before* and *after* GRACC. The five-point scale was from knowing ‘Nothing’ about CC/DRR to ‘Very High’ level of knowledge. Before GRACC: in Pursat, 10 WC rated their CC/DRR knowledge and skills at Low Levels and 1 WC rated herself at Medium. (Table 1 above). After GRACC: all 11 WC rated themselves with High Levels of CC/DRR awareness and knowledge. No one rated themselves as having very high levels. (Table 1 above). Before GRACC: in Kampot, 4 WC rated themselves with no CC/DRR knowledge and 2 WC rated themselves with low levels. (Table 2 above). After GRACC: 2 WC rated themselves as having medium levels and 4 with high levels. (Table 2 above).

Several WC mentioned that although their knowledge had increased, they felt they still had ‘more to learn’ and were ‘just beginning’ as CC/DRR advocates. Some identified the need for more training on how best to implement some of the practices they had learned.

1.4 Have women’s voices, concerns and representation increased in relation to CC/DRR processes?

The WC, as well as the local government representatives, acknowledged that the WC voices, concerns and representation in CC/DRR process has notably increased. WC noted that they are now recognized at commune meetings as community leaders who have valuable CC/DRR knowledge. WC also uniformly expressed increased confidence to represent their individual and community voices by ‘advocating through the Commune Chief to be included in future commune investment plans’. WC in both provinces noted that before GRACC they were almost invisible to their communities and not influential, ‘now I can see the difference, prior not many people, men or women, listened to me. But now when I speak, people listen.’ However, decision-making on budget priorities for disaster preparedness is linked with other ‘village business’ which are often decided by the men and, in many instances, women’s needs and priorities are not heard or prioritized.

Women and men expressed, regardless of their GRACC roles, women are still seen as ‘weaker’ and ‘more vulnerable’ than men. Some of the weaknesses described were based on physical strength and women’s gendered roles as caregivers and the need to remain at home to support the family. The culturally defined confinement was a limiting factor to attending meetings and trainings, lowering women’s access to information overall. One grassroots WC noted that even though her husband supports her CC/DRR work but that from a cultural perspective based on gender roles, “most men do not support GRACC, for they have the traditional mindset that women should not take a leadership role in their community’.

1.5 How has the capacity of women for participation in CC/DRR planning and mitigation changed?

The evaluation found that there have been positive changes in the capacity of WC to participate in CC/DRR activities. Differences in levels of capacity varied based on the WC’s self-perception of CC/DRR skill levels and whether they had been involved in a previous CC/DRR project e.g. Disaster Preparedness Echo program (DIPECHO)

in Kampot. In Pursat, a Commune Committee member noted a change in their regular meetings now that WC were attending regularly. WC have 'created awareness about DRR and take action right after decisions are made' at the commune level. Evidence of increased capacity included Pursat community members said they had learned from the WC about CC awareness, household preparedness. Kampot community members said they are better prepared because of the CC/DRR awareness workshops given by WC and are 'storing rice, dry food, clothes and access to clean water'. Local level planning and risk assessment analysis was conducted by WC and pre-disaster awareness increased and information disseminated in WC villages on household preparedness and access to clean drinking water.

A prominent challenge to the capacity of WC to participate in CC/DRR activities is tied to economic security. Localised disruptive events are having impacts on the livelihoods: more frequent and extreme events brought about by climate change make local crop production, fishing, salt harvesting even more difficult less profitable. Some WC lost income because they prioritised working on GRACC instead of earning income they normally would (e.g. salt harvesting, pig farming).

1.6 How has the capacity for women-led preparedness and resilience planning improved?

The evaluation found that WC have new individual and collective power representing the needs of women—and other vulnerable populations. This power, although not equal to men's, is slowly evolving as reflected in WC increased access to advocacy and influence on budgetary decision-making. The Kampot Sangkat Chief acknowledged that WC have received a lot of CC/DRR training and have been active in their communities raising awareness and imparting preparedness knowledge. He saw the WC as an extension of the Ministry of Women's Affairs efforts to support DM for vulnerable populations such as the disabled, children, and the elderly. In Pursat, while the Commune Chief recognized that RFCD was active in CC/DRR in the villages but was unable to describe their activities and felt that CC did not 'have a big impact' in his commune. He was grateful WC were trained, prioritizing infrastructure needs vs CC/DRR knowledge, 'what is successful, is tangible'. In contrast, the Commune Council member responsible for women and children concerns was clear that the WC were central to the increased resilience of their communities because they were trained, informed and active. She also noted the balance of power had shifted at Commune Council Meetings for she was no longer the sole voice advocating for women and children's needs, she now was backed by the WC who attended every meeting. Evidence of women's led preparedness and planning include WC are now identified as valuable individual and collective resources by provincial governments as part of their CC/DRR response toolkit to raise awareness and help prepare communities; WC are regularly attending Commune Meetings in both provinces; in Pursat, WC are an additional source of information about the needs, concerns and priorities for women. Previously, the main source of information was a village chief, most of who are male; in Kampot, WC are part of disseminating information about the Early Warning System and have been active in getting people to sign up; and WC can describe the budgetary links between the village, commune, and provincial and where potential leverage points might be. National budgeting process was mentioned less.

The success of WC increased capacity can be directly attributed to the AAC staff and their joint efforts with implementing partners in each province. Having a local office in the community that can lead activities, understand the local context, provide follow-up and support to the WC while also liaising with government officials is strategic and effective. AAC staff acknowledged that there was significant time spent in building the capacity of local partners on CC/DRR and women's rights during the first GRACC year. Staff turnover at AAA, AAC and RFCD was ongoing over the duration of the project, which always hurts program continuity and implementation.

WC improved planning skills can be directly correlated to the trainings and support provided by AAC and the implementing partners. Little mention was given to working other NGOs organizations in the area that might have similar goals and objectives (e.g. organizations working on infrastructure projects). WC noted that participation in training by officials and village leadership was helpful in progressing the CC/DRR agenda.

1.7 What attitudinal change has occurred about gender impacts of CC at local/regional decision makers?

All WC interviewed were clear that the bulk of the burden fell on them to keep families safe, fed and healthy overall and the burden increased dramatically during crises. The GRACC project provided women with the terminology to describe the unequal burden and the increased vulnerability they experience themselves and as primary caregivers of the other vulnerable members of the community.

