

SEMIANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

October 2019 – September 2020 | Bangladesh, Kenya, Rwanda

PURPOSE AND PROGRESS

When women and girls have equal access and opportunity, progress is accelerated, communities are more prosperous, and entire families are stronger. Addressing the barriers that women face is essential to sustainable, effective development, because women are key to creating a stronger world—for everyone.

Strong Women Strong World (SWSW) connects those who recognize the link between empowered women and lasting social change with projects that impact the daily lives of women and girls. SWSW helps tackle lack of access to clean water, economic opportunity, healthcare, and education, as well as address the harms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)—barriers that keep women and girls from reaching their full potential.

In vulnerable environments and during emergencies, like COVID-19,

harmful gender norms intensify, and women and girls bear the brunt of worsening inequality.

In FY20, SWSW focused on partnering with women in some of the world's toughest places. SWSW helped launch two new PURPOSE projects (Promoting Unified Response and Prevention of SGBV) in Kenya and Bangladesh designed to address the increased risk women are facing during COVID-19. Your partnership also helped bring clean water in an ongoing project in Rwanda, saving women and girls hours of time collecting (often dirty) water. This report highlights those projects.

We are profoundly grateful for your partnership in this work. Thank you for standing alongside women and girls—cheering them on—as they build a stronger world for all of us.



“I cannot walk, so World Vision trained me with a skill that I can do at home.”

—Mazeda, 25, Bangladesh

Above, Mazeda, a Rohingya refugee, shows off her embroidery handiwork, a skill she learned at World Vision's safe space for women and girls.

IMPACT OF FY20 SWSW FUNDS



BANGLADESH

Planned for FY21 & FY22: In Bangladesh, the PURPOSE project will increase protections for women refugees at risk of SGBV.



KENYA

Planned for FY21 & FY22: In Kenya, the PURPOSE project will strengthen government response plans to SGBV and provide direct support for survivors.



RWANDA

In progress: The water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) project in Rwanda means better health and more opportunities, especially for girls and women.

ADDRESSING SGBV IN BANGLADESH

NEW PROJECT SUMMARY

Over 850,000 Rohingya refugees live in Bangladesh. The majority of those arrived from Myanmar in 2017, seeking a safe haven following extreme violence.

But refugee camps pose other dangers, especially for women and girls. The amount of stress faced by refugees, combined with a lack of protection services and accountability, puts women and girls at high risk for SGBV. More than 70% of women have experienced gender-based violence in emergency and refugee settings (World Bank). COVID-19 exacerbates risk due to increased domestic stress and difficulty accessing services.

SWSW is helping women, men, girls, and boys find the safe haven they seek.

Building on the trust we've already established in refugee communities, this PURPOSE project (started in October 2020) will further integrate SGBV awareness and prevention through three major interventions:

- Preventing SGBV through community awareness sessions that target men and boys using a male engagement approach. Sessions will highlight the role they can play in creating a protective environment for women and girls
- Engaging faith and community leaders to prevent SGBV and reduce stigma faced by survivors of SGBV and COVID-19. Training will focus on cultural and religious practices that can reinforce SGBV risk.
- Enhancing healthcare support services for women and girls, including capacity building for health workers on SGBV prevention and response.

World Vision will also provide Women and Girls Safe Spaces, which will offer skills-based training, psychosocial support, and case management services.







"Yes, we are more powerful. Before, we did not know where to go or what to say if we had a problem at home. We see a difference in ourselves now. Men can try and impose on us, but we will not allow it. Inshall'ah, God willing, these are skills we can take back to Myanmar with us when we return one day."

—Rashida,*

Rashida, a Rohingya refugee, talks about the difference SGBV education has made in her community.

**Name changed*

PROJECT GOALS:

-  **54** local faith and community leaders will receive training on becoming advocates for SGBV prevention.
-  **40** women and girls will receive training on making reusable cloth masks and menstrual pads, so they can generate income as well as meet a need in their community.
-  **18** community health workers will receive training on referrals and support for SGBV survivors.
-  **1,100** women and 900 men will receive training about the impact of SGBV and COVID-19, increasing community awareness.

ADDRESSING SGBV IN KENYA

NEW PROJECT SUMMARY

In Kenya, as in the rest of the world, incidences of SGBV have increased during the pandemic. Systems of protection are disappearing due to social distancing or because shelter and referral services for survivors have been disrupted. Kenya also faced the worst locust infestation in decades last year, exacerbating the economic strain of the pandemic and threatening food security.

All of this has a disproportionate negative impact on the safety and security of women and girls. Mobility restrictions and subsequent economic downturn may lead to forced coexistence with a perpetrator and fewer ways to seek help. World Vision, in partnership with Strong Women Strong World, is seeking to address and reverse these impacts through the PURPOSE project.

