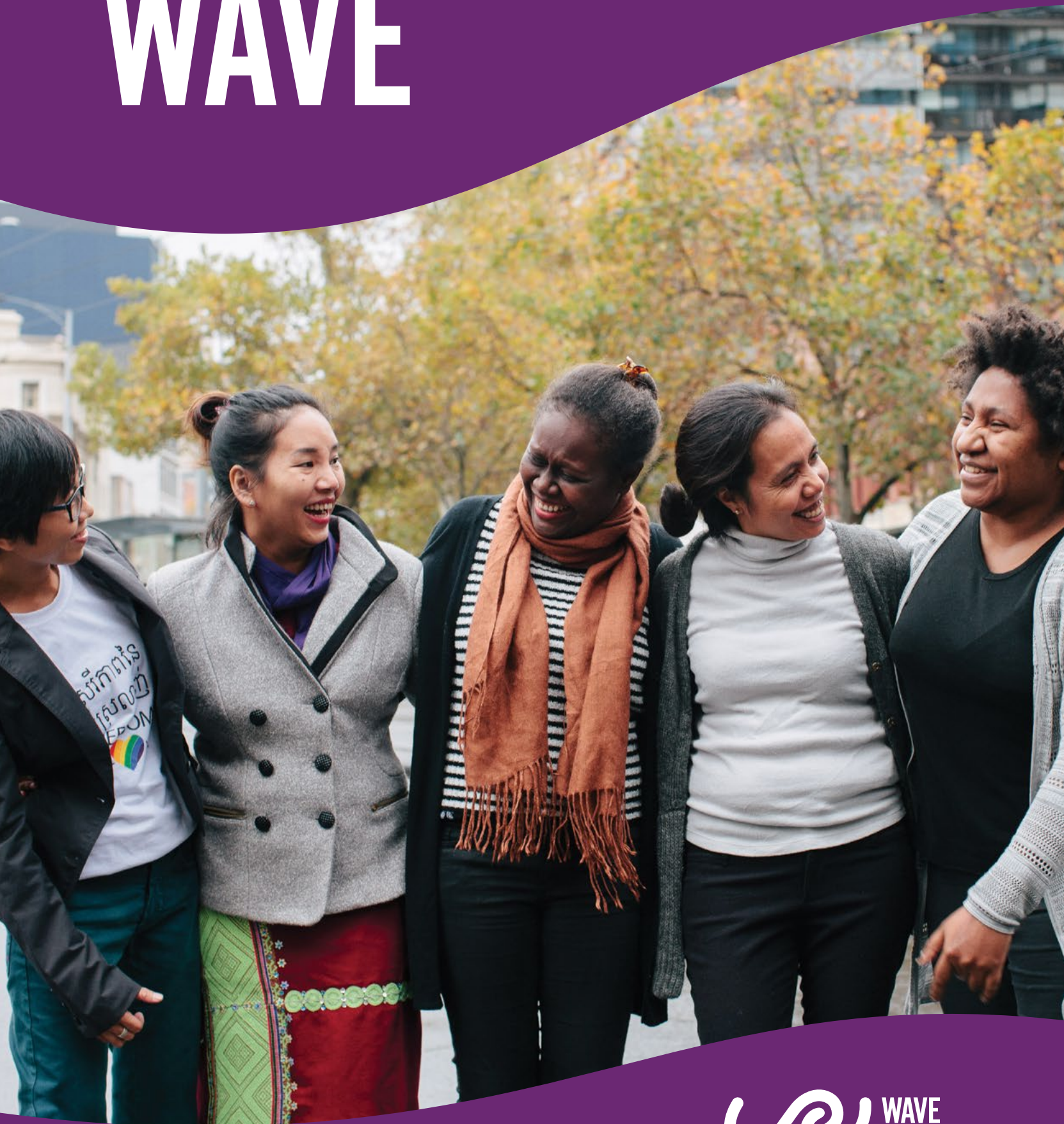


WOMEN'S ACTION FOR VOICE
AND EMPOWERMENT

2018 REPORT

WAVE



WAVE
WOMEN'S ACTION FOR
VOICE & EMPOWERMENT

**OUR VOICE
IS LOUDER
AND OUR
POWER
AMPLIFIED
WHEN
WE WORK
TOGETHER.**



Women's Action for Voice and Empowerment (WAVE) is a ground-breaking women's leadership program funded by the Government of the Netherlands and established by the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA). WAVE brings together and supports individual women, organisations, and movements in Asia and the Pacific region to increase the representation of women in diverse leadership positions.

The WAVE program strives for a world where diverse women are equally represented as leaders at all levels of society, and are able to use this power to drive systemic change toward gender equality.

Through WAVE, IWDA works in partnership with women's organisations in Cambodia, Myanmar, Timor-Leste, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Solomon Islands. IWDA's role in the WAVE program is as an ally, strategist, convenor, funder and partner at regional and international levels.

WAVE's ground-breaking work is only possible with the support of the Government of the Netherlands, which funds WAVE through its Funding Leadership Opportunities for Women (FLOW) program.

FLOW has enabled WAVE to demonstrate that ongoing, flexible and core funding for feminist movements is the best way to achieve transformative and sustainable change towards gender equality. We are pleased to present this 2018 Annual Report that demonstrates this growing evidence base, and shows the transformative impact this type of funding, coupled with strategic feminist engagement, can have. We thank the Government of the Netherlands for leading the way.