At the commune and provincial level, men's descriptions of the gendered impact varied. Some felt that the impact of CC and disasters were between genders were the same, some felt that women had larger burdens and others noted that it was children, elderly, pregnant women and the disable who suffered most. Many of the men interviewed considered that men must cope with protecting property and infrastructures, earning income and women having equal, yet different burdens. One WC shared, 'men are affected mostly by loss of income generation and can get to safety quickly. Women care about details, caring for children and elderly, food and water gathering, packing and carrying kitchen supplies.' However, one village chief was clear that the burden of the strategic thinking and work during crises falls on women. Several WC identified GBV as an escalating issue during crises as well as a

women's a right to not accept it and even report it. The disaster management committees in Kampot and Pursat acknowledge gendered impacts of CC, as noted above, due to the awareness raising by WC.

The GRACC project has started to shift the understanding of gendered impacts of CC/DRR. During interviews, even for men that did not see how CC and disasters had greater impact on women's lives, they were hearing many others, men and women, describing otherwise.

Summary Outcome 1

This evaluation reports that Outcome 1 was achieved based on the above findings. WC expressed feeling empowered with their individual and collective agency and the ability to make meaningful, resilient choices for themselves and their communities by disseminated and implementing CC/DRR knowledge. At the local and national level, WC explained that an increase in 'courage' and access made it easier to attend and participate in meetings where decision-making was taking place about funding priorities. The impact on policies was too early to gauge, but WC were able to influence small increases in budgeting allocations for women and children needs. Their nascent roles as leaders has increased their status beyond their homes reflects a cultural shift as women exercise pressure for CC/DRR responsiveness at the village, commune, provincial and national level. The project implementation timeframe of less than two years suggests that although the level on CC/DRR knowledge has significantly increased, more investment in CC/DRR would be impactful.

The relevance and importance of WC activities and their evolving leadership roles is underscored by the current (and future) alignment to Cambodia's key policy documents on gender and climate change adaptation/mitigation responses. Through WC's GRACC experiences, they feel more able and committed to support and drive change systemically. The engagement with implementing partners in both provinces was a key impact to the WC as they built their skills and confidence. Additionally, the joint WC activities between provinces, strengthened their knowledge, skills and resiliency as they learned from each other. Overall, WC, implementing partners, DMC and PDMC all noted an increase in empowerment of WC and preparedness in their communities that they attribute to the GRACC project.

Those WC that participated in the global events, and subsequently shared their learnings with key stakeholders back home, now have a broader universal understanding of how other countries and women are being impacted by CC and the action they are taking to respond. The exposure to global events links and helps WC articulate the continuum of gender issues creating a sense of solidarity with women globally.

Indication from the WC interviews in both provinces is that the empowerment they have experienced is sustainable beyond the project. The women have a new understanding where they envisage themselves as leaders, stewards and trainers of CC/DRR adaptation for their communities bolstered by legal and human rights to do so. Like all power relations, the process of empowerment is also shaped by and interacts with the norms and institutions (cultural, social, political, and economic) that define an individual's possibilities in a given context. At the provincial level, there is interest and expressed commitment to the WC and their efforts. At the village and commune level, there is evidence of some resistance shaped by cultural norms, but also and understanding that the WC are a valuable resource.

Findings Outcome 2: Women take collective action to influence and engage in national and international policy, planning and decision making on climate change and related crises.

2.1 What actions/activities have been undertaken to influence national or international policy?

The evaluation found that WC are engaging in a range of influencing activity from the local, national and international level to influence policy, programming and budgets. The baseline survey identified that “women participation throughout the DMC government structure, especially in leadership positions, is limited. Women are afraid to take leadership roles; have limited capacity and confidence and too busy with their normal and daily household tasks.” There has been effort put into develop the capacity of WC to advocate and influence policy change. The evidence of this includes active advocacy and awareness raising at village, commune and provincial level by WC on a range of topics, using different mechanisms; attending national government meetings e.g. national get together in Phnom Penh, UN women forum; participation of WC in international forums for organising, advocacy and influencing e.g. Switzerland; co-creation and presentation of Women’s Charter of Demands and other evidence of need; WC are regularly providing support to commune committees representing community and women’s needs; access institutional processes, especially grassroots WC. This includes accessing commune and provincial level institutional representatives, understanding of national budgeting processes and emerging understanding of the processes of the national government structures and an intense awareness of the need to influence national policy. WC better understand their power and advocacy role in accessing national budgeting priorities and policies (e.g. education, agriculture, CC) and increased understanding of the Commune budgeting processes (e.g. Commune Investment Plans). Finally, WC expressed that they were not intimidated to advocate.

The Pursat PCDM Representative noted that they have 40 members, 15 of which are women and was currently reviewing the membership to increase the number of women to 20. He also shared that they do not have a mechanism to capture the needs of marginalized voices (e.g. women, elderly). At every PCDM meeting there is always a women/children agenda item (also true for the commune level) and they typically focus on widows/elderly. Also, in Pursat, the WC/Vice Village Chief brings women’s voices to the commune budget process and has seen a change in some budgeting practices. In 2018, the budget line item for Women & Children was only 5 million riels (AUD 1,800). In 2019, it was increased to 7 million riels (AUD 2,500), a 39% increase. Two reasons given was the advocacy by WC as well as the commune Chief being a woman and more supportive. The commune representative for Women and Children (non-GRACC) in Pursat feels more empowered by the increased presence of WC – ‘they get things done’.

In Kampot, the Commune Deputy Chief stated “We can see the difference at village level. She (WC) supports the village office work, administration and operational. She is the first front to meet with community people about preparedness, CC adaption, and women’s health issue. WC often collaboration to the Officer who has responsibility for women and children.”

WC from both provinces worked together to create a Women’s Charter of Demands (WCoD) that contains five focal points: infrastructure, emergency shelter, emergency response and outreach, education and awareness raising and advocacy. The WCoD was then shared in a National Workshop on Strengthening Women Leadership in DRR/CC in 2018. WC expressed a keen interest in continuing to build their leadership roles and gain more knowledge to represent their own ideas and those of their communities on these committees. For example, women now understand the Commune Investment Plan process and are making plans to advocate for CC/DRR activities. Women champions had a greater sense of empowerment, confidence and knowledge. Many identified having greater courage, confidence to speak out in public, not being afraid to put forward the needs of women.

