

Report on Organizational Capacity Evaluation of WVL –Bangladesh Project

Ananya Kallyan Sangathon (AKS)



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**Commissioned by Manusher Jonno
Foundation (MJF)**



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1. Introduction

MJF's strategy for the Women's Voice and Leadership (WVL) Bangladesh project includes enhancing organizational capabilities, financial management systems, and program delivery practices among 16 Women's Rights Organizations (WROs) nationwide. These efforts aim to empower partner organizations to implement community-specific programs, focusing on activities such as raising awareness, fostering agency, promoting leadership, building skills, engaging with duty bearers, and advocating for policy changes through networking and alliances with like-minded organizations. The Women's Voice and Leadership (WVL) initiative is part of Global Affairs Canada's commitment to its Feminist International Assistance Policy.

In 2020, the WVL-Bangladesh Project has conducted an Organizational Capacity Needs Assessment (OCNA) for 18 WROs to identify their specific needs and potential areas for institutional capacity development as a baseline. In 2024, a post Organizational Capacity Evaluation (OCE) was conducted for 16 WROs excluding Jagoroni and Shabujer Jatra to evaluate the progress made over the past four years. Additionally, the assessment evaluated how the WROs integrated a feminist approach within their organizational policies and practices, and how these efforts extended to the community level. It also explored feminist leadership styles, considering contextualization and localization.

This OCE focused on:

1. Evaluating the effectiveness and progress of the organizational capacity of individual WROs according to the OCNA recommendations and strategies.
2. Identifying locally driven practices of feminist approaches in the key areas of the organizations.



2. Brief Organizational Overview

Name of organization	:	Ananya Kallyan Sangathon (AKS)
Established in	:	1997
Executive Director	:	Dawnai Prue Naly
Working area	:	Bandarban Hill District
Thematic area	:	Gender based violence, Rehabilitation of victim of violence, Establish customary law for ethnic communities, ecological conservation
Registration status	:	Directorate of Women Affairs and Directorate of Social Welfare and NGO Affairs Bureau.



3. The Organizational Capacity Evaluation

The OCE Process

MDF tailored the OCA tool, adapting it from the USAID OCA tool. The tool comprises Organizational Management (Governance, Administration, Human Resources Management, Financial Management, Program Management, and Organizational Sustainability) with 35 sub-sections. Each sub section was further assessed through a feminist lens.

The tool was finalized in consultation with MJF. The final version was also shared with the WROs so that they can familiarize with the tool before the Evaluation workshop.

Participants included representatives from every tier of the organization, from senior management to field operatives. During the workshop, participants assessed their organization using the tool and assigned scores to each element.

Each section of the tool provides score card and a checklist (with Yes/No/Partly/Not Applicable options and space for explanations). Participants were required to self-score using both the scorecards and checklists.

A scale of 1 to 4 was used for scoring. The underlying principle of the self-assessment required all participants to agree on a single score for each element. MDF moderated the discussions to keep them focused and to guide participants toward a common agreement.

In case of any performance which includes elements from two different level then score was counted in simple fraction of 0.5 including the basic level of performance. For instance, if performance indicators show the level is 1 with few performances in level 2, then total number will be for this is 1.5. In the checklist, the total number is calculated according to the question they answered yes and the facilitators observation and available documents against the scale of 4. Averages were calculated by total of all components in a segment and divided by the component number. Like in a segment there are 5 components. So, the averages will be the total number of all components divided by 5. Notes were added in cases of variance occurred comparing the baseline score.

Facilitator also scored separately based on the tool's criteria and evidence. It was varied than the participants' score at times.

In some cases, participants' scores were lower than the baseline, but findings show there was significant progress. Common responses from participants about the reasons for this discrepancy included: fear that the donor might withdraw support if the organization's capacity appears diminished, lack of understanding of specific questions, and the fact that current participants were unaware of the reasons since the baseline responses were provided by staff who are no longer with the organization.

A kick-off meeting was held on 20th June 2024 online with the 16 WRO's and concerned MJF personnel. The meeting fixed the number and categories of participants for workshops, KIIs and FGDs.