**THIS PROGRESSIVE, LONG-TERM
AND FLEXIBLE FUNDING HAS
DRIVEN TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE
FOR WOMEN IN ASIA AND THE
PACIFIC REGION.**



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands

PICTURED: KEAB LY, A MEMBER OF A SAVINGS GROUP COORDINATED BY WAVE PARTNER BANTEAY SREI IN CAMBODIA. PHOTO BY HARJONO DIOYOBISONO.

WAVE PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

WOMEN'S ACTION FOR VOICE AND
EMPOWERMENT 2018 REPORT

WAVE supports 16 women's rights organisations in five countries with the resources, skills and networks they need to amplify their collective voice and create a more enabling environment for women's leadership.

We know that our voices are louder and our power amplified when we work together. We also know that organising across the vast distances and remote landscapes of the Pacific region in particular, can be costly and difficult. That's why we use our resources and connections to convene spaces and processes where women leaders can connect, share, learn and organise together. This work aims to strengthen and deepen the vibrant women's movements across Asia and the Pacific.

MYANMAR

- Akhaya Women (Akhaya)
- Ta'ang Women's Organisation (TWO)
- Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN)
- Women's League of Burma (WLB)
- Women's Initiative Platform (WIP)

CAMBODIA

- Banteay Srei (BS)
- Amara
- Gender and Development for Cambodia (GADC)
- United Sisterhood Alliance (Us)

TIMOR-LESTE

- Alola Foundation (Alola)
- Asisténsia Legal Ba Feto no Labarik - Legal Aid for Women and Children (ALFeLa)
- Rede Feto - Women's Rights Network

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

- Bougainville Women's Federation (BWF)
- Voice for Change (VfC)
- Wide Bay Conservation Association (WBCA)

SOLOMON ISLANDS

- Women's Rights Action Movement (WRAM)

AUSTRALIA

- International Women's Development Agency (IWDA)

WAVE THEORY OF CHANGE

INDIVIDUALS

Individual women's leadership influences political, economic and social decisions

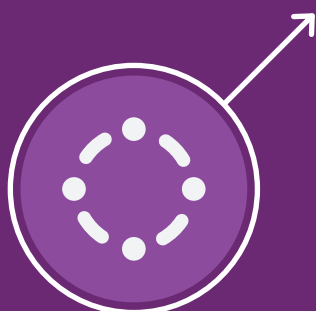


POLITICAL AND GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS

Power-holders and institutions are responsive to and accountable for women's rights and status

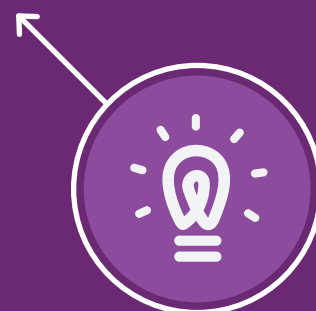


WOMEN LEAD
TRANSFORMATIVE,
SUSTAINABLE CHANGE
TOWARDS GENDER
EQUALITY, ENABLED BY
STRATEGIC FEMINIST
ENGAGEMENT



WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS (CSOs)

A vital, visible and vocal women's movement aggregates and amplifies women's power and priorities



RESEARCH, EVIDENCE AND LEARNING

Evidence of how change towards gender equality happens informs individuals, institutions and movements

TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER

In 2018, WAVE supported feminist movement strengthening in Asia and the Pacific region. Here is a snapshot of what we achieved together:

237

WOMEN SECURED NEW LEADERSHIP ROLES

195

CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES TOOK PLACE

82

JOINT DIALOGUE SPACES WERE CONVENED

2,906

WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE WERE SUPPORTED

5

FEMINIST RESEARCH PROJECTS COMMENCED

14%

INCREASE IN NUMBER OF SEATS HELD BY WOMEN IN NATIONAL, SUB-NATIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SINCE WAVE COMMENCED

6,967

COMMUNITY MEMBERS WERE REACHED THROUGH THE WORK OF MALE ADVOCATES

80%

OF ALL WAVE PARTNER ORGANISATIONS REPORTED A HIGH OR VERY HIGH ABILITY TO 'COMMIT AND ENGAGE'

PICTURED: MEAS SAM ATH ATTENDS A TRAINING SESSION DELIVERED BY WAVE PARTNER GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT FOR CAMBODIA. PHOTO BY HARJONO DIOYOBSANO.



PILLAR 1

INDIVIDUAL WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

WOMEN'S ACTION FOR VOICE AND
EMPOWERMENT 2018 REPORT



Women have the right to influence decisions that affect their lives but are drastically underrepresented in leadership at all levels of society. FLOW funding has enabled WAVE to address this by developing women leaders and leadership capabilities across generations to ensure that individual women's leadership can influence political, economic and social decisions.

WAVE's Theory of Change proposes that supporting women and young women to strengthen their skills and confidence to lead, and encouraging their communities to support them in that leadership, will facilitate women's access to positions of influence in formal political as well as community decision-making roles.

Our Theory of Change further suggests that when barriers to leadership, such as violence, are reduced, women are better able to participate in society and leadership roles. That's why WAVE supports women-led action to prevent and respond to violence against women.

**WAVE SUPPORTS WOMEN'S
LEADERSHIP, SO WOMEN LEADERS
CAN SUPPORT WOMEN'S RIGHTS.**

PICTURED: A PARTICIPANT OF WAVE PARTNER BANTEAY SREI'S WORKSHOP
ON LEADERSHIP IN CAMBODIA. PHOTO BY HARIONO DIJOYOBISANO.