Implementing partners and WC articulated that although they have made tremendous progress since the commencement of the GRACC project, they feel they have just begun their development. They are eager for more support and opportunities to have greater knowledge about government and international institutional processes and develop skills in influencing, lobbying, advocacy. WC, implementing partners and several government agencies identified the need to sensitise and build the capacity of government representatives in relation to gendered impacts of CC/DRR as an influencing strategy. Some ideas included involving government in future GRACC training activities and using WC as co-facilitators in training and linking with specific policy agendas of government agencies.

2.2 How have national or international policy changed?

The evaluation was not able to identify national or international policy change directly attributable to the work of the GRACC project in Cambodia. While there have been activities targeting the local, commune and provincial level, the evaluation identified that there was not yet an overarching influencing strategy at the national level. This finding is not surprising as the GRACC project timeframes for the global project as a whole were relatively short and influencing national and international policy is a long-term outcome, which was a collective responsibility of the

GRACC project. However, all WC and implementing partners demonstrated awareness of the importance of influencing policy change and believed that they have commenced the journey.

The evaluation has identified that the key foundations for influencing policy change has been laid by the activities of the project. The findings confirm key achievements which are pre-requisites to influencing policy change. These include: 25 WC have been identified and their capacity and knowledge for CC/DRR, human rights and awareness of gendered impacts have been expanded; WC have emerging awareness of institutional and policy landscape, have the confidence to engage with government has increased with evidence of frequency of engagement with authorities, particularly local and provincial level; WC can articulate and voice their needs, concerns and aspirations, and importantly the development of the Women's Charter of Demands; and four WC have taken part in the Grass Roots Academy and were part of a collective effort to influence international agendas at the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva, Switzerland in 2019.

These activities demonstrate significant steps taken in the project towards enabling skills and knowledge to influence policy influencing. Several major challenges remain to influence change in policy at the national and international level:

- The processes of gender mainstreaming are not strong in a decentralised form of government.
- WC's need further capacity development and knowledge about policy landscapes, level of knowledge to navigate complex institutional processes.
- Access by WC to policy makers at the national and international level are limited and limited engagement with national level authorities (including women in government).
- Barriers for women to travel and the time away from work or livelihood activities is a major constraint.

The conclusion that the evaluation draws from the evidence is that significant progress has been made towards laying the foundational work to influence policy change. At the local level, the signs of early influence are emerging as noted above. The notion of WC has provided a platform for safe engagement of women in leadership and influencing for CC/DRR and elevated their status. WC identified that their status was reinforced with the global activities and being asked to participate in international platforms. Taking a strategic approach to influencing including selecting priority departments, policies and determining the right political approach will likely enable greater influence in the next stage of the GRACC project. All WC have identified the need for greater capacity building in advocacy, negotiation and understanding government/policy frameworks.

2.3 What have women learnt during the Peer Learning Exchange (PLE) and Grassroots Academy (GRA)?

As part of the GRACC global initiative, women champions (two from each province, different women each conference for a total of four Cambodian WC) participated in two global learning events. The first event in April 2018, was a four-day peer learning exchange in Indonesia, enabling grassroots women participants to visit villages that are drought and landslide prone where they learned about micro-credit practices, local grocery stores, cultivation of a resilient local fruit and waste banks - practices that enhanced incomes, secured food and protected their living environments. In May 2019, four WC, two from each province, attended the sixth session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in Geneva, Switzerland. The GRACC women from Cambodia, Kenya and Vanuatu participated jointly and their participation was facilitated by the Huairou Commission.

The evaluation findings confirm that the two global events had overall positive influence on the learnings by women. The feedback from the WC participants, the Huairou Commission and AA staff confirmed that the PLE and GRA provided WC to gain global insights into common challenges; supported a broader understanding of DRR/CC and gender impacts; improved knowledge about global frameworks such as the Sendai Framework; developed insights into the value of collective organising; presented strong role modelling of women's leadership; enhanced the understanding of women's network building; enabled peer learning and sharing knowledge in a safe manner; and increased sense of solidarity with women from around the world. The WC came from different backgrounds and for some identified that this was considerable personal growth experience for them e.g. the first time they went overseas or on an airplane.

More specifically, the evaluation found that WC learnings from the PLE included increased awareness about waste management (e.g. plastic bags, recycling); increased knowledge of organic composting and fertilizer; benefits of a savings club; alternative ways to provide livestock feed; and knowledge of risk mapping in agriculture.

The women returned to Cambodia with ideas for implementation of potential projects e.g. waste management and savings club. In addition to the specific learning from the content material in PLE, the evaluators noted that WC could identify other benefits. For example, one WC pointed out the "high level of support from local authority in Indonesia" which provided her with ideas for advocacy and engagement with local authorities in Cambodia. Several WC identified the importance of women's organising which prompted them to consider about ways in which women

can organise in Cambodia. Majority of WC identified the value of witnessing strong women's leadership which provided role modelling for building strong women leaders. WC who were in government agencies noted the senior roles that women played in government and in formal decision-making structures. The sharing of learnings from the PLE were variable. Some spoke in public forums and in other instances the sharing of learning was one to one basis. The WCs identified the need for translated materials (with pictures) to use as tools for sharing the learning with broader communities and as a record for their own memory of what was learnt. In some instances, there were changes to practice e.g. cropping methods were altered as a result of learnings from PLE. WC shared learnings about risk mapping for agriculture. The idea of waste management had inspired them, and this knowledge was shared, however, there was no action undertaken, mainly due to further knowledge, support and resources needed for implementation. One WC identified that although she learnt a lot in the PLE, she came from an area which is predominantly fishing and some of the PLE learnings regarding agriculture could not be directly applied to her area.

The GRA had positive benefits for the WC. These included increased awareness about global platforms and frameworks, e.g. Sendai Framework, broadening the WC to global thinking about common challenges; reinforcement of that the need to represent grassroots women's voices need to be heard at global forums; power of collective action and mobilising by women; strength of women's leadership and role in senior position; how to influence policy and change at a larger scale, advocacy skills and personal development e.g. confidence to speak in large forums. The opportunity to go overseas was valued by all WCs. As stated by one WC in government identified, "I rarely see women getting a chance for tours. When opportunities are offered to go see another society or workplace, they select only men to join the trip".

