REACHING THE UNREACHED

Scale-Up

Empowerment Study

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The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is an intergovernmental organisation created by the Commonwealth Heads of Government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies.

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Abbreviations

COL	Commonwealth of Learning
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
PMF	Performance Measurement Framework
RtU	Reaching the Unreached
RtU-S	Reaching the Unreached — Scale-Up
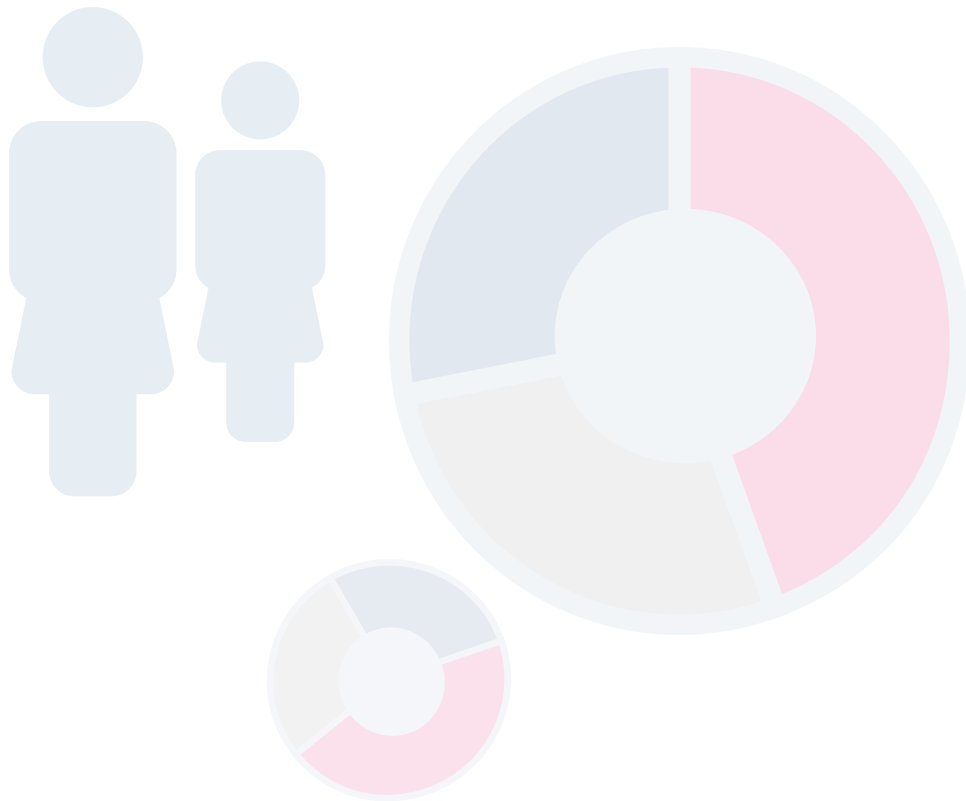
:≡ Executive Summary

The Reaching the Unreached — Scale-Up (RtU-S) project launched in 2018 and completed its work in 2021. RtU-S was an extension of the Reaching the Unreached project (RtU) that sought to expand the success of the initial project in providing hard-to-reach women and girls with education and economic opportunities. RtU-S continued its work in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan and began new work in Sri Lanka. RtU-S was made possible with support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia.

The RtU-S project sought to build on the theory of change of the RtU project and expand to new locations and participants in order to deepen country-level work on women's and girls' empowerment. RtU-S worked with the same community partners in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan and brought in a new partner in Sri Lanka, providing capacity building to the organisations as well as support for their field-level work. The RtU-S project expanded its work to include not only the villages that participated in the original project but also new villages, thus reaching 44,778 women and girls and 159,922 community members over the course of the project.

This study explores women's and girls' empowerment from the start of the project (the baseline) to its completion (the endline). It uses the Measuring

Empowerment Index framework developed by COL to conceptualise and measure empowerment in the context of the project (Carr, 2016). The data were drawn from baseline and endling surveys that were created to capture change over time in the project and analysed through index scores on various empowerment concepts.

The first section of this study provides details on the empowerment framework and how it was conceptualised for this study. This section also outlines the study methodology, including the survey tools, data collection process and analysis plan.

The second section focuses on the results of the Empowerment Index. First, it provides a high-level profile of the women and girls in the study at baseline, showing their education and employment opportunities before the project was launched. Then it provides the results of the Empowerment Index, showing the final scores for empowerment across realms (household, livelihood and community) and degrees (knowledge, desire, means and actions).

The report concludes with a summary and policy recommendations for workers in the field on women's and girls' empowerment based on the study results.

🔍 Summary of Key Findings

Women and girls face barriers to achieving formal education

At baseline, women and girls in the programme frequently dropped out of school because of cultural and economic barriers to education. At baseline, 33 per cent of women and girls reported not attending secondary school. Women and girls reported family crises, poverty and marriage as the top three reasons they stopped attending school.

Marriage prevents women and girls from exercising agency

Women and girls experience various community norms around marriage that can impact their ability to make their own choices about marriage. Overall, 19 per cent of women and girls reported being married at 17 or younger, with this being very prevalent in India (40 per cent) and Bangladesh (32 per cent). Depending on cultural norms, women and girls may not be able to choose when or whom they marry. In our

sample, only 4 per cent of women and girls reported being able to make decisions about marriage for themselves, while 76 per cent said their father made the decision about marriage.

Women and girls became more empowered in their households

Women's and girls' empowerment index scores on empowerment greatly increased from baseline to endline within their households. Specifically, they were more empowered within their households to aspire to, pursue and attain education, including formal school and skills training. On the empowerment index, women and girls scored 0.60 at baseline and 0.76 at endline, an increase of 16 percentage points from their time in the project.

Women and girls were also empowered in terms of household decision making. Their decision-making capabilities, captured across the different aspects of the empowerment framework, at baseline scored 0.46. At endline, they scored 0.69, an increase of 23 percentage points.

Women's and girls' livelihood opportunities grew

Women's and girls' opportunities to gain employment and secure a livelihood increased between the start and end of the initiative. At baseline, 61 per cent of women and girls reported that they were not employed at all; at endline, this had dropped to 39 per cent. Of those women and girls who were working, 71 per cent found their job after participating in the programme.

Furthermore, the women and girls were holistically empowered to pursue a livelihood, with empowerment score increases in knowledge, desire, means and actions across the board. At baseline, the women's and girls' ability to earn a livelihood scored 0.42 on the empowerment index, increasing by 26 percentage points to 0.68 at endline.

Communities became better supporters of women's and girls' empowerment

Community members, from baseline to endline, showed a positive shift in attitudes to and norms around women's and girls' empowerment. In the community sphere, measures of support for women's and girls' empowerment showed a positive increase from baseline to endline. More specifically, the community empowerment index score changed from 0.59 at baseline to 0.66, an increase of 7 percentage points. The largest shift was in community actions, with an increase of 14 percentage points on the index, with community members showing significant gains in their direct actions to support the experience of women and girls in their communities.

🔓 Introduction to the Reaching the Unreached — Scale-Up Project

The Reaching the Unreached — Scale-Up project (hereafter referred to as RtU-S) ran from 2018 (when contracts were signed) to 2021. With support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia, the project built on the momentum of the Reaching the Unreached (RtU) project. RtU-S involved the original countries, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, with a focus on deepening existing community work in the villages that originally participated and bringing in new villages from the original countries, as well expanding into Sri Lanka. COL worked with established community partners in each country, including the Centre for Mass Education in Science (CMES) in Bangladesh, Mann Deshi in India, Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) in Pakistan and the Women's Development Centre (WDC) in Sri Lanka.