INDIVIDUAL WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

In its third year, WAVE is supporting increasing numbers of women to achieve positions of leadership, with an impressive 237 women securing new leadership roles in 2018. This achievement is underscored by the results of WAVE's Mid-Term Reflection (MTR) which found that WAVE is supporting significant individual transformation in women's leadership and has led to an increased number of women in formal and informal leadership at community-level government and commune councils, civil society organisations, churches, and as provincial and national Members of Parliament (MPs). Importantly, the MTR also confirmed that a diversity of individuals experience transformation through WAVE, including women who are young and old (particularly notable in the Pacific due to cultural hierarchies), urban, rural and remote women, and women who are particularly vulnerable.

The increasing number of women in leadership positions across WAVE countries can be attributed to the work of WAVE partners in three key areas: (1) individual capacity-strengthening support and leadership skills training; (2) community awareness-raising to foster support for women in leadership; and (3) services and initiatives to respond to and prevent violence against women. For example, in addition to the delivery of ongoing leadership skills training programs such as SWAN's Emerging Women Leaders Training in Myanmar and BWF's Young Women's Leadership Program in Bougainville, WAVE has supported the piloting of new initiatives, including Myanmar's first campaign coaching program for women political candidates. This program strategically builds on WAVE's work and research in the political sphere, highlighting the importance of long-term, tailored support to women candidates.

Extensive MTR data across all five WAVE countries confirms that skills training and capacity-strengthening support is contributing to significant individual transformation in terms of increased confidence, capacity and skills. This is supporting women to achieve and retain both formal and informal leadership roles. In 2018 in PNG, WAVE partners supported the appointment of 14 women to a range of local government committees, including Ward development and law and order committees; assisted more than 20 women to secure community leadership roles; and supported five women to stand for

government and Ward elections in East Pomio for the first time. The impact of these programs on individual women is reflected in the feedback provided by community members from PNG, who report that through the WAVE program, they can now "take up spaces in leadership", "boldly speak on issues affecting women" and "directly challenge community structures".

WAVE's work in the area of community awareness-raising is also making substantial progress in fostering an enabling environment for women's leadership through critical social norms change. In 2018, WAVE partners utilised a range of methods to continue to support women and men's enhanced gender consciousness and commitment to gender equality. These methods include women's forums, gender sensitisation training with non-government organisations (WRAM, Alola, ALFeLa, Rede Feto), dialogues between men and women leaders to understand women's possibilities, opportunities and equality (Amara, GADC, Banteay Srei), male advocates training (VfC, GADC, Banteay Srei, Alola), documentaries (SWAN), and approaching families to encourage women to nominate as political candidates (Alola). The MTR found that this work has, over the past three years of WAVE, contributed to a transformation of social norms and the increased acceptance of women as leaders.

Through the provision of vital services for women, WAVE has also improved women's freedom from violence. In 2018, 2,906 women survivors of violence received information and support from WAVE partners across Cambodia, Myanmar, PNG and Timor-Leste. In addition, three safe houses in Cambodia and one safe house in PNG have been supported. As violence and related harmful gender norms and practices continue to inhibit women's participation in leadership across WAVE countries, this work remains vital to dismantling the barriers women face and creating supportive, enabling environments for women's leadership.

IN FOCUS: SUPPORTING WOMEN POLITICAL CANDIDATES IN MYANMAR

Myanmar is scheduled to hold national elections in 2020. In the lead up to this landmark political event, WAVE is supporting a number of innovative initiatives to facilitate women's enhanced political participation.

In 2018, WAVE supported Myanmar partner, WIP, to pilot the country's first campaign coaching program for women political candidates. This pioneering initiative saw five campaign coaches provide intensive, one-on-one coaching and support to 15 women potential candidates to assist them to develop a long-term campaign strategy tailored to the specific needs of their electorate. As a non-partisan initiative, the program targeted women from a broad range of political parties with reasonable prospects of preselection for the 2020 election. Strong emphasis was also placed on the participation of women from diverse ethnic backgrounds, including from rural areas.

While the pilot phase of the program is still underway, there are promising initial results. With consistent support from their campaign coaches, potential candidates have reported increased confidence to run for preselection, including facing competition from men during party preselection contests. Potential candidates also report they have strengthened their skills in engaging with constituents, developed important skills in campaign strategy design, and have a greater understanding of the policy priorities in their constituencies.

The campaign coaches play a central role in the program and were selected because they are respected by their communities and have close connections to a political party. Mi Cherry Soe Mon, who is coaching in Mon State, notes, "I am interested in coaching because I want to work with potential women candidates in my state to increase their self-confidence and to enable them to bring more of themselves into the constituency.

"I AM GRATEFUL TO HAVE THE COACHING SUPPORT BECAUSE IT HAS HELPED ME INCREASE MY CONFIDENCE AND ABILITY TO ENGAGE WITH THE PEOPLE IN MY COMMUNITY."

Being one of the coaches allows me to engage more closely with political parties and I can advocate to leaders for the inclusion of more women in their candidates lists."

The pilot initiative was designed in line with the strategic objectives identified as part of WAVE's Women's Political Leadership Strategy, which prioritises models of delivery that involve long-term tailored support to individual women candidates. This is aligned with global evidence and the experience of WAVE partners that demonstrates the importance of sustained support to women candidates throughout the electoral cycle. In addition to strengthening skills, women often require support in building networks, including with men and potential funders, support in raising their profiles and greater opportunities to demonstrate to their constituents that they have the capacity to deliver. This is just the kind of support that Myanmar's campaign coaching program is delivering to potential women candidates. As Mi Lawi Han, hopeful future candidate in Mon state, explains, "I am grateful to have the coaching support because it has helped me increase my confidence and ability to engage with the people in my community".