The evaluation concludes that the overall impacts of PLE and GRA and found that there was overwhelming support for the PLE and GRA from women participants. The evaluators observed these global opportunities for learning and organising provide a sense of empowerment to WC, gave them confidence, inspiration and motivation. All the WC identified the need for ongoing engagement with women in PLE and GRA beyond the overseas activities.

2.4 What was the impact of engaging with women from other parts of the country/world?

All WC identified positive impact of engaging with women from other parts of the country/world. Numerous benefits were identified by WCs:

- Being able to share and articulate their own knowledge, needs and concerns of women. WC identified that the engaging with women provided a strong platform to identify and work on similar issues. The evaluators observed that this was a first step in many instances to further mobilising by women and expressing their needs and aspirations.
- Learning from each other: peer learning in safe environments. Examples given included learning about disaster mapping and preparedness, traditional knowledge about agriculture, human rights and rights as women. Other areas of learning included technical aspects (e.g. using laptops) or skills development in areas such as public speaking and advocacy to government.
- Empowerment: women gaining from strength from each other, understanding of collective ability to influence change, realization of the importance of solidarity among women (for supporting each other and for advocacy), overcoming sense of isolation, understanding of the commonality of issues and challenges, gaining creative ideas from each other and pooling of resources to achieve the outcomes.
- Enabling Action: the engagement with women within the country or globally enabled women to have a sense of agency and 'courage' to speak out and act.
- Women's Leadership: the engagement particularly with global forums enabled women to see strong female role models in different roles e.g. government, global organisations and NGOs. This inspired WC to develop themselves or others as strong women leaders.
- Women's Organising: WC have greater awareness of women's organising and networking across Cambodia. The international engagement has provided inspiration for stronger women's organising.

The Women's Charter of Demands which was collaboratively created and presented by both WC groups in Pursat and Kampot. It served as a unifying series of activities between the two provinces as well as helping the women shape their ideas into actionable demands. The resulting five pillars contained in the WCoD: infrastructure; emergency shelter; emergency response and outreach; education and awareness raising; and advocacy - have provided specificity to the women's ideas and created a sense of empowerment and solidarity through this creative process. The women expressed that they can now better articulate their needs and demands as well as represent their villages' ideas at commune meetings.

The evaluation confirms the beneficial impacts of engagement with women from other parts of Cambodia and from around the world on WC and more broadly on communities of women in Cambodia. WC identified that the engagement with other inspired each other and had greater impacts on local women when shared. Majority of WC expressed keen interest in more continuous engagement with other women, particularly within Cambodia and identified the need to expand the WC concept to other areas, i.e. more frequent connection between Pursat and Kampot. Looking at other examples of women's organising from PLE and GRA, WC identified the need to consider how they may be organised in Cambodia. This was a view shared widely across WC and an expression of the need to organise more formally was repeated to the evaluators in interviews and focus groups. The evaluators note the complexity of the political situation in Cambodia and the sensitive nature of women's organising. The WC who took part in the global aspects of GRACC identified the need to have ongoing networking and contact with the women from around the world that they met.

2.5 What were the constraints on taking collective action to influence policy, planning and decision making on climate change and related crises?

The concept of the WC commenced with the GRACC project. The evaluators have observed that the process from the inception of WC concept, recruitment, training and building capacity of women and moving to the stage of collective action to influence, policy, planning and decision making been a duration of less than two years. This is a major achievement as building capacity, organising and networking and influencing change.

Numerous constraints on taking collective action to influence policy, planning and decision making on CC/DRR have been identified through the stakeholder discussions in the evaluation. A major barrier is the existing political, economic and cultural barriers to women's participation in decision making (Tanyag 2019)⁴. It was expected that communities do not seek assistance or raise concerns to their local authorities and women are often not likely to be invited to commune or Sangkat decision making. In a decentralized governance system, efforts to develop and implement gender mainstreaming is constrained. The evaluation confirms this through discussion with WC, village, commune and provincial level representatives. For example, the authorities demonstrated a spectrum of responses in relation to gender and CC/DRR from being responsive and aware to non-responsive. Approximately 62% of the authorities (5 from 8) (village, commune, provincial) identified differential the gendered impacts of CC/DRR and 38% said it was the same (3 from 8, with n=8). Some officials identified the work of WC as having contributed to their awareness. The differential impacts were often couched in language of 'women being not strong' and have health issues. In some instances, the authorities could provide a sound analysis of gender impacts of CC/DRR. However, little of the awareness was translated into practice in policy, program or budgetary change.

WC identified the ongoing effort required to be heard and participate in decision making. For example, positions at commune level are political roles and are mostly held by men. Women traditionally serve as the designated women and children representative on these local committees and the budget line item used for women and children at the commune level is small, it is set as a budget line at the national level as 'social affairs' and not intended specifically for CC/DRR. Another cultural norm is that provincial and national level committees' positions are held primarily by existing government department representatives. Each of these committees, have varying levels of operation. - WC have experienced some public community and family resistance to their increased leadership roles and activities. Increasing WC leadership roles in government structures will meet more resistance especially when trying to influence budget allocations. Preparing women who have lived isolated from these processes will require more support around GBV and change management. This was evident in numerous examples of women's needs not being considered, and priority being given in commune planning and budgets for what men thought were important. WC in government identified their efforts to be considered for specific initiatives and the difficulties of implementing gender mainstreaming within their institutions.

WC skills, knowledge and education levels varied and impacted on their ability to navigate and influence government and policy frameworks. At the local, commune and provincial level there was good collaboration between women in government and grassroots women to achieve change. All WC were greatly empowered by the training on Commune Investment Plans and were targeting change at the commune level. Majority of WC identified the need to understand the formal policy processes and workings of government particularly at the national level and skills in how to influence change. The role of the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MOWA) and WC is less developed which as a ministry could provide support, livelihood training, mentorship, internal government wisdom and introductions to key officials. WC were not sure what the office of MOWA does or how they could link to it. Majority of WC expressed the need for more training on advocacy, lobbying and influencing. WC in government also identified that they were often not aware of the national policies and processes and would benefit from further development.

⁴ Tanyag M. (2019) *Gender-Responsive Alternatives on Climate Change: A Country Report on Cambodia*, Research Report, Monash University and ActionAid Australia.

Lack of resources to convene was another major barrier. WC identified the need have solidarity to bring about collective action. The challenges of coming together as WC and travelling to Phnom Penh were identified as barriers. The village, commune and provincial authorities were geographically more accessible while the national level was not. An additional barrier was the time constraints for WC who had numerous livelihoods and household responsibilities, making it difficult for them to be stretched further.