Following the kick-off meeting, the consultants finalized the dates for the workshops, KIIs, and FGDs with individual WROs and continued further explanatory discussions as needed by the WROs.

The OCA process included a one-and-a-half-day workshop, four KIIs each lasting 1.5 to 2 hours, and one FGD lasting 1.5 to 2 hours. Three dedicated teams, each consisting of two facilitators, conducted the OCA process simultaneously.



Limitation of OCE

Self-assessment using the OCA tool relied on staff perceptions of organizational insights. While the process is participatory and aimed to capture opinions and understanding of organizational elements from multiple levels, a significant challenge was defensiveness toward self-reflection, which led to biased opinions. In addition, junior staff were somewhat reluctant to express themselves freely in the presence of senior staff. Another challenge was achieving a common agreement or consensus due to the diversity of staff opinions.

Approach to Overcome Limitations

It was emphasised that the process was not an examination but focused on the assessing organizational gaps and needs to identify areas for development. It was explained that this assessment was also a learning process which will lead to their organizational strengthening and further development. It was clearly stated that MDF's role was neutral, aiming to facilitate the process and guide participants toward accurate conclusions. Consequently, participants were encouraged to be open and transparent in their responses.

Additionally, responses to some sensitive issues were collected discreetly through individual VIPP cards, allowing participants to respond confidentially and thus reduce bias and potential power influence.

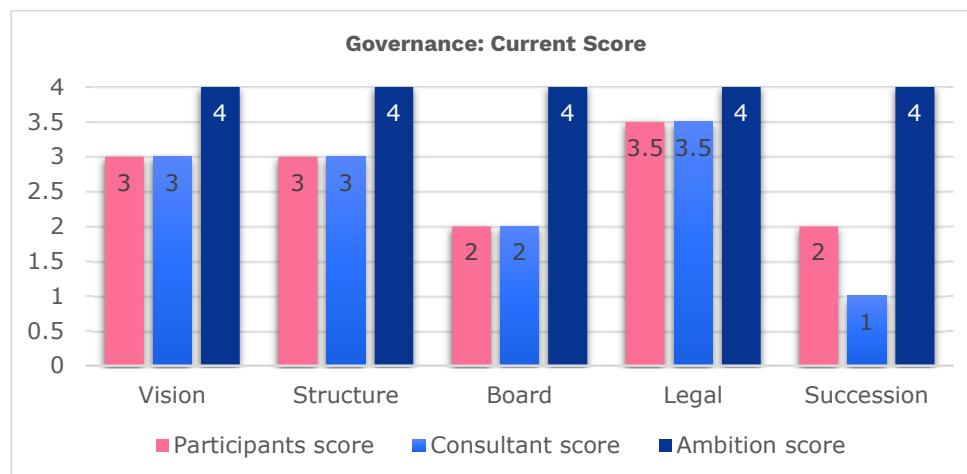
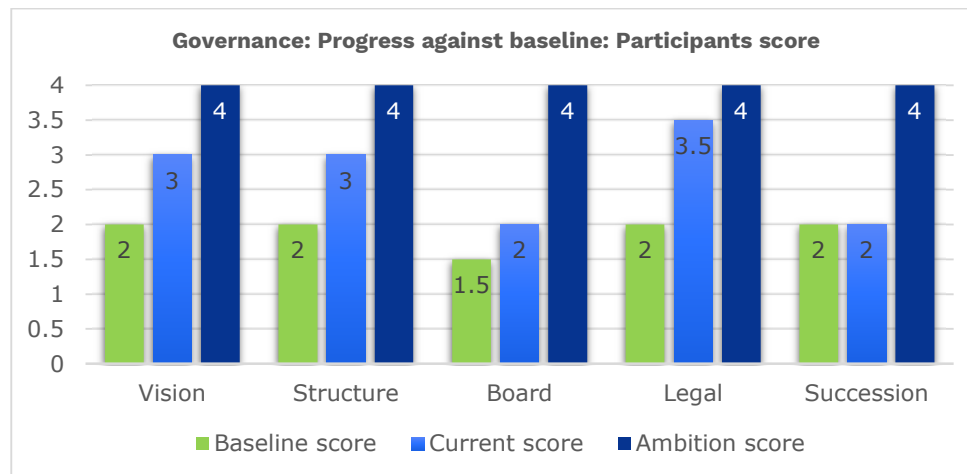