PICTURED: MYANMAR WOMEN MPS JOIN TOGETHER.



PILLAR 2

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

WOMEN'S ACTION FOR VOICE AND
EMPOWERMENT 2018 REPORT



Political and governance systems must work for women. WAVE is driving changes to inequitable legal, policy and economic frameworks to ensure that power-holders and institutions are responsive to and accountable for women's rights and status.

WAVE's Theory of Change proposes that well-planned and targeted advocacy on women's rights issues will lead to institutional reform, while ensuring that normative frameworks that support women and gender equality are in place. WAVE supports partners to apply a gendered lens to analyse laws, policies, electoral and budget processes and advocate for more gender-equal alternatives.

Our theory also proposes that monitoring and reporting on governments' performance against their obligations will create an accountability push. This, combined with work to increase duty bearers' knowledge of, and willingness to implement key changes, will enable individual champions to influence policy frameworks and institutions to advance women's rights.

PICTURED: WOMEN STAND STRONG AT AN INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH IN TIMOR-LESTE.

**TO ENSURE WOMEN'S PRIORITIES
AND SOLUTIONS ARE CONSIDERED
IN DECISION-MAKING, WOMEN MUST
BE PRESENT.**



SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Extensive MTR evidence and the results of WAVE partner reporting in 2018 show that WAVE partners are actively involved in a broad range of advocacy work, including joint advocacy, to influence laws, policies and budgets. While acknowledging that policy change is often a slow and non-linear process, it is clear that WAVE has been successful in influencing formal and informal policy and legal transformations across a number of country contexts.

This is particularly evident in the outcomes of WAVE partner advocacy at a local level. For example, in 2018, as the result of ongoing advocacy and community exchanges with heads of villages, Myanmar partner TWO was successful in securing support to introduce village rules prohibiting men from marrying women under 18 years of age. These village rules are now in place across a total of four villages. Consistent with WAVE's Theory of Change, TWO sees their strategic focus on increasing duty bearer awareness of girls and women's rights as central to their ability to influence local level change. TWO's targeted awareness raising activities have ensured that heads of villages are aware of, and understand, the harmful consequences of early marriage for girls, as well as their obligations to ensure the safety and security of girls in their village. Describing the impact of these new village rules, Lway Ku Ku, General Secretary of TWO, says it represents "an opportunity for girls to enjoy their teenage years, to finish high school and further training, and find a job to support themselves and their families, and will reduce domestic violence in villages". In another example of successful local level advocacy, WBCA in PNG has developed a process to enable communities to develop their own Ward Development Plans to feed into local government planning. As a result, the East Pomio local government will develop 13 plans with the active participation of communities, including women. This has also increased transparency over government processes and empowered communities to hold their Ward Members to account for implementing agreements.

Similarly, partners in Cambodia (BS), Myanmar (WLB) and PNG (VfC) report that their work to eliminate violence against women (VAW) has been successful in securing the attention of policy-makers. For example, the Jiwaka Provincial Government has developed local by-laws collaboratively with VfC to address VAW in Jiwaka. While in Myanmar, WLB as part of the Myanmar CEDAW Alliance successfully conducted parliamentary advocacy visits to three States and

three regions, resulting in the deputy speaker of the Thanintharyi Region Parliament making a commitment to form a sub-committee about violence against women with the support of local women's organisations.

There is also evidence that WAVE is beginning to influence improved budgets for women and children, particularly at the local level. Building on the networks established through their ongoing capacity-strengthening work with local women leaders in Cambodia, Amara worked with these leaders to successfully advocate for commune councils' increased commitment to women's issues and priorities in their Commune Investment Plans (CIP). In 2018, as a result of their advocacy, 26 communes across four districts in Siem Reap province agreed to allocate a minimum of 20% of CIP funds to support work specifically focused on addressing gender-related issues.

WAVE is also facilitating important joint advocacy work at a national level, with a strong focus on advocacy for temporary special measures (TSMs) aimed at accelerating gender equality in Parliaments in Myanmar, PNG and Solomon Islands. In spite of well-documented challenges to the introduction of TSMs, particularly in the Pacific, WAVE has made significant progress in driving the legislative reform process for TSMs in a number of WAVE countries.

In Solomon Islands, for example, WRAM's ongoing strategic advocacy efforts to build political support for TSMs has paid off with four of the country's Provisional Government Assemblies endorsing the inclusion of TSMs for women to take up a quota of positions in the Provincial Government Assembly (see opposite page for more). In PNG, WAVE has also supported partners to undertake collective advocacy to press for the introduction of TSMs. This includes developing a joint submission to the national review of electoral laws advocating for TSMs to be utilised at both the national and local level to facilitate women's participation in Parliament, presenting and speaking at a range of consultations and meetings with duty bearers, and distributing information briefs to community members and duty bearers explaining TSMs and their effectiveness with respect to women's participation.

WAVE partners' joint advocacy efforts continue to reinforce the crucial role of a vital, visible and vocal women's movements in advocating for policy and legislative change.

IN FOCUS:

MAKING SPACE FOR WOMEN LEADERS IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

In late 2018, the Solomon Islands' women's movement achieved a remarkable feat for women's political participation.