2.6 What degree of success do they feel they have had in influencing policy change and having women's concerns heard in decision making processes?

"Women Champions are now invited to consult in Commune Council processes." (Implementing Partner, Pursat).

This statement identifies the sentiments about the progress made in influencing policy and having women's concerns heard in decision making processes. WC have identified that "they have just begun" the process of influencing. WC identified that advocacy space is still new to them and they need further support and training. WC believed that the influence they had was more at the local level as is exemplified by the following words from a WC: "So far we have concentrated on the village, municipality and commune level. We need to more with Provincial and national level too".

Despite challenges and constraints, WC provided examples of success at the local authority and Commune level. These include:

- Being invited to meetings to and representing women's needs e.g. village, commune and DCM meetings and representing women's needs by WCs.
- DMCs recognising WC work and women's needs (e.g. engagement with WC to ensure women are part of early warning system in Kampot, and presentation to DCMs on women's needs in Pursat).
- Engagement of WC on a range of issues at village, district and commune level which provides opportunity for informal influence.
- Support with small amounts of funding for the work of WC at times (e.g. Kampot Disaster Management Committee).
- WC invited to take up decision making roles e.g. being deputy village chief in Pursat.
- Development and presentation of the Women's Charter of Demands.
- Influence in change of budget e.g. small increase in Women and Children's budget line in.

The WC and the implementing partners identified that the WCoD was tool to influence policy and decision making. At the time of the evaluation, the WCoD had been recently completed and missed the calendar cycle to influence the Community Investment Plan that allocates the commune funds annually. The WC had received training on Community Investment Plan and the evaluators were informed by majority of the WCs that they were intending to target change in 2020. Although poised well to have influence on the budgeting process next year, more support will need to be provided to transition the document into a policy and budgeting process in an appropriate manner.

Summary Outcome 2

The evaluation has found, based on the above findings, that the project has made achievements against Outcome 2 where WC are able to organise to engage in and influence national policy, planning and decision making on climate change. The evaluation confirms that the project has met the relevance criteria in that the needs and priorities of WC, as the main beneficiaries, were identified and treated as central. Relevant capacity building training and development was provided to support WC to become aware of policy, government, budgeting, human rights and advocacy to influence policy and decision making. All WC and stakeholders confirmed the relevance of the project and the activities. The evaluation confirms the effectiveness against Outcome 2 where the intended outcomes were achieved including empowerment of women; ability to take collective action as WCs; the development of a Women's Charter of Demand; representing women's needs in national and international forums and increasing engagement with government authorities for influencing purposes. Key outcomes include women voicing their needs to authorities, development appropriate evidence base for their needs, and advocating for change. The global activities of PLE and GRA broadened women's knowledge and shifted their thinking. Women's peer learning, local, national and international networking of women has enabled a strong sense of agency, enhanced awareness of policy and global platforms, increased confidence to influence policy, take collective action and affirming women's leadership. The evaluation notes that the process for engaging and influencing change at national and international policy, planning and decision making on climate change and related crises is multi-

‘There has been a big change in the community about women’s leadership. A lot of community people feel confident to raise their concerns and family issues and share them in public. In the past this did not happen.’

~Pursat - Deputy Commune Chief

dimensional and a process which takes a long time to achieve⁵. The impact of the project has been the collective organising of WC to raise women’s needs and demands at different levels including the development of a Women’s Charter of Demands; increased awareness and knowledge about mechanisms to participate in influencing; increased confidence levels to participate in representation of their needs and advocacy, and increased confidence by women in their own leadership. The evaluation also found significant constraints and challenges to achieving change at national

and international levels. WC are keen to increase influencing activity, build their leadership skills and have identified the need for support and capacity building in undertaking strategic work. The key factors that enable sustainability for include leadership of 25 WC active in their communities, women’s networks and collective action; confidence to pursue human rights-based CC/DRR policy influencing; and partnerships with agencies locally, nationally and globally. The evaluation concludes that the projects benefits will continue, and major impacts against Outcome 2 are gaining momentum and will need support into the next phase.

Findings Outcome 3⁶: Women’s voice and leadership in climate change and related crises is enhanced through the establishment of a gender responsive framework on gender, climate and security.

3.1 What has been the impact of learning and sharing activities on knowledge transfer, preparedness, resilience, leadership and advocacy e.g. peer learning exchange (PLE), grassroots academy (GRA)?

A key finding is the effective conceptualisation of WC as active and positive agents in CC/DRR resilience building in their communities. The GRACC project-increased community resilience by supporting WC to enhance what they were already doing to cope and recover in the face of quick-onset disasters with international knowledge HRBA, HVCA, Sendai Framework and scientific CC/DRR content. The stereotyped gender paradigm defined and constrained by women’s domestic responsibilities was noted as shifting as documented by interviewed informants.

A WC interviewed from Kampot who participated in the GRA said her key learning was the existence of a global network of women who were ‘strong’ with whom they have a ‘shared experience about climate change’ regardless of their countries. She was able to make the distinction that although Cambodia had not suffered from natural disasters at the level as some of the other countries, it did need to ‘pay attention and prepare’ for the changes that have been brought on by climate change (e.g. droughts, floods) and it was her responsibility to share this information with her community and help them prepare. A Pursat WC, who attended the PLE, observed how Indonesia was focused on waste management and recycling, something she didn’t see in her country. Upon her return she now encouraged communities to use less plastic and to recycle when possible.

For the WC themselves, they have new understanding, empowerment and increasing acceptance that they are fulfilling their human rights to advocate, contribute and perform leadership roles. For the communities, they are witnessing an expansion in women’s roles as well as finding a local advocate for them to share their concerns and priorities that can then be represented at commune meetings. For government entities, the presence of CC/DRR informed WC at meetings, as well as their visible action as CC/DRR actors, is highlighting an under tapped human resource to assist communities with preparation as well as a conduit to disseminated provincial CC/DRR information.

⁵ See Bergstrom L. (2005) *Development of Institutions is Created from Inside*, Swedish Development Agency. Beegstrom states” institutional change is a dynamic process – it takes place gradually and the various stages in the process are difficult to foresee. Time and space are needed in different phases to search for new solutions. These solutions are then developed in social inter-play between individuals, groups and organisations in which their different interests and experience are compared”.