The project's theory of change focused on three core pillars of activities:

- 2100: Increased economic participation and leadership, family decision making, including family planning, for disadvantaged women and girls in rural areas of selected countries

- 2200: Transformed community systems to ensure scalability and sustainability that lead to women's and girls' empowerment

- 2300: Increased capacity among government officials to take ownership and advocate for women's and girls' education and economic participation

The project worked towards providing women and girls with training and employment opportunities that they did not typically have access to, with a focus on life and vocational skills training for relevant employment opportunities in each country. Through the project, 39,161 women and girls completed life skills training and 44,778 women and girls completed vocational skills training. Furthermore, women and girls gained new access to employment opportunities, with 9,655 internships established for women and girls and 4,112 women and girls trained in online business/e-commerce. As a result of these trainings, 10,798 women and girls successfully gained employment and 252 established an online business. As well, 44,106 women and girls participated in decision making in their families and communities. Furthermore, the project offered opportunities for women and girls to access financial supports, resulting in 925 women and girls opening bank accounts and 1,752 accessing microloans.

RtU-S also focussed on community mobilisations and awareness in order to increase support for women's and girls' empowerment. Community partners provided community advocacy opportunities that were appropriate to the cultural context, including putting on theatre performances, mobilising local support groups and working with men and boys in the community. As a result of this work, 159,922 community members were reached, and 11,061 men and boys were registered in gender-equality training. Within the community, 4,985 advocates for women's and girls' empowerment were identified and trained, and 395 community mentorship clubs were established, with 805 project graduates participating in them as mentors and 1,078 as trainers. A total of 22,389 community members and families that support women's and girls' empowerment were identified.

◉ Empowerment Index Objectives

This study focuses on the change in women's and girls' empowerment from the start to the end of the project. In order to conceptualise and measure empowerment, this study uses the framework and methodology outlined in COL's *Measuring Empowerment Toolkit* (Carr, 2016) to create a quantifiable empowerment score. The COL team initially implemented baseline and endline surveys that sought to measure the project's impact on child and early marriage, empowerment and sustainable livelihoods across the four countries of RtU-S. These surveys were conceptualised from the outcomes outlined in the Performance Measurement Framework (PMF).

This study consisted of surveys of women and girls, community members, employers and organisation members at the start and end of the project in order to capture perceptions of change. This section outlines the Empowerment Index framework and methodology and provides the specific framework for the study.

Defining empowerment

Empowerment is an extremely prevalent concept in international development and is used as a starting framework within which to explore change in

individuals and communities. Empowerment can be defined as "the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them" (Kabeer, 1999, cited in Carr, 2016). For the RtU-S project, Kabeer's definition was used as the base definition for the framework and tool design in the initial baseline and endline survey set-up and will continue to inform how empowerment is defined in the Index. Building on this definition, this study uses COL's Three-Dimensional Empowerment Framework to frame and understand empowerment.

The Three-Dimensional Empowerment Framework, published in COL's *Measuring Empowerment Toolkit* (Carr, 2016), is the chosen theoretical framework for this study. It can be used as a tool to inform survey development, indexing, data analysis and interpretation of findings, and offers a robust interpretation of empowerment, focusing on agency, capabilities and outcomes. The Three-Dimensional Empowerment Framework is composed of realms, aspects and degrees to capture a holistic understanding of empowerment, as presented in Figure 1 (below).

Figure 1: *Three-Dimensional Empowerment Framework* (Carr, 2016, p. 12)
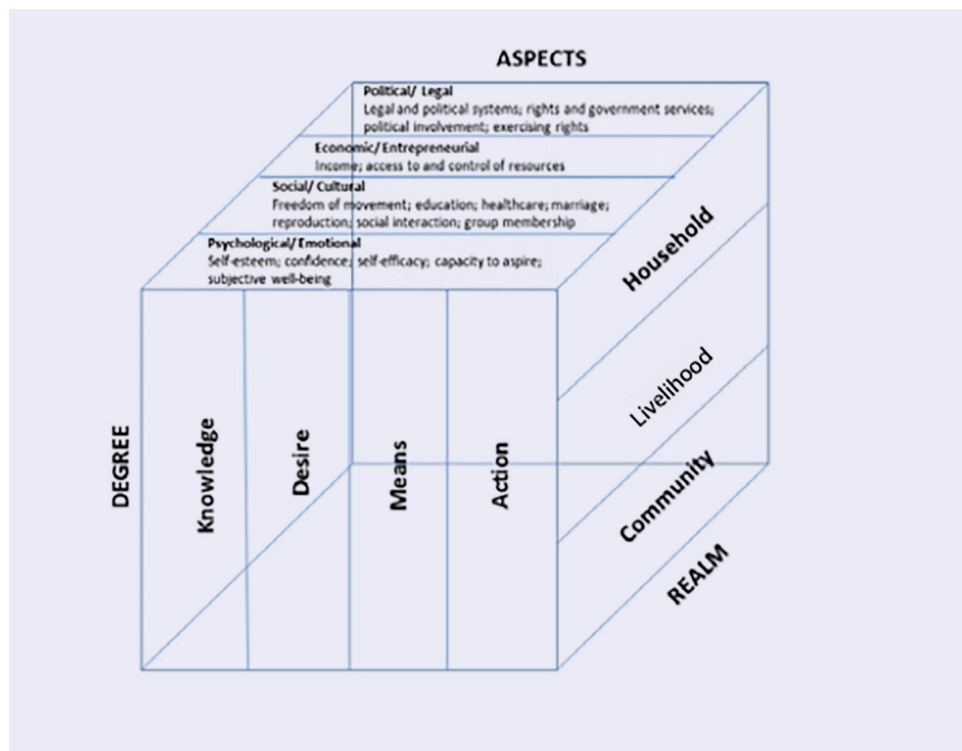
REALMS

The framework captures three distinct realms of empowerment, which are social-spatial structures that programme participants occupy. The framework captures space in which empowerment can be displaced within the real-life context of the women and girls in the RtU-S project: household, livelihood and community.

The household realm captures "decisions, actions, roles, rights and abilities within the household in relation to family members and other household members" (Carr, 2016, p. 13).

The livelihood realm captures "decisions, actions, roles, rights and abilities related to one's livelihood, in relation to employment, enterprise or other income-generating activities" (Carr, 2016, p. 13).

The community realm captures "decisions, actions, roles, rights and abilities within the community, in relation to community organisations/institutions and individual community members" (Carr, 2016, p. 13).

ASPECTS

Aspects capture the "strategic life choices" relevant to the women and girls in our study (Carr, 2016, p. 15). While the aspects realms are not mutually exclusive and are subjective because they are chosen by the researcher, together they capture the variety of areas in which women and girls may make choices in their daily lives. In the framework, empowerment indicators are mapped across these various aspects. The framework has four aspects:

- Psychological/Emotional
- Social/Cultural
- Economic/Entrepreneurial
- Political/Legal (Carr, 2016, p. 15).

DEGREES

Lastly, the framework captures degrees, which are defined as a "multifaceted process of exercising agency" (Carr, 2016, p. 15). Each degree captures different personal areas in which an individual is able to exercise empowerment. The degrees are particularly helpful for holistically capturing how project interventions have impacted empowerment for each individual participant. The four degrees are defined as follows in the *Measuring Empowerment Toolkit* (p. 16):

- Knowledge: Awareness of options and pros/cons of different choices.
- Means: Resources available to facilitate making a choice.
- Desire: Internal wish and personal drive to make a choice.
- Actions: Choosing or taking actions, or the direct results that come from making a choice.