After the movement's tireless campaigning, the country's Provincial Government Assemblies endorsed the inclusion of temporary special measures (TSMs), paving the way for women to take up a quota of leadership positions. WAVE partner, Women's Rights Action Movement (WRAM), played a critical role in advocating for this change.

TSMs, which can include quotas and reserved seats, have been used successfully to increase women's representation in political leadership globally. Of the 47 countries in the world with 30% or more women's participation in national parliaments, 41 countries use at least one form of quota system.

The endorsement of TSMs on a provincial level is a major step forward in Solomon Islands. Since the country gained independence in 1978, only four women have won a seat at the national level. Data from previous provincial elections paint a similar picture, with only eight women winning a seat across 200 Provincial Government Assembly seats since independence. WRAM and other stakeholders have worked tirelessly in trying to change this.

WRAM, with the assistance of its networks and supporters who hold influential relationships with the Premiers of targeted Provincial Governments, effectively secured support for TSMs from the four Provincial Government Assemblies of Western Province, Central Islands Province, Malaita Province and Guadalcanal Province. Each Provincial Government Assembly consists of 12 or more men. WRAM's knowledge and expertise on TSMs and legislative reform won the support of each of these powerful duty bearers.

WRAM's advocacy and persistent lobbying efforts made the progress on TSMs possible. The organisation was responsible for advising key government officials on the legislative reform space, including how to legislate for a TSM provision in the Provincial Government Act 1997. This vital, specialised work was made possible by support from the WAVE program, which enabled WRAM to conduct high-level consultations and training with Provincial Government Assemblies as well as with key National Government officials.

This significant win for women's rights in Solomon Islands was a product of a vital, visible and vocal women's movement working together with committed Solomon Island Government women bureaucrats.

PICTURED: WOMEN LEADERS IN SOLOMON ISLANDS ATTEND A WORKSHOP.



FLEXIBLE AND LONG-TERM FUNDING FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF THE NETHERLANDS ENABLES ORGANISATIONS LIKE WRAM TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF KEY ADVOCACY WINDOWS TO SUCCESSFULLY LOBBY FOR THIS TYPE OF LEGAL AND POLICY REFORM.

PILLAR 3

WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

WOMEN'S ACTION FOR VOICE AND
EMPOWERMENT 2018 REPORT



At the core of the WAVE program is our shared vision for a vital, visible and vocal women's movement that aggregates and amplifies women's power and priorities.

The WAVE Theory of Change aligns strongly with the Dutch International Gender Policy, which contends that strong and committed civil society organisations are needed to transform gendered power relations and foster structural change. That is why IWDA, through WAVE, invests heavily in strengthening the capacity of partner organisations to commit and engage in transformative work towards gender equality.

Some of the most important advances in women's rights have been secured through the efforts of autonomous feminist movements. Women's movements hold decision makers and governance systems accountable, while also challenging gender stereotypes and shifting perceptions about women and women's leadership. WAVE convenes and enhances spaces where women leaders and organisations can connect, share, learn and organise together to strengthen and deepen the already strong and vibrant women's movements in Asia and the Pacific region.

**STRONG WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS NEED
STRONG WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS.**

PICTURED: BRIDGETTE (CENTRE) JOINS OTHER YOUNG WOMEN AT A LEADERSHIP FORUM IN THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF BOUGAINVILLE. PHOTO BY HARONO DIJOYOBSONO.



WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

One of the key learnings from the first three years of WAVE's implementation is the centrality of women's movements as both a driver for and an outcome of transformative, sustainable change. While strong movements and civil society organisations form one of the four pillars of WAVE's approach, it has become increasingly clear that strong women's movements are fundamental to change across all four pillars of WAVE. This is confirmed through the MTR data which overwhelmingly shows that WAVE partners believe collective power is critical to structural transformation, and that WAVE should further strengthen women's movements to create change. In line with this MTR recommendation, IWDA and WAVE partners are now focused on exploring together how the WAVE Theory of Change can be adapted to ensure that movement strengthening underpins and drives WAVE's approach to achieving change towards gender equality.

Recognising the importance of strong women's movements, WAVE intensified its support to a range of local, national and regional women's movements and coalitions, through a strategic focus on connecting and convening women's rights actors, fostering the resilience of individuals, organisations and movements and providing technical support and resources. This strategic support to movement strengthening is achieving results, with the MTR finding significant evidence that WAVE has been effective in strengthening solidarity between women, organisations, and movements, resulting in enhanced spaces to connect, improved relationships, and a growing shared identity. This is best demonstrated at a regional level through WAVE's Our Voice joint advocacy campaign, which has been successful in bringing together 25 partner organisations across all five WAVE countries to collectively campaign to increase the representation and effective participation of women in decision-making. At a national level, WAVE's achievements in supporting women's movements are evidenced through the growing strength of Solomon Islands National Women's Forum, which, in 2018, commenced implementation of its joint advocacy action plan, and Myanmar's coalition of WAVE partners, who have agreed to work together for the first time to jointly advocate for voluntary party quotas prior to the 2020 election.