⁶ Evaluator note: Outcome 3 was intended to address the global GRACC framework which had just being finalized as this evaluation project began and therefore not been introduced to many women and key stakeholder so specific data was not available on its impact. However, the country activities contributed directly to the global framework’s formation. A framework provides a blueprint of what is, and a compass for sustainable development. Hence, the findings and analysis to Outcome 3 address the systemic nature of GRACC, situating the project within larger processes of change, which informed the global framework and included activities of global forums, scaled impacts, knowledge transfer and country contexts.

Additional key findings from the evaluation were WC now feel they are part of a local, provincial and global network of women leaders contributing to CC/DRR. Their relationship to the CC/DRR national efforts was less articulated and therefore less evident. WC valued peer learning and felt a solidarity across both provinces which gave them social and emotional support. WC are actively sharing CC/DRR information in formal and informal settings (e.g. one-to-one or commune/village meetings). Attending PLE and GRA shifted WC CC/DRR learning to a global perspective gaining insights to common challenges and connections to a network of women leaders.

The positive impact of WCs new CC/DRR knowledge has also highlighted for them the need to develop alternative livelihoods for themselves and their communities that are more responsive and resilient to CC as a strategy to deflect income and food insecurity (e.g. crop failure, damage).

[3.2 How has women's leadership capabilities been strengthened to work at different scales?](#)

WC expressed in both provinces a new understanding of the leadership role they could play in CC/DDR preparedness at the village, commune and some at the provincial level. The grassroots WC tended to feel more confident to take a leadership role at the village and commune level while the government WC articulated their confidence to take a leadership role at the DMC/PDMC. Overall, WC stated they felt 'confident', 'brave', 'knowledgeable' and ready to take on more personal challenges as leaders. They are being stopped on the street and asked for advice, to do home inspections, look for hazards and to speak at public events. However, there is not enough data yet due to the short timeframe the project has been operating, to confirm the depth and nature of the influence on the implementation of commune, provincial or national plans and budgets.

[3.3 What has been the impact of the Global Learning Exchange \(Indonesia\) and Grassroots Academy \(Switzerland\)?](#)

Attendance at the global workshops contributed greatly to the excitement and impact of the project for the WC who attended by exposing them to other social, cultural and political realities about CC/DRR, women's lives, ways of organising and how other cultures live. It gave them hope and a vision. They were able to share values, ideas and understanding on how women can mobilise and form networks. The attendance at the international forums earned women increased status and respect in their local community, both among women and men. Upon returning to Cambodia, WC shared their experiences in different forums such as village and commune meetings and larger national events.

"At the Switzerland training, I saw many high-level officials and now know it is not only our country that faces CC/DRR and gender inequality, but it is also the big issue for every country around the world." ~ Grassroots WC

Additional key findings from the evaluation were:

- WC, those that went and those that didn't, valued the opportunity to learn about other women and their ways of networking in countries. WC expressed feeling more hopeful about their own countries change process as well as underscoring the importance of women taking the lead.
- WC want greater exchange opportunities within, and outside, Cambodia.
- WC wanted regular connectivity across provincial GRACC sites.

[3.4 How has good practice knowledge been transferred?](#)

Based on the interviews and FGD, there have been several ways that knowledge was transferred, formally, informally and through the attendance at regional and national meetings. The first, and more formally, was WC hosting 'awareness raising activities' (e.g. drought readiness, storm preparedness, early warning system registration) for village and commune members in both provinces. The awareness activities were also conducted ongoing as WC disseminated information to people they met in their daily lives. WCs identified that good practice for knowledge transfer were regional and national meetings. WC from each province attended GRACC network meetings with each other where learning was exchanged and the WCoD was created. Some WC attended a national workshop on women's leadership which gave them an understanding of how their local CC/DRR efforts fit in to a national effort. An innovation for sharing knowledge was the creation of a Facebook messenger group (social media) called "Women Champion DRR/CC Network" as a communication platform. From the evaluation perspective, it was clear that the process of writing the WCoD was as important to knowledge transfer as was the actual document.

3.5 What frameworks have been established to ensure women's voices are heard?

At the country level, there were no frameworks established, and the GRACC global framework was too new for the WC and key informants to respond. The work in Cambodia, however, did contribute directly to a global framework which includes three domains: capacity development/knowledge brokering, overcoming barriers/recognizing added value and bottom up/integrated approach.

3.6 What is the nature of women's leadership in their country contexts?

In each province, WCs are at a different level of development and commitment in her new leadership role. Although they feel braver and more confident overall, there still is a strong cultural norm that does not accept women leaders. A government WC noted that 'there is mistrust from the men that women can do this leadership role. Women have less education than men and they are not respected. Sometimes they get words of discouragement and the women give up and do not take up leadership roles.'

Although the WC and other key informants identified an increase of level of access to leadership activities, there remains a strong cultural norm about leadership being perceived as a man's role, more evident at the grassroots level. Ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making will still need to be a necessary element of any future CC/DRR efforts to continue to provide visible opportunities of how women lead and the role they can play in political, economic and public life.

Summary Outcome 3

The evaluation based on the above findings has found, that Outcome 3 was achieved based on the limitations already described in the footnote on page 19.

GRACC was effective to building an inclusive systemic foundation of CC/DRR activities which built women's and institutional knowledge; created a women-centric solidarity movement between provinces and globally; spurred local government and institutional transformation; and shifted cultural norms about who should and could provide input and leadership to decision-making platforms⁷. The evaluators found a systemic foundation of activities that encourages a critical and holistic understanding of the opportunities, constraints and relationships of parts within a CC/DRR system, yet considering the system as a whole.

As noted in Outcome 1, WC in both provinces articulated their individual and collective growth as women, leaders and Cambodian citizens. Evidence showed this empowerment impacted their lives and created more resilient communities, but also introduced them to broader cultural, social and political systems where they were able to establish leadership roles. The knowledge they gained about a global network of women working on CC/DRR transferred knowledge about adaptation and responsive practices, while reflecting on the similarities and differences to their own living experiences to those of others. This newly found solidarity indicated to them that they are not alone but embedded in a global movement of empowered women.