4. OCE Score and Findings: Organizational Management

4.1. Governance

4.1.1. SCORE: GOVERNANCE

Governance	Baseline Score		Current Score		Ambition OCE score
	Participants	Consultants	Participants	Consultants	
Vision/mission	2.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	4.0
Organizational Structure	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	4.0
Board composition and responsibility	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	4.0
Legal status	2.0	2.0	3.5	3.5	4.0
Succession planning	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	4.0
Average	1.9	1.5	2.7	2.5	4.0



4.1.2. Findings: Governance

COMPARISON OF THE GOVERNANCE TO BASELINE AND ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

Vision/Mission

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
No findings for improvement	Score increased from 2.0 (Basic level) to 3.0 (Moderate level)

Additional insights

There is scope that the Vision/Mission statement could be more specific and clearer. Vision/mission is in line with the goals of the organization, but the mission & vision are not always followed to implement the program. The mission and vision are generally known to most of the participants.

The vision and mission statements reflect a commitment to gender equality but do not explicitly incorporate the feminist approach as defined by AKS.

Organizational structure

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
No documented organogram of the organization is available	The organization has a documented organogram illustrated all positions and hierarchical levels, including functions, roles, and responsibilities of each department or position. It is evident how departments and functions relate to one another. The staff's understanding about their job are fair.

Additional insights

Staff members were able to explain their roles and responsibilities, as well as the types of communication used. Communication is conducted through emails and messenger groups. Mostly they discuss directly with Pc and ED. Coordination is managed through monthly coordination meetings and weekly meetings.

The inclusion of staff at decision-making levels is not documented in any policy but practically women/junior staff are included at decision making level and they can express their opinions.

The top decision-making level is gender-balanced, and women employees frequently voice their opinions. Women and junior employees are often involved in decision-making processes and are encouraged to share their opinions. However, the participatory decision-making process is not documented.



Board composition and responsibility

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
EC members do not have clear idea about their role and work of the organization. EC members mostly communicate with the ED and are not associated with the staff	Awareness of the organization's work has increased among the Board members (interviewed). The board is more active now than it was.

Additional insights

Board members come from varied and relevant backgrounds. Attendance at their quarterly meetings varies, but they meet quarterly. Meeting minutes are kept but are not consistently documented or distributed for review. The board's primary duties—fundraising, financial oversight, and leadership selection and guidance—are not effectively executed. Term limits are either vague or arbitrary, and board members are selected instead of elected.

One of the community members is included in the EC. According to the ED, she has developed into a good leader over time through the organization's efforts to engage community women in various activities.

The board members include women from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds. The EC's leadership style focuses on creating opportunities for other women. For instance, one board member, who was previously a general member before being selected as an EC member, is now a well-known activist in Bandarban. She is currently preparing to participate in the Karbari election.

Legal status

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
The organization is registered with Directorate of Women Affairs and Directorate of Social Welfare. Its registration with NGO Affairs Bureau is under processing. AKS does not have clear understanding or idea about labour law, tax law etc.	The organization has its legal registration with NGOAB, Social welfare and Women affairs and AKS is aware of its tax status.

Succession planning

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
There is no written succession plan of the organization. The organization has no second line of leadership to replace or take charge in absence of the present Executive Director.	The organization does not have a succession strategy in place. The ED is the only one who can run the organization. The staff cannot make decisions on their own.

Additional insights

The organization is dependent on the Executive Director for its functioning. Delegation gives to PD in absence of ED for the time being. Staff members opined that, Organizational operations and programs would abruptly halt in the absence of the ED.



According to the OCA participants, organizational operations and programs would come to an abrupt halt in the absence of the Executive Director (ED). However, there are two potential female leaders among the staff members.