Importantly, the MTR also found that, through WAVE, women are mobilising to change social norms and deep structures through women's groups and networks at local, national, regional and international levels. WAVE is supporting women to experience feminist spaces, increase their capacity, respond to local needs, collectively advocate and engage in activism and politics. For example, in PNG, WAVE has been supporting partner organisations to come together to connect, share and strengthen relationships over a number of years. In 2018, a PNG Partner workshop enabled partners to learn from each other and identify opportunities for joint advocacy. This kind of movement strengthening support is particularly important in a context where long distances, poor transport and lack of reliable internet make convening joint spaces particularly difficult. As a result of this workshop, PNG partners collaborated on a joint submission to the Constitutional Law Reform Commission on temporary special measures for women's leadership to inform the review of PNG electoral laws, a significant step in a country where there are currently no women in the national parliament.

WAVE has continued to support individual organisations to strengthen their ability to commit and engage in line with the five capabilities framework. As a result, 80% of WAVE partners are demonstrating a high or very high capacity to "commit and engage". This is reflected in the results of the MTR, with partners reporting that they are stronger women's organisations, with increased capacity to deliver and engage, and with stronger systems. In particular, Us reports that WAVE has enhanced their organisation with a feminist culture of care, strengthening internal institutions so that staff have strong knowledge and can work as a team. Similarly, GADC reports that they are learning from IWDA's approach to creating a culture of care for staff and building relationships with other stakeholders. In addition, some WAVE organisations have successfully leveraged WAVE for further funding, such as VfC's funding from the provincial government for its violence against women programs. This progress is evidence that strong movements require strong women's organisations – and WAVE is making this possible.

IN FOCUS: TOGETHER, OUR VOICE IS POWERFUL

Our Voice is WAVE's joint advocacy campaign focused on increasing the representation and effective participation of women with a broad commitment to gender equality and women's rights in decision-making at local levels across Asia and the Pacific region.

WAVE partners proudly launched the Our Voice campaign on International Women's Day 2018, with the message 'We are Women! We are Ready!'

The Our Voice campaign demonstrates WAVE's support for vital, visible and vocal women's movement in our region in four ways.

First, Our Voice supports the existing advocacy efforts of WAVE partners by providing the resources and coordination they need to amplify their collective calls for change. The Our Voice identity is used collaboratively to create advocacy messages that are consistent, effective, and relevant to local contexts. Our Voice actions during the 2018 16 Days of Activism campaign exemplified this practice, with 25 partners across five countries raising their voices together to show their communities that violence against women is a barrier to women's leadership.

Next, Our Voice provides the space and strategic support for partners to collaborate for collective advocacy. This is evident in PNG, where partners came together under the Our Voice campaign to develop a joint submission in response to a review of PNG electoral laws.

Third, Our Voice facilitates joint action at the regional and international level. Our Voice partners have sent open letters to Australian government representatives, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) committee members, and the United Nations General Assembly in relation to women's representation.

And finally, Our Voice has enabled solidarity actions and shared learning across campaign partners which has strengthened movement identity and capacity. Supportive messages sent between Our Voice partners throughout the year are a perfect example of this solidarity. PNG partners received positive encouragement as they began advocacy for TSMs. Timor-Leste and Solomon Islands partners shared lessons after International Rural Women's Day which will be used to improve their next campaign and throughout the 16 Days of Activism, partners shared the activities of other Our Voice partners across the Pacific to support each other's causes.

The Our Voice campaign has amplified the voices and priorities of women's movements in our region by providing support where needed, working collaboratively, and encouraging partners to participate when it supports their current work. The Our Voice campaign is an exciting movement-strengthening initiative for WAVE, and the continued high participation rates point to the power of joint advocacy.

PICTURED: STAFF FROM WAVE PARTNER SHAN WOMEN'S ACTION NETWORK (SWAN) IN MANMAR SHARE THE OUR VOICE MESSAGE. PHOTO SUPPLIED BY SWAN.



PILLAR 4

RESEARCH, EVIDENCE AND LEARNING

WOMEN'S ACTION FOR VOICE AND
EMPOWERMENT 2018 REPORT

WAVE is working to close the significant evidence and data gap on women's leadership, and document the lived experiences of diverse women.

WAVE is undertaking innovative and ground-breaking research on the perceptions of women leaders, women's pathways to leadership, and women's movement strengthening. The Government of the Netherlands, alongside IWDA and local women's rights organisations firmly rooted in local realities, are delivering research that is the first of its kind in Asia and the Pacific region.

Together, we are applying knowledge from women's lived experiences to advocacy and programming to ensure that evidence of how change happens informs and influences individuals, institutions and movements.

WAVE's Theory of Change proposes that we will be able to apply evidence to our programming and advocacy and inform the broader women's movement on how change happens. This is made possible through feminist participatory research, which strengthens partner capacity while collecting evidence that values women's voice and priorities.

**WHEN WOMEN LEAD, EVERYBODY
BENEFITS AND COMMUNITIES ARE
SAFER AND MORE EQUAL.**

PICTURED: COMMUNE COUNCILLOR CHAY SATH (LEFT) MEETS WITH STAFF FROM WAVE PARTNER BANTEAY SREI. PHOTO BY HARINON DIOYBISONG.



Women's movements in Asia and the Pacific region have always played an important role in gathering and documenting women's stories and advocating for women's priorities. The following WAVE regional research projects build on these foundations to deepen the capacity of researchers and partner organisations to produce evidence with a feminist lens, which can inform the advocacy efforts and programs of women's movements across the region.