RtU-S EMPOWERMENT FRAMEWORK

The Empowerment Framework for this study was conceptualised post-data collection. Using the baseline and endline tools, survey questions were positioned within the Empowerment Framework dimensions. More specifically, the tools and integrated questions from the original project (specifically, in the Community tool) were used to robustly capture the Empowerment Framework's aspects, realms and degrees. Employer and organisational data were not used in the framework, but they were consulted throughout this study for triangulation of findings. Where there was no appropriate survey question to capture the specific degree and realm within the framework, a metric was not used for measurement. And where multiple survey questions measured a dimension, those questions were noted in the framework and calculated in the index. A framework was created that captured both baseline and endline tools, using survey questions that mirrored each other to represent dimensions. In most cases, these questions were already part of the baseline/endline survey, though in some cases proxy or binary measures were used to capture certain dimensions. The Empowerment Framework for this study is detailed on the next page.
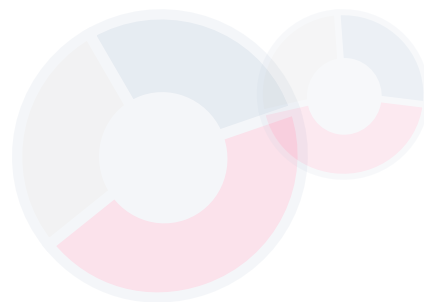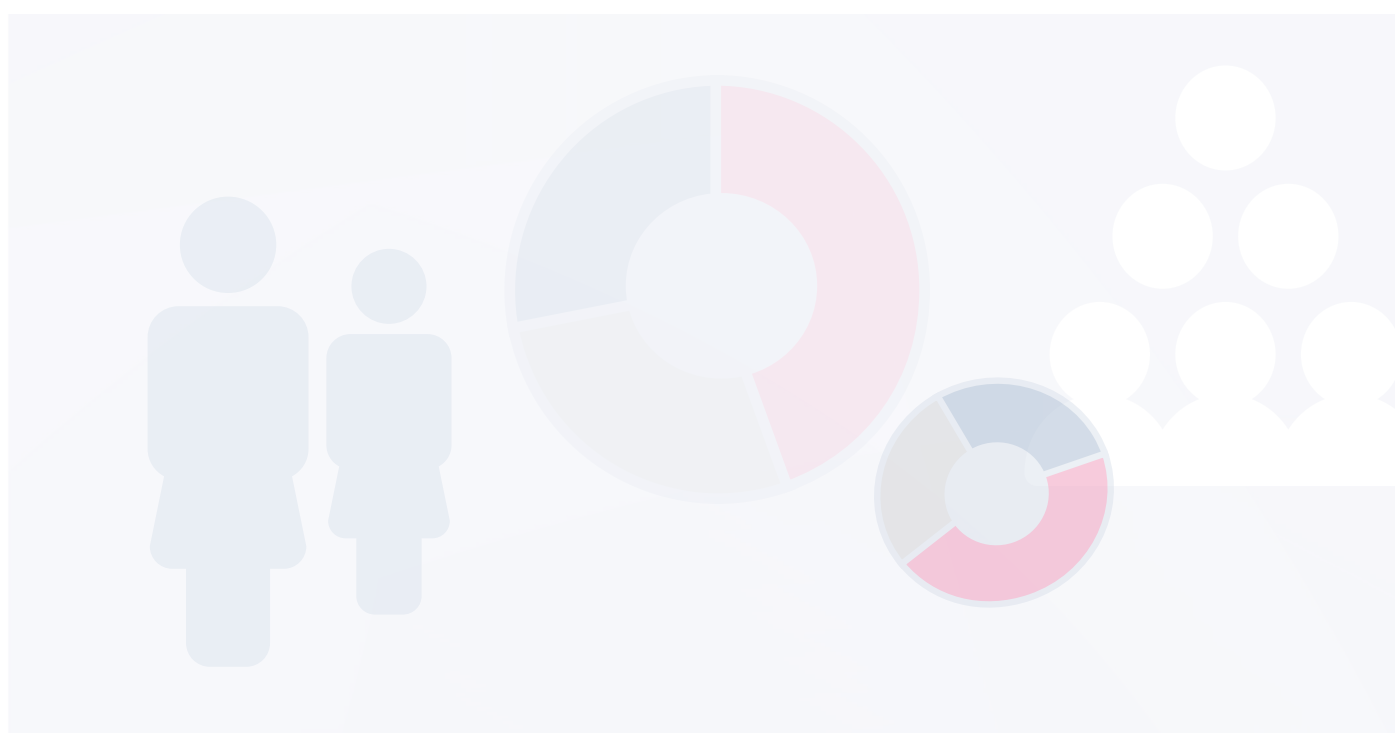
Figure 2: *The Empowerment Framework*

REALMS	DEGREES	ASPECTS			
		Psychological/ Emotional	Social/Cultural	Economic/ Entrepreneurial	Political/Legal
Household (EDUCATION)	Knowledge	I am confident that I will be able to complete my education. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)	My knowledge on health and education has sig-nificantly improved from training. (W+G Baseline #35 and Endline #26)	My knowledge on seeking and finding employment has significantly improved from training. (W+G Baseline #37 and Endline #26)	I have a good understanding of my social rights including my right to education, right to social protection, right to an adequate standard of living (food, clothing, housing etc.) (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #26)
	Desire		I aspire to obtain tertiary education. (W+G Baseline #34 and Endline #23)	I would like to improve my livelihood skills. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)	I would like to discuss women's and girls' rights to education (etc.) with my family members. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)
	Means		My family is supportive of letting me go to school. (W+G Baseline #33 and Endline #24)	How supportive is your family with letting you go to skills training? (W+G Baseline #33 and Endline #25)	It is important for me to be active in my community through collec-tive action such as engaging in social protests. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)
	Actions		I plan to go to school and skills training in the future. (W+G Baseline #31 and Endline #22)	I have completed vocational or skills training courses. (W+G Baseline #29 and Endline Registration)	I make decisions about me attending schooling or skills training. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)

REALMS	DEGREES	ASPECTS			
		Psychological/ Emotional	Social/Cultural	Economic/ Entrepreneurial	Political/Legal
Household (DECISION MAKING)	Knowledge	I feel supported by my family and friends to make decisions. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)	I have knowledge on life skills, from educational training. (W+G Baseline #30 and Endline Registration)	I know about financial management and budgeting for my livelihood. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)	My knowledge on social rights and decision making has significantly improved from training. (W+G Baseline #36 and Endline #26)
	Desire		NA	I want to be involved in decision making about household expenses. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)	I have spoken on the important of girls to make their own decision on marriage. (W+G Baseline #59 and Endline #59)
	Means		I have access to health clinics and health education materials. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60).	I have access to a bank account. (W+G Baseline #47 and Endline #46)	I am confident I will be able to make decisions about my marriage including when to get married if I am not already married. (W+ G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)
	Actions		I make my own decisions about my health. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60) I make decisions about pregnancies and childbearing. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)	I make decisions about my finances. (W+G Baseline # 60 and Endline #60)	I make my own decisions about my marriage including who to marry and when to marry. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)
Livelihood	Knowledge	I am confident that I am able or will be able to work outside the home and earn money to support myself if needed. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)	I have access to information on training and employment. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #40, #41, #43)	I know about different groups in my area that can help support me in my work. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)	I am aware of the legal processes for creating a business. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)
	Desire		I aspire to be employed/self-employed. (W+G Baseline #45 and Endline #38)		
	Means		I have access to technology. (W + G Baseline #50 and #50)	I have access to economic opportunities such as job opportunities and access to transportation. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)	I have access to financial support (i.e., loans, credit, education). (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)
	Actions		I use technology. (W+G Baseline #50 and Endline #50.	I am engaged in employment. (W+G Baseline #40 and Endline #32)	I make decisions about my income generating activities. (W+G Baseline #60 and Endline #60)

REALMS	DEGREES	ASPECTS			
		Psychological/ Emotional	Social/Cultural	Economic/ Entrepreneurial	Political/Legal
Community	Knowledge	NA	I think education and/or skills training is important for girls and/or women to find employment. (COMM Baseline #39 and Endline #40)		CEFM is a significant/very significant concern in the community. (COMM Baseline #12 and Endline #12)
	Desire		**My personal support for women and girls' education is good/very good.** (COMM Baseline #37 and Endline #37)	**My personal support for women and girls to earn their own income is good/very good.** (COMM Baseline #38 and Endline #38)	I agree/strongly agree that people in my community approve of child marriage. (COMM Baseline #18 and Endline #18)
			I as a community member often discussed the role of women in decision-making and leadership in the community. (COMM Baseline #25 and Endline #25)		
	Means		**Access to educational opportunities for women and girls in the community is good/very good.** (COMM Baseline #22 and Endline #21)	**Access to employment opportunities for women and girls in the community is good/very good.** (COMM Baseline #33 and Endline #33)	**I have/will continue to discuss women's and girls' rights with community members.** (COMM Baseline #36 and Endline #36)
			Access to health for women and girls in the community is good/very good. (COMM Baseline #22 and Endline #27)		**I have/will continue to hold meetings for men regarding child marriage and related gender norms.** (COMM Baseline #36 and Endline #36)
	Actions		**There is a high level of support for women and girls' education in the community.** (COMM Baseline #41 and Endlines #39 and #42)	**Females in my household participate in income-generating activities.** (COMM Baseline #34 and Endline #34)	**I have/will continue to intervene directly to prevent a child marriage.** (COMM Baseline #36 and Endline #36)
					I have/will continue to participate in public activities on child marriage, human rights of girls, girls' education, violence prevention. (COMM Baseline #36 and Endline #36)
			There is an increase in advocacy and awareness efforts for women and girls' education in the community. (COMM Baseline #20 and Endline #44)		**I have/will continue to organize in public activities on child marriage, human rights of girls, girls' education, violence prevention.** (COMM Baseline #36 and Endline #36)
					I have/will continue to support sanctions to prevent child and early marriages. (COMM Baseline #36 and Endline #36)