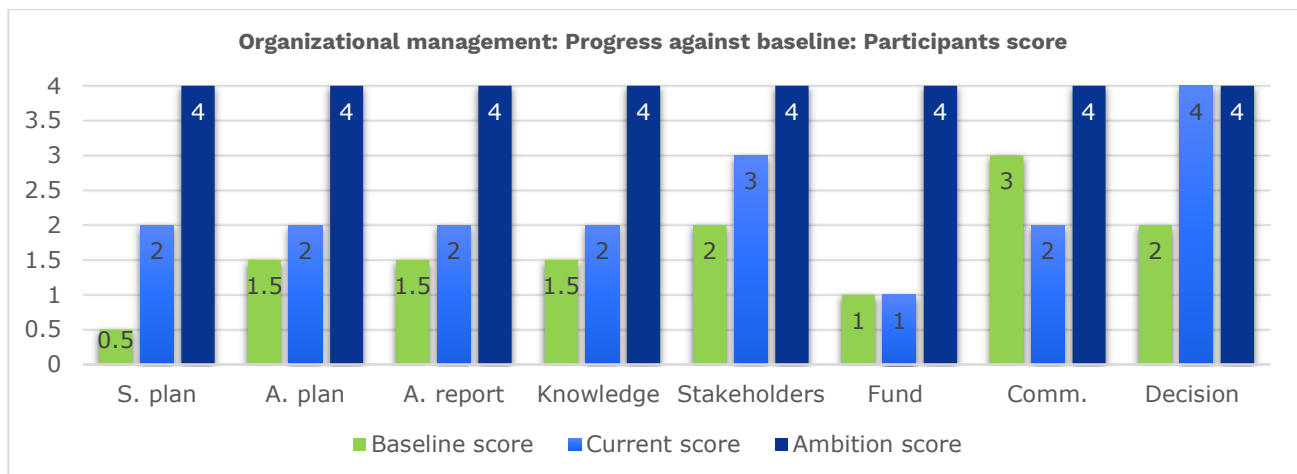
The ED plays a crucial role in effectively administering the organization, demonstrating strong leadership in both program and financial management. This central role ensures a cohesive and streamlined approach, although it also means that other management personnel have limited involvement in these areas. It might hinder the development of second-line leaders.



4.2. Organizational Management

4.2.1. SCORE: ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Organizational management	Baseline score		Current Score		Ambition OCE score
	Participants	Consultants	Participants	Consultants	
Strategic plan	0.5	0.5	2.0	2.0	4.0
Annual plan	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	4.0
Annual report	1.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	4.0
Knowledge management	1.5	1.5	2.0	1.0	4.0
Stakeholders' involvement	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.0	4.0
Strategy for funding resources	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.0
Internal communication	3.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	4.0
Decision making	2.0	2.0	4.0	3.0	4.0
Average	1.6	1.5	2.3	1.9	4.0



4.2.2. FINDINGS: ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

COMPARISON OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT TO BASELINE AND ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

Strategic Planning

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
The organization has no strategic plan. Furthermore, it does not have the financial resource, or the expertise required to develop a strategic plan	There is a multi-year strategy plan in place.

Additional insights

The strategic plan includes measurable objectives, clearly identifies priority areas, and reflects the organization's vision and mission but it lacks aspects for monitoring progress and results. Management does not regularly examine the multi-annual strategic plan or use it as a tool for decision-making when creating operational plans. It was created after an organizational assessment and program review. Women and general staff get involved in the planning process. Beneficiaries' inputs are taken in the meeting with them.

The strategy for monitoring and assessment is absent. Management does not regularly examine the multi-annual strategic plan or use it as a tool for decision-making. Beneficiaries' inputs are taken in the meeting with them.

The affirmative approach and women's rights are aligned with the organization's strategic goals and are actively implemented. For example, AKS has established policies for maternity leave and travel specifically for women. Both women and general staff were involved in the planning process, and beneficiaries' input is taken as well.

Annual workplan development

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
Beyond the projects there is no substantial programme of the organization, as a result there is no organizational practice to develop systematic annual plan.	The organization have a documented annual work plan

Additional insights

the annual work plan reviewed and adjusted Half yearly. It is not detailed or thorough, and it only partially aligns with strategic objectives. While the plan includes a few measurable objectives, it lacks specific milestones and quantifiable targets. Additionally, there is no evaluation process in place.