The relevance of GRACC is strong in a Cambodian context. The now common periods of drought and floods continue to have emotional, financial and health-related effects. By directly linking CC/DRR and gender equality, GRACC directly supports the government's broader commitment to these strategies providing a good model for the country to document as progress on their country sustainable development agenda. Having local implementing partners doing the bulk CC/DRR capacity building and networking with local government was an effective way to build capacity of the women by transferring power and knowledge, sometimes centralized in the capitol, to local actors who can act more nimbly and adapt project deliverables based on the local context.

Although the biggest impact from GRACC has been on WC and their communities through their increased resilience and preparedness, another considerable impact was on the village, commune and provincial governments by increasing their awareness about the role that women can play in CC/DRR. Most, but not all, government officials in both provinces described their appreciation of the WC activities building resilience in their region and were knowledgeable that the women had participated in global activities which linked their region to a national and global agenda. Several officials mentioned they now view the WC as an extension of their DM plan team and hoped that the project would be continuing.

Evidence indicates that the benefits of the GRACC program will extend beyond current funding. WC are empowered and connected, government officials recognize the contributions and resources the WC can provide and communities are more informed on how to adapt and prepare.

⁷ GRACC Global Framework

5. Conclusion

This evaluation concluded that the GRACC project, funded under the Gender Action Platform through DFAT, has successfully achieved its three outcomes of increasing women's capacity and knowledge to respond to CC/DRR; take collective action in national and international policy, planning and decision making on CC/DRR and raised their voices and leadership through the establishment of gender responsive framework. Despite the relatively short implementation period, it is clear that a strong foundation and impact has been made in the WC lives and has begun to create a leadership role for them in the decision-making governmental bodies at the local and provincial levels. The project's HRBA approach has increased gender-responsive knowledge in all key informants involved in GRACC raising women's capacity to advocate for their rights and the rights of other marginalised voices within their political system while contributing to a global agenda.

In Cambodia, the GRACC project has been an entry point for dozens of women to step outside their currently constrained gendered roles set by society's social and behavioural norms which limits women's voices, roles, ideas and aspirations. Aligned with Cambodia's larger political efforts on gender mainstreaming and CC/DRR, the GRACC project and its stakeholders have made impressive strides in a short two-year span of time. Most of the key informants have identified that they are in the early stages of a major agenda for change, accompanied by many intersecting challenges of geography, cultural norms, male dominated decision-making processes, gendered societal relationships and economic barriers. Women leaders are clear that they have only begun to 'simmer' as women champions and are committed to remaining involved until they are fully 'cooked'.

6. Key Recommendations

- Using the Women's Charter of Demands as a foundation, support WC in the development of strategic 3-5-year plan, identifying priority action plans for scales of influence (e.g. local, commune, provincial, national, international and target policies and departments), key opportunities for influence, engagement strategies to enlist critical partners/allies and appropriate communication to different audiences.
- Identify ways to create livelihood projects in response to CC/DRR, particularly to projects that strategically reinforces women's leadership.
- Provide further capacity building for WC in policy, governance, influencing, negotiation and advocacy to enhance the knowledge and skills of WC to impact policy change and decision making.
- Train the WC to be train-the-trainer facilitators, have them facilitate workshops in their own communities and other provinces to improve awareness at village, commune and provincial levels and raise awareness of vulnerable groups (e.g. disabled, elderly, single women head of household)
- Explore options for ongoing engagement and peer exchanges for WC with women in Cambodia, PLE and GRA, with a facilitated discussion about benefits /disadvantage of formal organising of WC.
- Support the development of resources and educational material (with pictures) from training programs and global learning events, to enable WC to share information effectively with other women.

Annexes

ANNEX 1: EVALUATION CRITERIA AND KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Evaluation Objectives and Criteria

The main objectives of the evaluation were:

- To review the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability and impact of the project by reviewing the project outcomes achieved as a result of project outputs and project approach.
- To assess the project achievements, strengths, weaknesses and implementation constraints with a view to identifying any lessons and good practice that can be incorporated into future ActionAid programming and shared in the sector.

The evaluation criteria and questions for each country level report will be decided in a consultative manner with the teams at the country level and with input from the Evaluation Working Group and as part of the participatory approach of the evaluation. It is envisaged that there will be some common questions across countries while still trying to reflect the unique context of each location.

The evaluation criteria are:

- a. Women's Empowerment
- b. Relevance
- c. Effectiveness
- d. Efficiency
- e. Impact
- f. Sustainability

Country Key Evaluation Questions

Outcome 1

- 1.1 How have women participants become more resilient to climate change risks?
- 1.2 How have women become empowered to take action in relation to CC/DRR and their concerns being heard?
- 1.3 How has the levels of awareness about CC increased?
- 1.4 Have women's voices, concerns and representation increased in relation to CC/DRR processes?
- 1.5 How has the capacity of women for participation in CC/DRR planning and mitigation changed?
- 1.6 How has the capacity for women-led preparedness and resilience planning improved?
- 1.7 What attitudinal change has occurred about gender impacts of CC at local/regional decision makers?

Outcome 2

- 2.1 What actions/activities have been undertaken to influence national or international policy?
- 2.2 How have national or international policy changed?
- 2.3 What have women learnt during the Peer Learning Exchange (PLE) and Grassroots Academy (GRA)?
- 2.4 What was the impact of engaging with women from other parts of the country/world?
- 2.5 What were the constraints on taking collective action to influence policy, planning and decision making on climate change and related crises?
- 2.6 What degree of success do they feel they have had in influencing policy change and having women's concerns heard in decision making processes?

Outcome 3

- 3.1 What has been the impact of learning and sharing activities on knowledge transfer, preparedness, resilience, leadership and advocacy e.g. peer learning exchange (PLE), grassroots academy (GRA)?
- 3.2 How has women's leadership capabilities been strengthened to work at different scales?
- 3.3 What has been the impact of the Global Learning Exchange (Indonesia) and Grassroots Academy (Switzerland)?
- 3.4 How has good practice knowledge been transferred?

- 3.5 What frameworks have been established to ensure women’s voices are heard?
 3.6 What is the nature of women’s leadership in their country contexts?