Methodology

A robust Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan was developed for the RtU-S project to ensure data points were captured across many sources, including women and girls, community members, employers and organisations. Community partners delivered the M&E plan in their country, with the M&E framework, tools and training provided by COL on a consistent basis. Each partner provided training and capacity building for women and girls, community members, employers and staff members. As part of the M&E framework, community partners established sample survey targets for each group to ensure adequate representation. This report focuses on data collected from women and girls and community members for its Empowerment Index, with support data and triangulation from employers and staff surveys.

TOOL DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

The RtU-S project used the baseline and endline surveys designed for the RtU project, with additional survey questions added. COL worked with an external consultant (Salasan Consulting) to develop surveys for the identified four stakeholder groups. A pre-project (baseline) survey and post-project (endline) survey were developed for women and girls, community members, employers and staff to measure changes from the beginning of the project. These surveys were developed from the project's Performance Measurement Framework and captured the perceived changes

of the project outlined in the Theory of Change. From this process, eight survey tools were designed and then tested with community partners to ensure the surveys' questions were culturally sensitive. The questions were designed to capture elements of women's and girls' empowerment, sustainable livelihoods and cultural understandings of early marriage.

The surveys were programmed into an online survey platform (SurveyGizmo) administered and monitored by COL. The surveys were translated into the local languages — Bengali (Bangladesh), Hindi (India), Urdu (Pakistan) and Tamil (Sri Lanka) — and could be administered offline through mobile phones as needed by the field staff. The surveys relied on quantitative close-ended questions, with additional open-ended questions asked as needed.

Additional data were collected from various sources throughout the project. While these data are not the focus of the Empowerment Index, they do provide additional triangulation of trends seen in the data. These sources of supplementary data included quarterly reports from partners, case studies, blog posts and a data hub to capture the project's impact.

Data collection was done by field staff who received training in using the online survey platform and tools. Ongoing training was provided through a monthly M&E session for appointed M&E staff, with in-country sessions and on-going training provided as needed.

SAMPLING STRATEGY

Table 1: Target Sample Size

Partner organisation	Women and girls	Communities	Organisations	Employers	Total
CMES	600	120	60	24	804
MDF	360	10	3	5	378
SPARC	310	38	43	61	452
WDC	250	56	20	120	446
Total	1,520	224	126	210	**2,080**

SURVEYING

Baseline surveys were conducted among the women and girls when they registered for the project. Endline surveys were typically collected one to three months after project activities were completed. Field staff were chosen for their ability to speak the local language and were trained to create a safe and inclusive surveying experience. In instances where a male data collector was in the field, a female data collector was often present to ensure that the women and girls felt safe, which in turn helped parents feel comfortable with women and girls participating. Field staff ensured that surveys were done in a confidential manner, using an environment where the women and girls could feel secure when giving their responses. Respondents were notified that their participation was voluntary and confidential. For women and girls under the age of 18, consent was provided by a parent or guardian for participation.

Community member, employer and staff baseline surveys were conducted before the launch of the project. Endline surveys were done as cohorts of women and girls completed the project. Community members were selected for leadership roles in the community, and included religious leaders, parents, men and boys. Employers were selected from those who offered potential employment prospects and business presence in the community. Staff members from community partners were selected to work on the project in a variety of roles such as field staff, community mobilisers, facilitators and teachers.

Due to the unique challenges of COVID-19, endline sampling in some countries was delayed or halted before completion. Attempts were made to survey the same individuals at baseline and endline. However, some women and girls migrated during the course of the project and could not be traced at endline. These factors impacted the endline survey responses. Table 2 (below) shows the response rate by surveyed group in each country.

Table 2. Response Rates for Baseline and Endline by Country and Sample Group

Country	Survey type	No. of women and girls	No. of community members	No. of prospective employers	No. of organisational staff
Bangladesh	Baseline	274	83	66	47
	Endline	226	68	44	17
India	Baseline	413	5	1	5
	Endline	336	1	0	0
Pakistan	Baseline	322	114	51	52
	Endline	257	83	31	28
Sri Lanka	Baseline	571	757	117	27
	Endline	94	121	24	14
Total	Baseline	1580	959	235	131
	Endline	913	273	99	59

DATA CLEANING AND ANALYSIS

Data were securely stored and maintained by COL staff throughout the project. They were then downloaded from the survey platform at the end of the project and cleaned for accuracy. The cleaning process included standardising any language or data points (such as age), removing duplicates and test responses, and translating any open-ended text into English. Each dataset was maintained separately.

Descriptive statistics were run on the initial datasets, specifically the women and girls, community and employer surveys, in order to paint an initial profile of the women and girls and to check for any major discrepancies in baseline and endline tools. When needed, descriptive statistics are provided in the results of this report to further illustrate changes in the project participants and community from the RtU-S project. This analysis was done in Excel using PIVOT tables and formulas as needed.

In order to analyse the data in the Empowerment Framework, the data for each tool were then reformatted into the Empowerment Index. This involved creating a separate datasheet with the unique IDS and relevant variables in the Empowerment Index, resulting in four unique datasets. From there, the raw data were converted into numbered scales, which were ranked from 1 to 5 for women and girls and 1 to 4 for community member responses, with 1 representing the least empowered response, and 5 (or 4) the most empowered. The find and replace function in Excel was used to ensure the accuracy of this process.

Once the Empowerment dataset was coded, the Index was calculated using the methodology presented in the Measuring Empowerment Index. For each dimension (Knowledge, Desire, Means and Actions) a score was calculated using the formulas provided in the index. This was then transposed to a scale of 0 to 1. These scores were grouped by realm at baseline and endline. From there, the average score for each dimension was calculated at baseline and endline, and then the two results were compared to show the change in empowerment during the project. These results are presented in the body of this report. The calculation and analysis of the Empowerment Index was done in Excel using PIVOT tables to pull descriptive statistics and formulas as needed.

📊 Empowerment Index Results

Profile of the women and girls

This profile uses data collected at baseline from a sample of women and girls in the RtU-S project across the four participating countries. Using the baseline results from women and girls in the project, this section paints an overall picture of the empowerment-related challenges faced by the women and girls at the start of the project. The survey response rate by country is shown in Table 3. When relevant, the profile will break down data points by country to show unique differences in the lived experiences of women and girls.

Table 3. Baseline Women's and Girls' Sample Size by Country (n= 1579)

Country	Percentage
Bangladesh	17%
India	26%
Pakistan	20%
Sri Lanka	36%

AGE

The RtU — Scale-Up project was designed to reach women and girls who faced barriers to accessing or were left out of traditional education and employment opportunities. The main focus of the project was women and girls who could be defined as youth (15 to 29 years), but the project was designed to be responsive to community needs, with some countries, specifically Sri Lanka, extending the programme to older women. Table 4 (below) shows the age breakdown of women in the programme, with the majority (42%) being between 18 and 24 years old.

Table 4. Women's and Girls' Age at Baseline (n=1574)

Age at baseline (years)	Percentage
10-14	4%
15-17	16%
18-24	42%
25-34	18%
35-44	12%
45+	9%

Educational attainment

This project placed an emphasis on reaching underserved women and girls in communities across Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. These women and girls may not always have the option to access or complete formal education. At baseline, 89 per cent of women and girls reported attending primary school. Of those who attended primary school, 75 per cent reported completing it. A portion of the respondents, 11 per cent, reported not attending primary school at all. Across the four countries, attendance at primary school is 83 per cent or above, with Sri Lanka having the highest rates of primary school attendance.