The work plan includes activities related to menstrual health management (MHM) and creating space for lactating mothers in the office. However, gender equality and the elements of the feminist perspective that AKS believes in are not adequately included.



Annual Organizational Report

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
The organization has no system of preparing annual report. But it produced its first ever annual report for the period 2018-19. The report mainly is a compilation of progresses made in implementation of projects during the reporting period and the consolidated audited financial statement.	The organization has a basic annual organizational report.

Additional insights

There is scope to improve the annual organizational report by including an external audit report and a section on lessons learned.

The annual report portrays a perspective of gender equality and non-discrimination through its narrative.

Knowledge Management

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
The organization has no capacity to conduct independent study. But it participated in field activities of research work by BNPS. Organization has functional relation with Durbar, Sujana and local Women Resource Network. Staff of the organization take part in training by other organization when such opportunities become available.	The organization does not have a formal knowledge management system, but they have informal practice. Staff share lessons learned from their own program through meetings and reports. AKS has technical connections with other organizations.

Additional Insights

The organization has an active alliance with the Durbar network and IFES. Through meetings, AKS exchanges experiences and learnings. Although best practices are not formally documented, they are mentioned in the annual report.

AKS mainly share information, practical knowledge, and experiences on topics such as MHM, women rights and GBV.



Stakeholder Involvement

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
The organization said to have a stakeholders' profile which participants consider outdated. It could not be ascertained that the nature, purpose, and process of profiling stakeholders is clear in the organization. There is no system of involving stakeholders/target groups in decision making.	The organization has a documented list of key stakeholders. The list is updated and comprehensive. The organization meets with important stakeholders to share updates about the programs. The stakeholders do not participate in planning process, although they do have half yearly meetings with important stakeholders and share updates about the programs.

Additional Insights

AKS involves community members in various ways. They organize events to observe Days, giving priority to community members to share their experiences. They installed feedback boxes in their girls' clubs and provided notebooks to the girls. The girls can leave their feedback in the boxes or write it in the notebooks to share with the relevant staff, who then address the feedback and respond to the girls.

30% percent of key stakeholders are women, and all beneficiaries are women. Both the staff and board members are engaged with the community, representing diverse groups such as Bengali, Mro, Marma, and Mong. AKS encourages women and girls to participate in activities outside the home. To break the stigma, they organize football games for women from all communities.

Strategy for funding resources

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
The organization has no fund-raising strategy or projection of resource requirement and fund flow forecast.	The organization has no funding strategy for potential scale up or new program development.

Additional Insights

AKS secured project funds for two years. The organization identifies the needs of women and girls within the community through discussions.

The PC said, we conduct this type of needs assessment before beginning the project and at different implementation phases.

All funds are dedicated to empowering women and supporting women's rights.

Internal Communication

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
In absence of functional organogram, communication within organization is not likely to be methodical.	The organization has an organogram, but it lacks a structured system for internal communication.



Additional Insights

Staff feel comfortable initiating discussions and raising issues, supported by an organizational culture that encourages openness and transparent communication. AKS disseminates administrative decisions to staff via email, while general communication occurs in person. Staff ideas are actively sought, respected, and incorporated into decision-making processes.

When asked to rate the level of openness in the organizational culture (Very High, High, Moderate, Low, Very Low), staff confidentially rated it as "Moderate."

According to the participants, they can admit their mistakes to the ED without fear.

Example of staff opinion respected by the management

Political unrest frequently occurs in Bandarban. A staff member suggested to the management that AKS should have an official policy stating that staff should not be required to go into the field during such unrest. The management adopted this recommendation.

Staff feel comfortable initiating discussions and raising issues, but the opinions of women and field staff are included in only a few major decisions.

Decision Making

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
Staff have no participation in organizational decision making. Overall, decision making is centralized and top-down as described by the participants.	Decision is made by the management, yet management actively seeks out and uses employee's feedback.

Additional Insights

The decision-making process is not always documented. While decisions made during monthly meetings are recorded, those from ad hoc, need-based meetings are not. Field staff make decisions about organizing field events, though management provides advice.