Linking Evaluation Criteria to Key Evaluation Questions

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions
Women’s Empowerment	1.2,1.4,1.5,2.3,2.4,2.5,2.6,3.2,3.6
Relevance	1.1, 1.2,1.5, 2.3, 3.1 3.6
Effectiveness	1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 2.1, 2.4, 2.5, 3.2 , 3.4
Impact	1.1, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.2, 2.6 , 3.3,
Efficiency	See limitations section in the body of the report
Sustainability	1.2, 1.6, 1.7, 2.3, 3.1, 3.5

ANNEX 2: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Table 4 Key Informant Interviews

	WC	WC Husbands	Village & Commune: Leaders & Members	Provincial Leadership	ACC/Partners	Others*	Sub-TOTAL	No of Participants
Kampot	WCG ov 2	3 M	7 M 9 F	5 M 1 F	1-CWDCC F 1-AAA- F		18 F <u>15 M</u>	45 F <u>32 M</u> 77 people
	WCG R 4		(1 disabled)	Dept of Women’s Affairs			33	
Pursat	WCG ov 2	3 M	6 F 7 M	2 F 2 M	5 F 1 M	2 F 2 M	27 F <u>17 M</u>	
	WCG R 10		(1 disabled)				44	

Table 5 Capacity Building Meetings/Workshops

Workshops	Activity	No of Participants
AAC staff	Inception Meeting	5
Capacity Building	ISE4GEMs Methodology & Gender Responsive Theory	10
Preliminary Findings	Presentation to AAC staff	7

ANNEX 3: EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS and GUIDING QUESTIONS

Women’s Individual and Focus Group Interview Questions

1. How were you recruited for this project? When did you join this project?
 - a. Are there other women in your community who would like to have the same access to the program/training? Why/Why not?
2. How aware are you of CC/DRR or programs in your community?
 Not Aware Slightly Aware Moderately Aware Very Much Aware Highly Aware
3. How would you describe the GRACC project to a friend?
4. Has changed for you personally about your ability to influence change in your community?
5. Has decision making in your household changed since you became a WC? (Probes e.g. money, assets, DRR, household management)
6. What was your level of awareness and knowledge about climate change before the project started?

- 1 Nothing 2 Low 3 Medium 4 High 5 Very High
7. What is your level of awareness and knowledge now? Why?
- 1 Nothing 2 Low 3 Medium 4 High 5 Very High
8. How do men in your community feel about women's increased decision-making because of CC/DRR?
9. Do individuals in your community seek your opinion/help, advice of CC/DRR or other matters? Did this happen before becoming a WC (who seeks advice, why, why not others such as Village Chief, is she able to respond?)
10. How do women feel about women's increased decision-making because of CC/DRR?
11. What is the extent of your involvement in CC/DRR activities?
- What were the activities?
 - Were you involved before the project?
 - What is your involvement/role now?
 - Have you been in informal or formal roles?
12. What changes have you help implement in your community because of your involvement with GRACC?
13. What impacts does climate change on income generation?
- Are the impacts different for men and women?
 - Has the GRAAC project helped to mitigate those?
14. Has being a WC impacted on your capacity to generate income? (unintended consequences)
15. The highlight of being of being a WC
16. What would help build your resilience for income generation in the long term?
17. How did these activities change your perception on your leadership abilities?
18. To what extent are you more confident more to leadership roles in CC/DRR
19. How has your awareness of policy and processes increased because of this project?
20. Have you had opportunity to influence and advocate for women's concerns beyond CC/DRR?
21. Has your confidence increased to advocate to leaders about CC/DRR?
22. What specific skills and capacities have you developed because of this project?
23. What topics would you like to learn more about to feel confident in responding to CC/DRR?
24. What challenges remain in your community for women to continue to be leaders in CC/DRR?

Staff Focus Group Questions

- Can you describe the project and its effects for the women you work with/in this community?
- In your view, what did the program achieve?
- In your view, what were barriers that prevented the program from being effective/more effective? How did you respond?
- What are the benefits to your community/agency of women's participation in CC/DRR leadership and action?
- What are the benefits to women of their increased participation?
- In your view, is there resistance to women's participation?
- Where there any unintended impacts/outcomes (positive or negative) during the program?
- Impact of local policy?
- Women's charter? Did all the WC get a chance to have their voices heard?
- Describe the capacity development that occurred
- What other type of capacity building do you think would be helpful to support GRACC?
- Can you describe the learning of staff involved in the delivery of the program?

Global Team Interview Questions

- Please describe the GRACC program and your organisation's role.
- What were the anticipated outcomes from your organization's participation? An example of an impact beyond participation?
- Why was it important to share good practices and innovations across countries among community women?
- Was the peer learning exchanges (Indonesia) achieve the anticipated outcomes?
 - What were the indicators that showed this?
 - Where there any unintended impacts/outcomes (positive or negative) during the program?
 - What would you have done differently?
- Did the Grassroots Women's Academy (Switzerland) academy achieve the anticipated outcomes?
 - What were the indicators that showed this?

- b. Where there any unintended impacts/outcomes (positive or negative) during the program?
 - c. What would you have done differently?
6. How were participants' needs assessments assessed prior to each activity?
7. What differences did they observe between the learning exchange learning and the grassroots?
8. What did the post training evaluation of workshop indicate? ·
9. Has the GR framework been completed? Where can it be accessed?
 - a. Who contributed to its development?
 - b. How or when will it be launched?
 - c. If already launched, how was it received?
 - d. How will it be used?
10. From your experience on this project, what have you learned about the intersections on gender equality, the environment and marginalized voices that are engaged in the program?
11. What are the benefits to women of their increased participation in their communities, regionally and globally?
12. In your view, what were barriers that prevented the program from being effective/more effective? How did you respond?
13. What resources were made available to women to take back to their countries to share with others?

WC Husband/Men Focus Group Questions

- 1) When did you first hear about climate change and its impact on the weather patterns in your commune?
- 2) How has CC impacted your life?
- 3) Do you think that CC affects men and women differently? (Why/why not and how?)
- 4) Can you describe the impact of the GRACC program the women in your family (i.e. wife, daughter, sister) who participated?
- 5) Did you have any concerns about the participation of your wife/daughter/sister in GRACC program, why/why not?
- 6) In your view, what were the negative and positive outcomes from the project?
- 7) What knowledge and skills did the women gain? Was their learning about CC/DRR shared with you and your family members?
- 8) In your view, what are the benefits to broader community of women's participation and leadership?
- 9) In your view, is there resistance in the broader community to women's participation and leadership?
- 10) What would you suggest for the future phases of this project?

ANNEX 4: REFERENCES

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Front cover: Communities in Baringo lead flood response. Photo: ActionAid.

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