Table 5. Women's and Girls' Baseline Primary School Completion Rate by Country (n=1557)

Primary school attendance	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	Total
Did not attend	11%	15%	17%	5%	11%
Attended	89%	85%	83%	95%	89%

Women and girls experienced a drop-off in educational attainment at secondary school. At baseline, 67 per cent reported attending secondary school. By country, Sri Lanka sees the biggest drop in secondary school attendance from primary school. Of those in secondary school who dropped out, 47 per cent reported completing up to between Grades 8 and 10, and 36 per cent reported completing up to Grade 12.

Table 6. Women's and Girls' Baseline Secondary School Completion Rate by Country (n=1557)

Secondary school attendance	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	Total
Did not attend	24%	17%	40%	44%	33%
Attended	76%	83%	60%	56%	67%

FACTORS THAT IMPACT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

It is clear that women and girls experience challenging circumstances within their daily lives that impact their ability to go to school and, consequently, their educational achievement. At baseline, the women and girls were asked to share the factors that prevent them from going to school. Overall, family crises, poverty and marriage were reported as the top three reasons for not going to school.

When these data are examined at a country level, some factors emerge that illustrate the barriers that women and girls face across the world. These factors are important to keep in mind when creating responsive programming. In Pakistan, distance was the most commonly listed reason for not attending school, followed by poverty and family crises. In Bangladesh, the top two reasons mirror the overall findings, with the need to work listed second. In Sri Lanka, the most common reasons were low academic performance (8%), followed by poverty. In India, family crises and poverty were the two most common reasons, with a lack of interest in education the third most common, suggesting some deeper cultural reasons women and girls may not participate in education.

Table 7. Top Three Reasons Given for Not Going to School at Baseline.

Overall reason	Percentage
Family crises	13%
Poverty	12%
Marriage	7%

Table 8: Top Three Reasons for Dropping Out of School by Country, at Baseline

Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Family crises (20%)	Family crises (21%)	The school is too far from my home (17%)	I failed my subjects (poor school performance) (8%)
Marriage (16%)	Poverty (20%)	Poverty (14%)	Poverty (5%)
I need to work (14%)	I am not interested in education (12%)	Family crises (10%)	Family crises (5%)

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

The RtU project targeted women and girls who were married at a fairly young age, not yet married but who could benefit from training and support, or at risk because of divorce or widowhood. Fifty-one per cent of the participating women and girls reported they were married, and 47 per cent reported being single. Widowed women and divorced women represented the remaining 3 per cent. Table 9 (below) shows the marital status at baseline of the women and girls by country. There are key differences between the countries, with more unmarried participants in Pakistan than in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

Table 9. Marital Status of Women and Girls at Baseline, by Country (n= 1579)

Marital status	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	All countries
Single	61%	42%	87%	20%	47%
Yes, married	39%	56%	13%	73%	51%
Yes, widowed	0%	0%	0%	4%	2%
Yes, divorced	0%	1%	0%	2%	1%

The women and girls reported their age at marriage, with the average age being 21. The average age of a husband at the time of marriage was 27, making the age gap on average six years. Examining the dataset, the largest age gap between spouses was 30 years. On a country level, differences in the age at marriage for women emerge. For example, in Sri Lanka, 96 per cent of the women and girls reported being 18 years or older at the time of marriage, which is the legal age.

In India, 40 per cent of women and girls were 17 and under at the time of marriage, despite the legal age for marriage also being 18 in the country. Bangladesh showed a similar trend, with 32 per cent of the women and girls marrying before the age of 17, despite a legal marriage age of 18. In Pakistan the legal age of marriage is 16, although the majority of the women and girls at baseline reported being 18 or older when they married.

Table 10. Age of Marriage for Women and Girls at Baseline, by Country (n=827)

Age at marriage	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	All countries
17 and under	32%	40%	20%	4%	19%
18 and older	68%	60%	80%	96%	81%

The baseline survey asked the unmarried women and girls who had decision-making power about marriage. Most of the women and girls responded that their father is the decision maker around marriage (76 per cent), followed by their mother (9 per cent).

In Sri Lanka, community members had much more significant decision-making power around marriage (44 per cent). Bangladesh has the highest level of women and girls reporting that they can decide about marriage (13 per cent).

Table 11. Decision Maker about Marriage at Baseline, by Country (n= 1580)

Decision maker	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	All countries
Brother	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Father	75%	81%	90%	38%	76%
I decide	13%	1%	2%	5%	4%
Mother	1%	18%	6%	10%	9%
Other family member (e.g. uncle, aunt)	2%	0%	1%	3%	1%
Other person/persons outside the family (e.g. local elites, headmaster)	7%	0%	0%	44%	9%

Women and girls can also lack support systems within their family and communities to help them negotiate with their head of household. More specifically, 47 per cent of all the participating women and girls reported they did not have anyone to negotiate for them if they did not want to get married. This is particularly the case in Pakistan, where 90 per cent of women and girls stated they did not have anyone to speak on their behalf if they did not want a marriage. This suggests women and girls may be completely left out of marriage decisions, despite marriage being a significant emotional and economic life experience.

Table 12. Women and Girls Who Reported Having Someone to Negotiate about Marriage at Baseline, by Country (n=1104)

If parents/caregivers want to marry you to someone, is there someone who can negotiate on your behalf?	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	All countries
No	26%	90%	36%	32%	47%
Yes	74%	10%	64%	68%	53%

CHILDREN

For many women and girls, children and domestic work are a reality of marriage. Having children out of marriage was not common in our baseline sample (only 1 per cent of unmarried women and girls reported having children). At marriage, 99 per cent of unmarried women and girls reported that they did not have children, and 80 per cent of married women and girls had children. The average number of children in the sample group is 1. Table 13 (below) shows the per country breakdown of married women and girls with children.

Table 13. Women and Girls Who Reported Having Children, by Country (n=1104)

Have children	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	Total
No	19%	34%	18%	13%	20%
Yes	81%	66%	83%	87%	80%

EMPLOYMENT

At baseline, 61 per cent of women and girls reported that they were not employed, 32 per cent reported that they were self-employed, 4 per cent reported being employed in a family business and 3 per cent by a local employer. At a country level, there are some slight differences in these data. Pakistan has the highest rate of unemployment at 91 per cent, followed by India at 78 per cent. Employment with local employers was low across all countries, with more women and girls pursuing self-employment. Sri Lanka and Bangladesh had high reported levels of self-employment (55 per cent and 37 per cent respectively).

Table 14. Women and Girls Reporting Employment, by Country (n=1504)

Employment status	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	Total
I am employed by a local employer	5%	1%	1%	4%	3%
I am employed in the family business	7%	5%	2%	4%	4%
I am neither employed nor self-employed	52%	78%	91%	37%	61%
I am self-employed	37%	16%	7%	55%	32%

Empowerment Index scores

The Empowerment Index was calculated using the methodology outlined in the *Measuring Empowerment Toolkit* (Carr, 2016). The overall Empowerment Index scores are shown in Table 15 (below), where the mean scores are presented on a scale of 0 to 1. The scores were calculated to show the empowerment change across realms and degrees. This section will explore not only the results of the Empowerment Index by realm but also what the Empowerment Index means for the project.

Overall, from baseline to endline, we see an increase in empowerment across all realms. Table 15 shows the mean scores as well as the calculated percentage point difference between the baseline and endline scores. Looking at the household realm, we see that the women's and girls' empowerment scores increased by 16 percentage points within empowerment measures on education in the household and 23 percentage

points within empowerment measures on household decision making. Women's and girls' empowerment scores in the livelihood realm showed the highest increase, with a score increase of 23 percentage points. Combining all the data points together, overall, the RtU-S Empowerment Index has a baseline score of 0.54 and an endline score of 0.70, showing an increase in empowerment of 16 percentage points from start to end of the project. Table 15 provides the overall index scores by realms and degrees for the project. The following sections look more closely at the empowerment scores by realms.