Perceptions of Women as Leaders

In 2018 three Public Perceptions of Women as Leaders studies commenced field work in Cambodia, Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste. The purpose of these three studies is to deepen the collective understanding of public perceptions of the qualities and qualifications necessary for leadership and the gender norms associated with these perceptions. Each research project has been adapted for the country context and is driven by WAVE partner advocacy priorities. For instance, household-level surveys and qualitative interviews in Timor-Leste and Cambodia have specifically explored the role of gender norms in people's views of women as leaders at the sub-national level, while the Solomon Islands study explores public views on temporary special measures to increase women's representation.

2018 saw data collection completed in all participating countries. In Cambodia, the research team travelled to three provinces, conducting 458 surveys. The research team in Solomon Islands conducted 723 surveys and undertook 18 focus group discussions and 99 individual interviews in two provinces and the capital, Honiara. While, in Timor-Leste, 240 surveys and 30 focus groups and interviews were completed in three rural districts and the capital, Dili. Research teams in each country will finalise analysis of the data collected and produce final study reports in mid-2019. A further synthesis report for this project will be developed at a WAVE program level to consider findings from the three country projects and discuss the feminist framework applied in the development and implementation of this research. The full Perceptions project will be completed and launched in mid-2019.

One of this project's central intentions has been to strengthen the research capacity within WAVE partner organisations, including IWDA. Participants have developed skills in research design, research tool development,

data gathering, entry and analysis, navigating the politics of stakeholder management, project financial management and feminist research practice and analysis. Significant learning has also emerged from the projects around the complex nature of undertaking feminist participatory research projects across countries and with large numbers of stakeholders with varying levels of power.

Women's Leadership Pathways

The WAVE Women's Leadership Pathways research project is a three-year, collaborative, feminist research initiative, carried out by twelve WAVE partners. The project is designed to generate evidence about individual women's experiences of leadership in economic, social, and political spheres in five countries, with a view to informing WAVE's work on women's leadership, providing evidence for advocacy at various levels, contributing to the research literature and building research capacity within the participating organisations.

In 2018, WAVE partners across five countries have undertaken 88 interviews and 13 focus group discussions with diverse women leaders, collected 19 video diaries and administered at least four survey questionnaires. The Research Support Team from Le Groupe-conseil Baastel ltee, contracted by WAVE to support the project, have invested heavily in capacity-strengthening to support partner researchers to fine-tune interview questions, conduct preliminary analysis of data, plan and conduct focus group discussions and, in a few cases, facilitate collection of video diary entries from women leaders.

A data analysis workshop is planned in early 2020 once all data has been collected, which will see the partner researchers analyse their own data sets to generate local understanding and encourage comparisons across partners and countries to generate broader regional findings. Initial analysis of focus group discussion topics and key themes from interview transcripts suggest that to date, the research has been useful in uncovering critical sources of support for women's leadership, such as parents, the church (in the Pacific), and influential and sympathetic men. The research has also identified how women perceive their own leadership, as well as how they perceive the concept of leadership itself. Some data shows, for example, that women (and their communities) do not always consider themselves as the leadership 'equivalents' of men.

IN FOCUS: REFLECTING ON THE WAVE PROGRAM

In 2018, WAVE partners undertook a Mid-Term Reflection (MTR) of the WAVE program. The WAVE MTR was designed primarily as a learning exercise for WAVE partners, including IWDA, to reflect on approaches, make visible the patterns and interconnections emerging, and jointly analyse WAVE practice.

In line with this intention, IWDA contracted a team of consultants to support WAVE partners through a Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) process throughout 2018. FPAR is a gender justice approach to knowledge generation and action for social change. As a values-based methodology, FPAR involves an organic, cyclical process of democratic decision-making using inclusive participatory methods to generate knowledge and take action for structural change.

FPAR is a process of transformation, and honours the expertise of people who participated in MTR activities (including WAVE partner organisations, community members, IWDA and consultants) as co-researchers who share power through democratic inquiry. The terminology of co-researchers recognises that the MTR was conducted in partnership with WAVE partners and communities, and co-researchers collectively engaged in ongoing cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting to undertake the reflection on the WAVE program. An Appreciative Inquiry model was overlaid to enable appreciation of current successes and achievements. The MTR used creative and participatory methods including drawings, video interviews, change stories, role-plays, discussions and photos to gather and analyse data.

The MTR found that diverse people experience transformation through WAVE, including women (young, old, urban, rural, remote, women in formal and informal leadership, and women who are vulnerable); people who engage with women (men, husbands, families, and communities); and duty bearers (women MPs, police, commune councillors, women's ministries, and government officials).

WHILE THE MTR REFLECTED ON THE TRANSFORMATIVE ASPECTS OF THE WAVE PROGRAM, THE PROCESS OF UNDERTAKING THE MTR WAS, IN ITSELF, TRANSFORMATIVE.

The MTR also found that WAVE supports significant individual transformation in women's leadership and has improved women's freedom from violence, strengthened women's organisations, supported policy transformations that promote gender justice and contributed to increased acceptance of women as leaders.

The MTR also showed that WAVE has contributed to increased solidarity between women at local, national, regional and international levels, supporting women's movements to build trust, mobilise, be strategic, and take action to change structures of injustice.

While the MTR reflected on the transformative aspects of the WAVE program, the process of undertaking the MTR was, in itself, transformative. The MTR nurtured solidarity, and women were empowered by the process. Through joint decision-making, power was shared. Partners expressed that they more fully acknowledged and appreciated the meaning of feminism as a result of the process. Feedback from MTR workshops showed that co-researchers overwhelmingly enjoyed learning about FPAR and hope to integrate the methodology into their work. The FPAR process provided a co-learning space around feminism, WAVE and the process of change. Co-researchers felt that it strengthened collaboration amongst WAVE partners and embraced group wisdom. The WAVE MTR co-researchers developed several key recommendations to improve the program. These recommendations and how WAVE intends to address them are discussed in the next section.