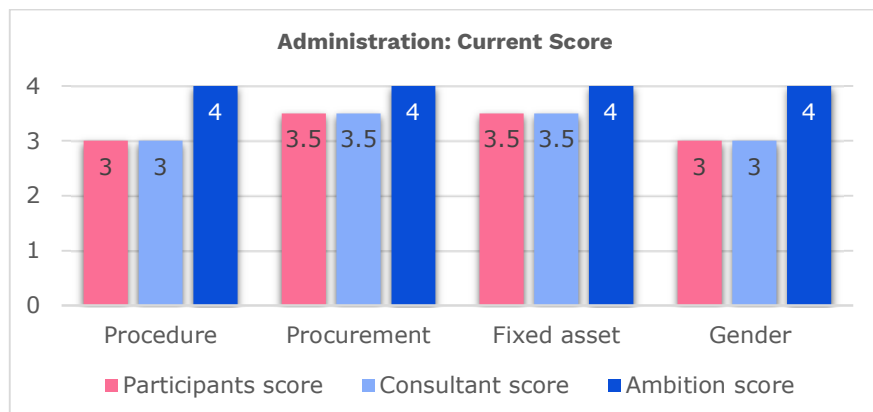
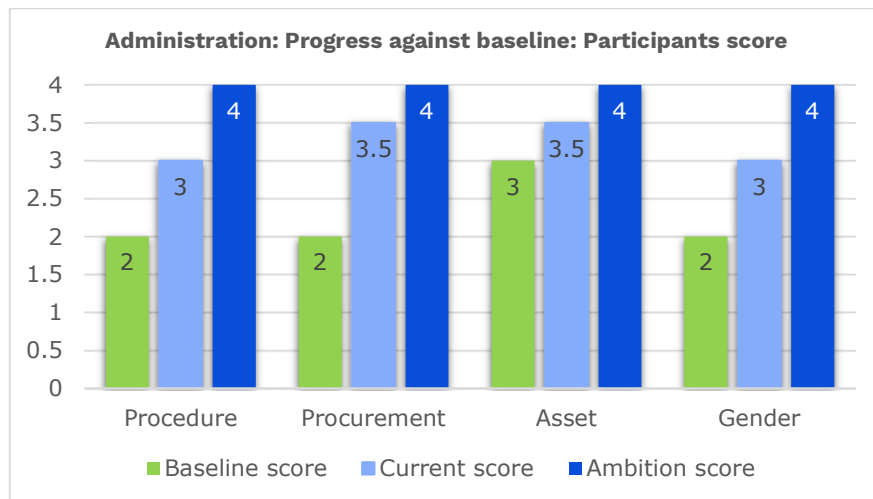
Women and junior staff make decisions about field operations, such as determining the number of participants and selecting participants for events, based on management's advice.



4.3. Administration

4.3.1. SCORE: ADMINISTRATION

Administration	Baseline score		Current Score		Ambition OCE score
	Participants	Consultants	Participants	Consultants	
Operational Procedures and Systems	2.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	4.0
Procurement policy	2.0	2.0	3.5	3.5	4.0
Fixed asset management	3.0	1.0	3.5	3.5	4.0
Gender and Culture	2.0	1.0	3.0	3.0	4.0
Average	2.3	1.3	3.3	3.3	4.0



4.3.2. FINDINGS: ADMINISTRATION

COMPARISON OF THE ADMINISTRATION TO BASELINE AND ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

Operational Procedures and Systems

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
The organization has few policies and rules documented. The policies and rules, as much could be ascertained from the participants, are not widely applied/adhered to.	There are numbers of written procedures and system in place.

Additional Insights

AKS has following written procedures in place:

- Safety and security procedures
- Procedures for lost or stolen equipment as per the depreciation process
- Vehicle use and management policies
- Advance and reconciliation procedure
- Filing system (no written procedure but practiced)
- IT procedures (no written procedure but practiced)

There are no standard processes or systems for distributing work, and no formal feedback mechanism. Feedback is given only if an issue arises.