"The skills training and other activities have changed the women's and girls' social and economic status in the society. They are confident, self-reliant and most importantly they are empowered."
— Afzal Hossain, Zakia Akter, Zohuru

Table 15: RtU-S Empowerment Index Scores by Realm and Degree

REALMS	Knowledge			Desire			Means			Actions			Total		
	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change
Household (Education)	0.75	0.76	0*	0.57	0.74	17	0.54	0.77	23	0.53	0.75	22	0.60	0.76	16
Household (Decision Making)	0.61	0.80	19	0.36	0.74	38	0.39	0.56	17	0.49	0.65	16	0.46	0.69	23
Livelihood	0.45	0.59	14	0.73	0.82	9	0.46	0.69	23	0.44	0.63	19	0.52	0.68	16
Community	0.73	0.80	7	0.63	0.63	0	0.60	0.65	5	0.43	0.57	14	0.60	0.66	6
Total	0.64	0.74	10	0.57	0.73	16	0.50	0.67	17	0.47	0.65	18	0.54	0.70	15

*not statistically significant; ρ > 0.05

HOUSEHOLD

In the Empowerment Index Framework, the household realm captures "decisions, actions, roles, rights and abilities within the household in relation to family members and other household members" (Carr, 2016, p. 13). Over the course of the RtU-S project, women and girls were given access to training and life skills opportunities to increase their agency within their households. Due to the original structure of the baseline and endline surveys, household empowerment was centred around two main areas: support for education for women and girls in their household and decision-making abilities for women and girls in their household. Index scores were calculated to show the change in levels of empowerment in the household in these two areas.

SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION IN THE HOUSEHOLD

Looking at the Index scores, women and girls experienced an increase in empowerment in their choices and support around education from their households. More specifically, the women's and girls' empowerment score increased from 0.60 to 0.76, an increase of 16 percentage points. Interestingly, there was a limited shift in the scores on knowledge in this realm, suggesting that knowledge of the value of education was consistent in communities from start to end of the project. However, the women and girls showed a steady increase in their desire, means and actions to explore education. Measures on desire to attain an education increased positively from the baseline (0.57) to endline (0.74), a statistically significant 17 percentage point increase. The biggest empowerment increase occurred in the means (24 percentage points) and actions (22 percentage points), suggesting the participants had experienced a meaningful impact on their ability to pursue education.

Table 16: Empowerment Index Scores, Household (Education Support)

REALMS	Knowledge			Desire			Means			Actions			Total		
	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change
Household (Education)	0.75	0.76	0*	0.57	0.74	17	0.54	0.77	24	0.53	0.75	22	0.60	0.76	16

*not statistically significant; p > 0.05

This shift in educational empowerment was triangulated with other project data that indicate women's and girls' new-found support and resources within their households to attain education. More specifically, at baseline, only 43 per cent of women and girls reported that their family was supportive of them pursuing education. At endline, 75 per cent reported that there was more support from their family for them to go to school and 80 per cent reported more support from their family to attend skills training.

Qualitative data from participants also highlighted the increase in women's and girls' support and capabilities to pursue education. Mahana in Bangladesh said, "I want to continue my studies and become self-reliant. The training boat has given me new skills, and it brought me hope. I want to be a great tailor so that I can continue to cover my educational expenses and support my family; then my parents and community will listen to me, and I will be able to help other disadvantaged girls with my skills — and we will have a village free from child marriage." Clearly, capabilities to attend and thrive in education for women and girls increased through the project.

DECISION MAKING IN THE HOUSEHOLD

From baseline to endline, the women and girls became more empowered in decision-making capabilities in their household. At baseline, the average score of this realm was 0.46; by endline it had increased 16 percentage points to 0.69. Breaking this down by degrees, it is clear that the project had a measurable impact on decision making across all realms. Women's and girls' knowledge of their decision-making rights around

social and financial measures increased. At baseline, the empowerment score average was 0.61, moving to 0.80 at endline, an increase of 19 percentage points.

Women and girls saw the greatest empowerment increase in their desire to be involved in decision making within their household, with a significant increase of 38 percentage points in their empowerment score in this realm from baseline to endline. In fact, at endline 79 per cent of the surveyed women strongly agreed/agreed with the statement "I want to be involved in decision making about household expenses." This was a marked increase from the 60 per cent who voiced this opinion at baseline.

Lastly, women and girls saw almost equal increases in their means and actions areas, with increases of 17 percentage points and 16 percentage points respectively from baseline to endline. Regarding means, the women and girls experienced greater access to support and services to support leadership in the household, including bank account and health access. Within the action realm, the women and girls expressed having a greater ability to make decisions.

More specifically, at baseline, 54 per cent of the women and girls agreed/strongly agreed they could make decisions about their health, 30 per cent agreed/strongly agreed they could make decisions about marriage, 34 per cent agreed/strongly agreed they could make decisions about pregnancy and childbearing and 51 per cent agreed they could make decisions about their education. By endline, the women and girls reported greater agreement with these statements, which is reflected in the empowerment scores. More specifically, at endline, 79 per cent agreed/strongly

agreed they could make decisions about their health, 60 per cent agreed/strongly agreed they could make decisions about marriage, 53 per cent agreed/strongly agreed they could make decisions about pregnancy and childbearing, and 75 per cent agreed/strongly agreed they could make decisions about their education.

Table 17: Empowerment Index Scores, Household (Decision Making)

REALMS	Knowledge			Desire			Means			Actions			Total		
	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percent-age point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percent-age point change
Household (Decision Making)	0.61	0.80	19	0.36	0.74	38	0.39	0.56	17	0.49	0.65	16	0.46	0.69	23

LIVELIHOOD

The empowerment index scores show a positive change in the livelihoods of the women and girls from the project. In each of the participating countries, community partners provided specific interventions to present economic opportunities to the women and girls, including vocational training related to the local economy, internships and work placements as well as financial resources for entrepreneurship in the form of loans. From baseline to endline, the index scores rose from 0.52 to 0.68, an increase of 16 percentage points.

Women and girls gained more knowledge in relation to pursuing a livelihood, with a positively increasing score. At baseline, the women's and girls' knowledge scored 0.45; at endline, it was 0.59, an increase of 14 percentage points.

The women and girls expressed a greater desire to pursue livelihood opportunities. While at baseline they scored high on this degree, at 0.73, by endline they scored 0.82, an increase of 9 percentage points.

The most significant empowerment increases for the women and girls were in the means to pursue a livelihood, which captured women's and girls' access to technology, transportation, economic opportunities and financial resources. From baseline to endline, the women and girls became more empowered, scoring 0.46 at baseline and 0.69 at endline, an increase of 23 percentage points.

Lastly, the women and girls were more empowered in pursuing livelihood opportunities in their daily life. This included their use of technology, income-generating abilities and engagement in employment. From baseline to endline, women's and girls' empowerment level increased from 0.44 to 0.63, an increase of 19 percentage points.

Table 18: Empowerment Index Scores, Livelihood

REALMS	Knowledge			Desire			Means			Actions			Total		
	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change
Livelihood	0.45	0.59	14	0.73	0.82	9	0.46	0.69	23	0.44	0.63	19	0.52	0.68	16

Women's and girls' access to employment opportunities and self-employment opportunities was reflected in the women's and girls' stories as well as the data. At baseline, 61 per cent of the women and girls reported that they were not employed at all. By endline this had dropped to 39 per cent, with 71 per cent of those working reporting that they had found the job after their participation in the project.

Ruwanthi, who attended training in Sri Lanka with WDC, has one such story of employment. She shared, "Participating in these activities strengthened me and I realised that I was not alone; that there were others who had overcome challenges in their lives. I am especially grateful that I could learn a variety of new skills in sewing, up-cycling of products, mosaic and designing. My confidence grew significantly when I began to sell my products. I have become very involved with the entrepreneurs' society and enthusiastically learn through every opportunity that I encountered."

COMMUNITY

The RtU-S project did extensive work with community members, including community leaders, parents, men and boys and employers, to mobilise support for women's and girls' empowerment. In the Index framework, survey data from community members at baseline and endline were conceptualised across the degrees and aspects to show if and where women and girls experienced greater empowerment within their community. Overall, the community realm showed a positive increase, with a score of 0.60 at baseline and 0.66 at endline, an increase of 6 percentage points.