PICTURED: AS PART OF THE MID-TERM REFLECTION, WAVE PARTNERS USED DRAWINGS TO REFLECT ON THEIR JOURNEYS.



OVERCOMING OUR CHALLENGES

MTR data suggests that WAVE partners and their communities can experience various challenges in achieving transformational change. In some WAVE countries, restrictive civil and political spaces include limited freedoms for civil society organisations and media, security risks that restrict movement, unstable political conditions and attacks on women human rights defenders.

Some parliamentarians are uninterested in women's issues and lack knowledge of gender policies. Contextual challenges include poor infrastructure for travel and telecommunications, geographic isolation from government services, and safety risks for travel. Patriarchal contexts and attitudes are extremely difficult, including resistance to gender equality and women's rights, men as gatekeepers to women's participation and leadership, and widespread acceptance of violence against women.

Partners also identify cultural challenges such as traditional norms, beliefs, and power structures that deny women their rights, and social obligations that put pressure on women. WAVE partners, women in their communities, and

movements highlight a lack of resources (both funding and human resources), and partners self-report capacity gaps in research, monitoring and evaluation to inform programming, report writing, sustaining networks, relationships with MPs and outreach. Women in communities also experience financial barriers to participation, particularly livelihood pressures. Several partners experience a lack of solidarity, with resistance from some women, negative comments from leaders and community distrust. Across several partners, some women and community partners do not take ownership of their roles and responsibilities, and communication issues also exist, due to lack of effective communications platforms and processes, and poor communications technologies. Through the MTR, co-researchers provided many proposals for how the WAVE program can be strengthened to overcome these challenges.

Recommendations overwhelmingly reflect the goal of strong women's movements, through shared spaces, facilitated events, cross-partner training, resources, consciousness-raising, capacity building, relationships with duty bearers, joint advocacy, resources for communication technologies and platforms, using Feminist Participatory Action Research for program design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation, developing partnership guidelines, and undertaking partnership reviews. Other recommendations relate to the machinations of WAVE, including simpler reporting, flexible program design, simpler monitoring and evaluation, local consultants, adapting the WAVE Theory of Change, and a shared structural analysis.





Applying our lessons

In response to the recommendations from the Mid-Term Reflection, the WAVE program intends to undertake the following changes over the final two years of the program:

WAVE will resource additional shared spaces for women to engage in learning, networking and solidarity, including conflict resolution between women leaders and organisations. This includes prioritising resources for all-partner workshops, country-level partner workshops and cross-partner learning and exchange initiatives. In the post-2020 WAVE design, more structured and consistent convening will be prioritised at national, regional and international levels. WAVE will also further invest in supporting partners to navigate internal power dynamics within coalitions and alliances.

WAVE will continue to leverage the flexible, long-term funding available through FLOW to enable partners to react to emerging opportunities and threats. Examples of new initiatives already being piloted in line with this commitment area include a child safety and disability safeguarding fund, a mentoring support fund and a counselling support fund that will support partners to respond to threats to their personal safety and the safety of vulnerable community members.

WAVE will expand support to partners to strengthen their skills and capacities in areas that help them strengthen women's movements. This will include continued integration of Feminist Participatory Action Research approaches to research, evidence and learning systems in WAVE. WAVE also intends to develop new tools to support mobilising, organising, activism and advocacy. These include a Feminist Advocacy Toolkit, a Sustainable Development Goals Toolkit and a resource on CEDAW Shadow Reporting drawing on the expertise of women's movements in Asia and the Pacific region.

A key recommendation of the MTR was for IWDA and WAVE partners to develop partnership practice guidelines to guide IWDA program managers on how to establish and maintain feminist partnerships according to mutually-agreed values by IWDA and partners, and embed learnings from previous applications of partnership principles. As part of the response to this recommendation, IWDA is strengthening its approach to partnership health checks and exploring ways that WAVE program cycle management can be more flexible, creative and learning-focused.

The final key recommendation from the WAVE MTR was that the program adapt the WAVE Theory of Change with a clearer program goal of strengthening women's movements to create and sustain structural change, and that the Theory of Change and women's movements are informed by a shared analysis of the root causes of structural inequalities in Asia and the Pacific region. The WAVE program is responding to this recommendation by convening an all-partner workshop in June 2019 to collaboratively review and adapt the WAVE Theory of Change. This workshop will be facilitated by world-leading women's movement and feminist leadership expert, Srilatha Batliwala.

PICTURED BOTH PAGES: WOMEN CALL FOR GENDER EQUALITY AT AN INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH IN TIMOR-LESTE. PHOTO BY HARJONO DIOYORISONO.

“TRANSFORMATIVE, SUSTAINABLE CHANGE IS RELIANT ON STRONG, AUTONOMOUS AND ORGANISED WOMEN’S MOVEMENTS”

WAVE MID-TERM REFLECTION

WOMEN'S ACTION FOR VOICE AND
EMPOWERMENT 2018 REPORT





PICTURED: WOMEN GATHER AT DLI'S INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATIONS. PHOTO BY HARINO DIOYOBISNO.

COVER PHOTO: PARTICIPANTS OF THE WAVE INCEPTION
WORKSHOP IN AUSTRALIA. PHOTO BY GEMMA CARR



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