Documented procedures address the travel needs of female staff. It entails safety measures and flexibility in travel arrangements including booking of double seats for women employee if needed. There is a provision to pay extra money for the childcare assistant during travel of female staff with infants.

Procurement

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
For organizational procurements there is no plan, procurements for projects are made according to project plan. No written checklist is followed during procurements. Procurement policy for the projects is not comprehensive. It does not deal with issues such as code of conduct and conflict of interest. There is no procurement plan of the organization.	There are written procurement policies and procedures for the organization. The policy includes guidance on codes of conduct and conflict of interest.

Fixed Asset Management

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
Fixed asset of one project is used in other projects if it does not affect activities of the source project. No accounting is maintained for use of assets across	• There is a policy for inventory, maintenance, insurance, disposition and custody of non-expendable equipment



projects. Policy guideline is inadequate. There is no provision for depreciation. Asset register was not available.	• Expendable/non-expendable equipment defined • Physical inventory conducted in compliance with policies and documented • Inventory tags used • Title and disposition statements for non-expendable equipment is there • There is a way of billing usage if projects are sponsored from different funds
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Gendered culture

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
No gender policy was available. Organization has no gender strategy or gender focal person. Other policies (Service rule) are not consistent with gender rights (maternity leave 3month).	The organization has a comprehensive gender policy, Sexual harassment prevention committee, gender committee, and gender focal person to deal with the GBV complaints.

Additional Insights

AKS maintains a gender-sensitive culture in the office but does not conduct formal gender assessments or surveys. Confidentiality for complainants is upheld by omitting names in discussions. The gender policy supports gender equality through measures such as Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) friendly toilets, paid maternity and paternity leave, transport provisions for women, and flexible working hours for lactating mothers. Women are prioritized for leadership positions. The Program Director occasionally facilitates sessions to raise staff awareness about gender equality, which participants report has positively influenced male staff attitudes and behaviors.

The organization provides flexible working hours for lactating mothers and creates an environment where women and junior staff can voice their opinions and concerns without fear of retaliation. Although prioritizing women for leadership roles is not explicitly documented, it is consistently practiced. AKS has mechanisms for reporting gender-based violence (GBV), including a gender focal person and a gender committee that reviews the complaint box monthly.

The ED said, “I apply gendered culture learned from the office in my family, share my learning about gender equality with friends. I use my learnings from various sources in the organization and encourage my colleagues to do the same”.

AKS supports the growth of female staff, such as Eli Prue Marma and Pausing Mro, who represent the organization in various networks and lead events. While there are no formal sponsorship programs for female staff and beneficiaries, mentorship is offered to community girls through their adolescent club.

Example of women friendly approach

The ED said, during the menstrual period, I do not send women employee in field where toilet is not available. I also told man employee to be sensitive with women during their menstruation.