The program is designed to prevent and address SGBV, empower the community to advocate for government action, and provide

livelihood training so that women have more options to direct their own futures. Interventions will:

- Enhance SGBV prevention and response in the plans of local governments. Expected results include capacity building for government actors, enhanced government coordination on prevention, and targeted community structures becoming more ready to take a lead in SGBV prevention.
- Strengthen referral systems to respond to SGBV cases. This will be in coordination with the Kenyan government, civil society, and bilateral agencies such as the United Nations.
- Provide direct livelihood and financial literacy training for survivors of SGBV and those at risk. Participants will receive support for starting small businesses and cash transfers for basic needs such as food, seeds, and small livestock.



“Now, our dignity is restored. We feel valued and empowered, as we can make our own money and take care of our children. We are confident and our self-esteem is high.”

—Christine, Kenya

Before, Christine (pictured with her grandchildren) struggled to care for her family. To make ends meet, she started buying and selling fish, but male fishermen harassed her for sex. Christine found a safer opportunity when a neighbor, who'd been trained by World Vision on fish farming, trained Christine. “I have now become the supplier and not the retailer. God is good,” Christine says.

PROJECT GOALS:



30

community health volunteers and community-based organization representatives will receive training on SGBV prevention and response measures during COVID-19.



10

healthcare workers and 30 health volunteers will receive training on good nutrition, menstrual health and hygiene, and SGBV prevention and response for women and girls in isolation.



600

comprehensive dignity kits (personal care and hygiene supplies) will be distributed to women and girls who are survivors of or at risk for SGBV.

CLEAN WATER IN RWANDA

FY20 PROJECT SUMMARY

It's estimated that girls and women spend 200 million hours carrying water every day (UNICEF). This means fewer opportunities to earn income and less time for education—areas where harmful gender norms already put women at a disadvantage. And if the water they gather is dirty, it puts them at risk of waterborne diseases.

But clean, accessible water—that's a life-changer for women and girls. In Rwanda, more women now have access to safe water, handwashing stations, and improved sanitation facilities thanks to support from SWSW. These resources, combined with hygiene education, also help families prevent the spread of communicable diseases like COVID-19.

And now, thanks to the generosity of our donors, World Vision has obtained the resources needed to finish the job of bringing clean water to everyone, everywhere we work in Rwanda over the coming years.

Here are some of accomplishments SWSW helped make possible in Rwanda in FY20:

- 34,487 people (121,067 women) accessed a basic drinking water source in their communities.
- 63 education facilities gained a basic drinking water source, benefiting 50,298 students (24,646 girls and women).
- 26 health facilities were supplied with basic water supply, benefiting patients and healthcare staff.
- 344 improved, sex-separated latrine stalls were built at education facilities.
- 28 education facilities gained new menstrual hygiene and management facilities, so girls don't have to miss school when they're menstruating.
- 303,080 people participated in community hygiene behavior change programming, to help protect themselves and others from COVID-19.



"We used to fetch dirty water from the swamp for use at both home and school. There are times I would miss school either because I was sick due to hygiene-related diseases or because I had to go fetch water in the morning before going to school. ... I am happy that we now have clean water both in my community and school. I love to drink the clean water, too. I feel healthier than before."

—Chantal, 13, Rwanda

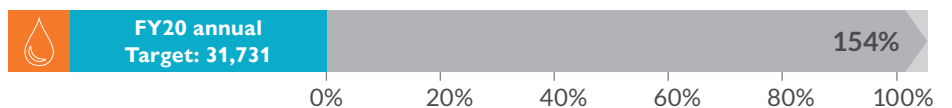
Chantal's community and school received water access through World Vision's newly constructed Nyagatoma Water System.

PROGRESS ON CORE ACTIVITIES

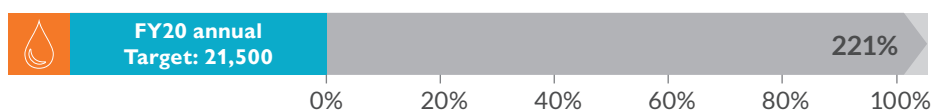
1,459 new and rehabilitated water taps built in all settings



49,021 sanitation facilities built



47,479 household handwashing facilities built





“We know how to raise our voice now. We are thankful for the [Women’s Peace] center. We never had a place like this before. We have come to know so many things for each other. The time we spend at the center is so peaceful. We are safe.”

—Khaleda, Bangladesh*

Khaleda (right), Bibi* (left), and Rashida*, Rohingya refugees, met at the Women’s Peace Center funded by World Vision Canada. Thanks to SWSW, World Vision U.S. has started a program to help more refugee women at risk of violence.*

**Names changed.*

THANK YOU

Women are powerful agents of change. When we help women and girls rise, they bring their communities and families with them. When you invest in women, you pave the way for a stronger world.

What’s more, your support lets women and girls in poverty know that you believe in their potential. Thank you for partnering with World Vision through Strong Women Strong World.



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For more information visit:
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World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice. Motivated by our faith in Jesus Christ, we serve alongside the poor and oppressed as a demonstration of God’s unconditional love for all people. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity, or gender.

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