However, when we break down the index by realm, we see that not all areas showed an increase in empowerment. Community knowledge of women's and girls' rights and empowerment increased over the duration of the project. At baseline, the index score was 0.73; at endline it was 0.80.

Community desire actually showed no improvement from baseline to endline, starting and ending at 0.63. More specifically, community attitudes to CEFM did not significantly change, suggesting that shifting community norms around marriage may need longer-term and deeper work.

Community means also positively increased, from 0.60 to 0.65, an increase of 5 percentage points. Furthermore, community increases mirror the perceived changes felt by women and girls throughout the project, with increased scores on access to health, education, employment and political rights.

Lastly, community responses showed a positive empowerment increase for women's and girls' roles in the community. At baseline, the score was 0.43; at endline it was 0.57, a 14 percentage points increase. This included specific gains for women and girls in social areas, economic areas and legal areas around work on CEFM.

Table 19: Empowerment Index Scores, Community

REALMS	Knowledge			Desire			Means			Actions			Total		
	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change	B	E	Positive percentage point change
Community	0.73	0.80	7	0.63	0.63	0	0.6	0.65	5	0.43	0.57	14	0.60	0.66	6

💬 Discussion and Policy Recommendations

Study limitations

The Empowerment Index has some limitations, which are listed below and may be helpful for future projects that are likely to include a monitoring and evaluation plan.

One limitation of the index was the process of using the methodology. Since the Empowerment Index framework was used post-project, some questions in the baseline and endline surveys had to be retrofitted into the framework. Empowerment was included as a concept in the initial set-up of the baseline and endline study. However, the Empowerment Framework from COL provided a more robust conceptualisation of the definition than we initially planned for.

Another limitation is the endline sample size of the study, which was much smaller than the baseline sample. Maintaining the same baseline and endline sample can be challenging at the best of times, but it was exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis. Migration, health concerns and partner capacity were core challenges in getting responses from the same respondents at both baseline and endline. While a Unique Identification system was put in place for the project, a variety of logistical challenges made it difficult to match unique responses from baseline to endline. More robust M&E technologies may be required in order to do that kind of matching.

A control group was not used for this study, unlike other COL Empowerment Indexes. Therefore, the study cannot account for other factors within the communities or countries that could positively impact empowerment levels for the women and girls in the project.

Response bias may also be a factor. For example, respondents may give answers they feel field staff may want to hear or not provide accurate responses because they do not feeling safe doing so. Focusing on field staff training on gaining trust in survey participants is one option to try to limit bias.

Lastly, the endline timing may not capture all the impacts of the project, which may need more time to occur than the length of the study. Endline surveys were done one to three months post-project, but some of the changes may take longer to unfurl.

Policy recommendations

THE BARRIERS FACED BY WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE INTERTWINED

Women and girls face interconnected challenges to achieving empowerment, and it is important to mobilise across the realms and degrees in which women and girls live their lives. Women and girls face challenges in accessing employment and education, but these challenges manifest first in more intimate spaces in the household and community. Interventions need to consider all possible barriers to create a meaningful theory of change and intervention.

FOSTERING EMPOWERMENT REQUIRES HOLISTIC MEASURES

The Empowerment Index Framework can help conceptualise the three-dimensional realities in which women's and girls' empowerment can flourish. Project teams need to consider how to work with women and girls, their families and community members, putting theory into practice, in order to have a deep impact. It is important to consider the many ways in which women and girls may be disempowered in a personal, community or economic realm. Meaningful impact means working holistically across the realms of a woman's or girl's life.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT INCLUDES SOFT SKILLS AND TECHNICAL SKILLS

In the RtU-S initiative, women and girls accessed a variety of training from life skills to more specific training on employment skills and running a business. While the final goal of a project like the RtU-S is often to empower women and girls to be economically independent, there are many soft skills women and girls need to develop in order to feel empowered. Woven throughout the baseline and endline surveys are measures that show women and girls feeling more confident, resilient and informed on their rights and desires.

INVOLVING COMMUNITY IS IMPORTANT

Community measures in the Empowerment Index showed that community members shifted their knowledge and actions in terms of supporting women and girls in the community. It is crucial for projects to consider how to get community buy-in and create community champions to support project participants. Creating real empowerment for women and girls means creating an inclusive community in which they can thrive.

⊕ Acknowledgements

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Glossary

Triangulation: The use of several methodologies to measure a social phenomenon.

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👪 List of Communities: RtU — Scale-Up

CMES, Bangladesh (160 villages)

Suruj, Tangail
Suruj South para
Suruj North para
Suruj East para
Suruj West para
Awaltia
Gharinda
Goshaijowar
Khopipara
Niogijowar
Torotia
Vokta
Sarotia
Dhorat
Bashunda
Gopinathpur

Kayetpara, Gazipur
Sitpara purbo
Dorikhujikhani
Rasulbag porshim
Goshinga
Bormee chowrasta
Pathantek
Shohadia porshim
Jamboritek
Bormee purbo

Damkura, Rajshahi
Alokchatro purbo
Vemerdaing purbo
Vemerdaing porshim
Vemerdaing uttar
Gobindopur
Asgram
Bindarampur
Natun Madhupur
Puratan Madhupur
Emamganj Purbo
Fulbari

Dhamila

Gobratola, Chapainawabganj
Mohipur Porbo
Mohipur Porshim
Mohipur Uttar
Mohipur Dhakkhin
Gobratola (bakultola)
Gogodima
Gobratola (chechania)
Behula Baganpara
Monsebpur
Sarjon Baganpara
Behula
Faridpur
Dehepara
Sirtola
Aronbari

Khasherhat
Morichbuni porbo
Morichbunia porshim
Morichbunia dhakkhin
Morichbunia Uttar
Kalagasia dhakkhin
Kewabunia
Tathalbaria Dhakkhin
Goiyabari purbo
Goiyabari porshim
Goiyabari uttar
Goiyabari Dhakkhin
Patukhali purbo
Patukhali porshim
Uttar Bazar guna
Kalibari Dhakkhin
Gobratola, Chapainawabganj
Fulbari
Miapara
Pani Maskutir
Miapara purbo

Fulbari
Nawdanga
Balarhat purbo
Balarhat porshim
Charshimulbari
Shonaikazi
Porbu fulmoti
Porshim fulmoti
Porshim Nawdanga

Deuty
Chalunia purbo
Chalunia porshim
Pashua uttar
Kisamotbala purbo
Monurchora purbo
Birahim purbo
Adarshopara
Maital
Fokirtari
Chaklapara
Sundarpara
Mohismuri
Pobitrojhar
Tatipara

Shakhipur
Sholaprotima porshim
Sholaprotima porbo
Poya madhu
Chotomousha
Silimpur porbo
Gourgabindopur
Talukderpara porbo
Talukder para porshim
Goalbari
Araipara
Angargora

Ranirbandar
Nasratpur porbo
Nasratpur porshim
Ranirbandar porshim
Gochahar purbo
Khamarsatnala purbo
Nasratpur porshim (Alokdihi)
Ranirpur purbo
Champatoli purbo
Fatejangpur
Goaldihi porshim
Hasimpur purbo
Palashbari purbo

Jaintapur
Amjagram purbo
Amjagram porshim
Amjagram dhakkin
Lamapara purbo
Lamapara porshim
Furnapara porbo
Furnapara porshim
Kathaltola purbo
Kathaltola porshim
Kathaltola uttar
Kathaltola dhakkhin
Fultoli purbo
Fultoli porshim
Fultoli dhakkhin
Fultoli uttar
Haluaghat
Mominpur purbo
Pabiajuri porbo
Pabiajuri porshim
Pabiajuri uttar
Dhorail porbo
Dhorail uttar
Asrampara purbo
Asrampara porshim
Asrampara Uttar
Chadsree
Shemulbari purbo
Karua para purbo
Karua para porshim
Karua para Uttar
Karua para Dhakkhin

Bokshiganj
Surjo nagar porbo
Surjo nagar porshim
Surjo nagar Uttar
Surjo nagar Dhakkin

Shajimara
Nilakkhia purbo
Nilakkhia porshim
Nilakkhia uttar
Nilakkhia dhakkin
Deshpara purbo
Shadurpar porshim
Alipur para
Dhatua kanda purbo
Dhatua kanda porshim
Tangaripara porshim

SSS, Bangladesh (110 villages)

EXISTING LOCATIONS (60)

Natore
Nasiarkandi
Santanagar
Balidaghati
Pundari
Mirzapur
Bildahar
Raninagar
Samarkol
Sonapur
Bahadurpur
Hajipur
Bara Sawail
Salikha
Kusabari
Patsawail
Bipra Halsa
Roy Halsa
Matikopa
Hat Halsa
Par Halsa

Pabna
Chhaikola (Sabujpara)
Langolmara
Katenga
Barodanagar
Kukragari
Natabaria
Char Sengram
Sengram
Dodaniya
Sonaharpara
Dhankunia
Binnabari

Gournagar
Karkola
Chinabhatkur
Sahanagar
Bhangajola
Baoihat
Chhota Bishakol
Bara Bishakol
Noabaria
Uttar Kalkati
Char Bhangura
Kaidanga
Khuddra Kaidanga
Puibil
Betuan
Bahar
Baguan
Chowbaria
Hariabari
Purandarpur
Arkandi
Bangabari
Lakshmikul
Nrayanpur
Chhota Goalkata
Bara Goalkata
Majat
Demra

NEW LOCATIONS (50)

Natore
Dhulauri
Harubaria
Raninagar
Palpara
Sreerampur
Sherkole
Kanshapur
Agpara
Panch Para
Baktarpur
Majhpara
Chandpur
Nagar Para
Kumar Para
Par Krishnapur
Aglarua
Panchlarua
Narayanpur
Mora Patia
Natun Basti

Pabna
Agpungali
Datta Pungali
Madhya Pungali
Ratanpur
Dighalia Uttarpara
Dighalia Dakshinpara

Sirajganj
Gonaiganti
Konabari
Dahakola
Baltail
Elongjani Atiar Para
Elongjani Datta Para
Kaibartaganti
Suja
Par Elongjani
Katabari
Naukhada
Hemnagar
Ishwarpur
Dhamaich
Binnabari
Char Kusabari
Sabjuj Para
Bil Kusabari
Nado Saidpur Nadi Para
Nado Saidpur Khukni Para
Nado Saidpur Moshinda Para
Nado Saidpur Muslim Para
Char Hamkuria
Patgari

Mann Deshi Foundation, India (140 villages)

EXISTING LOCATIONS (49)

Lonand BS
Nira
Lonand

Satara BS
Aakashwani Zopadpatti
Matakar Colony Zopadpatti
Sadar Bazar
Shivthar
Kamathi Pura
Indira Nagar Vilaspur
Godoli

Gadakar Ali
Shelkewadi
Ravivar Peth
Bhuinj
Nagthane
Mangalwar Peth
Satara

Lonand MBS
Someshwar
Lonand

Pune BS
Janta Vasahat
Savitribai Fule Vasahat
Kishkindhanagar Vasahat
Sutardara Vsaahat
Apper Depo, Katraj
Dhayrigaon
Narhegaon
Sanjay Nagar Vasahat
Pune

Vaduj BS
Kuroli
Dhondewadi
Mayani
Vaduj
Nimsod
Suryachiwadi
Murudwak
Nadhawal
Kamathi
Kanasewadi
Umbarde
Gursale
Ambhawade
Goregao
Gopuj
Katarkhatav
Banpuri
Yelmarwadi
Vaduj

Dahiwadi BS
Dahiwadi

Mhaswad BS
Mhaswad
Piliv

NEW LOCATIONS (91)

Lonand MBS
Waghalvadi
Wanevadi
Nimbut Chapari
Wagdarvadi
Sortevadi
Vadgaon Nimbalkar
Hol
Pandare
Korhale
Gulunche
Rakh
Sangavi

Lonand BS
Walhe
Phaltan
Rajale
Asu
Waghoshi
Bavkalwadi
Sastewadi
Morve
Bori
Vadale
Kesurdi
Vathar Nimbalkar

Mhaswad MBS
Dhanje Wasti - Eslampur
Esalampur
Kaneher
Bham
Malshiras
Malshiras-Shidhrthanagar
Sadashiv Nagar
Garwad

Satara BS
Indira Nagar
Khed
Khodashi
Shendre
Dhamner
Matkar Colony
Sadar Bazar

Pune BS
Rajivgandhinagar Katraj
Dandekar Bridge

Dangat Vasti
Ramnagar Vasahat,Warje
Kelewadi Vadsahat,Kothrud
Hanuman Nagar,Kothrud
Marketyard
Premnagar Vasahat
Gosavi Vasti,Karvenagar
Kamna Vasahat, Karvenagar
Papal Vasti,Bibwewadi
Panmala
Ganeshmala
Taljai Patar

Dahiwadi BS
Ranand
Dahiwadi
Mardi
Kalevadit
Kiraksal
Naravane
Swarukhanvadi
Mahimangad
Ukirade
Pandharwadi
Malawadi
Shevari
Madave

Vaduj BS
Datewadi
Visapur
Gundewadi
Malinagar
Bhanjalwadi
Jakhangao
Kokrale
Kaledhon

Chiplun BS
Kadvad
Muradpur
Nirbhade
Vadar Colany
Kadavli
Akale
Chiplun

Mhaswad BS
Velapur
Panvan
Akluj
Dhuldev

Masaiwadi
Valai
Hingani
Devapur
Khadus
Ranjani

SPARC, Pakistan (58 villages: 34 old, 24 new)

EXISTING LOCATIONS (34)

Rawalpindi
Loharan Bazar
Mehar colony
Model colony
Mohalla Choudrian
Wakeel Abad

Sindh (province)
Karachi (district)

Hyderabad
Gadi Qabristan
Glass Factory
Hindu Area
Liaqat Ashraf colony
Railway colony

Multan
Seetal Mari
Abbas Town
Ali Town
Bodhla Town
Changron ki Basti
Gulshan-e-Rehman colony
Kot Rabnawaz
Naseerabad
Shaheen Town
Shamas Pura

Peshawar
Gareeb Abad
Gujra Abad
Makri Godown
Sikandar Town
Supply Gate
Shaheed Abad
Afridi Abad

NEW LOCATIONS (24)

Rawalpindi
Khyban-e-Sirsyed
Bhara Kahu
Bari Imam
Mehra Akku
Zia Masjid

Hyderabad
Hadi mill
Halli Road

Multan
Khawaja Greeb Nawaz
Rehman Pura Samejabad
Fazal Model
Samijabad
Fatimah Jinnah Town
Z-Town
Basti Shorkot
17-Kasi
BCG Chowk
Fazal Model
Shah Town
MDA Chowk
Allah Wasaya Chowk

Peshawar
Muhammadzai
Hashtnagri

Hari Pur
Shah Maqsood
Sarai Sala

WDC, Sri Lanka (28 villages/communities)

ALL NEW LOCATIONS (28)

Kandy District
Pathadumbara DS Division
Delthota DS Division
Kundasale DS Division
Yatinuwara DS Division
Udu Nuwara DS Division
Akurana DS Division
Hatharaliyadda DS Division
Uda Palatha DS Division
Mada Dumbara DS Division
Poojapitiya DS Division

Ganga Ihala Korale DS Division
Panwila DS Division
Doluwa DS Division
Udu Dumbara DS Division
Harispaththuwa DS Division
Pasbage Korale DS Division
Pathahewahata DS Division
Minipe DS Division
Thumpane DS Division
Gangawata Korale DS Division

Mathale District
Raththota DS
Ambanganga korale DSD
Mathale DSD
Yatawaththa DSD

Nuwara Eliya District – Forum 1 (Child Care & Women's Development Foundation)
Hanguranketha DSD
Walapane DSD

Nuwara Eliya District – Forum 2 – Swashakthi Women's Development Forum
Nuwara Eliya DSD
Kothmale DSD