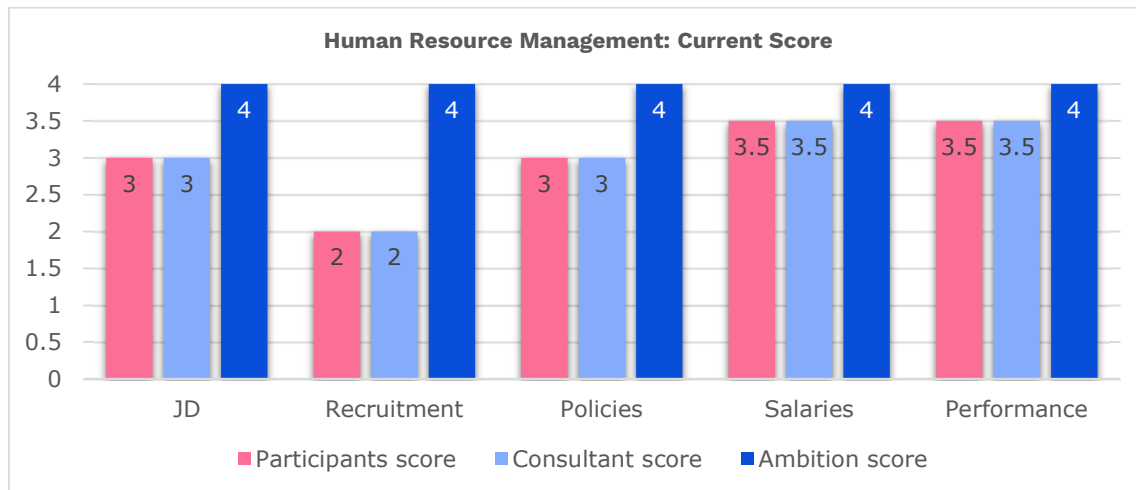
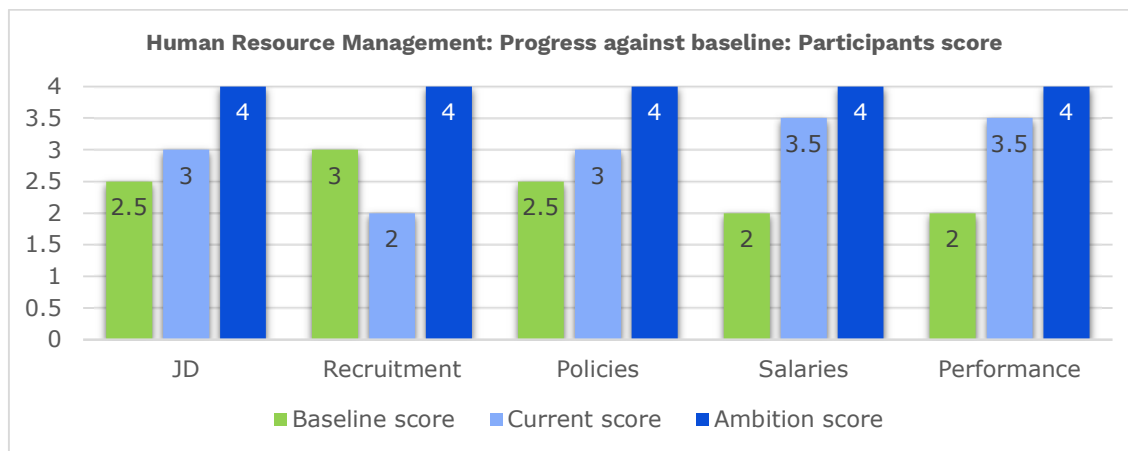
The organization ensures 100% women leadership on the Board and maintains a gender balance among staff with a ratio of 90% women to 10% men. Volunteers are supported in their leadership development. Although there is no specific policy or guideline for feminist leadership, it is actively practiced within the organization.



4.4. Human Resources Management

4.4.1. SCORE: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Human Resource Management	Baseline score		Current Score		Ambition OCE score
	Participants	Consultants	Participants	Consultants	
Job description	2.5	2.5	3.0	3.0	4.0
Recruitment and Retention	3.0	3.0	2.0	2.0	4.0
Personnel Policies	2.5	2.5	3.0	3.0	4.0
Salaries & Benefits	2.0	2.0	3.5	3.5	4.0
Staff Performance Management	2.0	2.0	3.5	3.5	4.0
Average	2.2	2.2	3.0	3.0	4.0



4.4.2. FINDINGS: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

COMPARISON OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT TO BASELINE AND ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

Job description

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
Organization has job description for its staff (project) but those are not complete. Important elements like skills and qualification required are not identified.	The job descriptions for all positions in the organization available and job descriptions include title, job duties/responsibilities, report-to details, supervision responsibilities, qualifications, skills required.

Additional Insights

- Job descriptions are occasionally filed in personnel files.
- The organization does not have a process for updating job descriptions.
- Although the organization is not always able to promote its employees, AKS promotes its staff whenever opportunities arise.
- No gender perspective is mentioned in the job descriptions, such as gender sensitivity. Job descriptions do not include responsibilities that promote diversity and inclusion without reinforcing stereotypes or biases.

Example of promotion

Py-May-Ching initially worked as a volunteer before being promoted by the organization to Program Officer. She was then assigned as HR Officer (as part of capacity building) and later promoted to Project Officer. These promotions occurred in vacant positions.

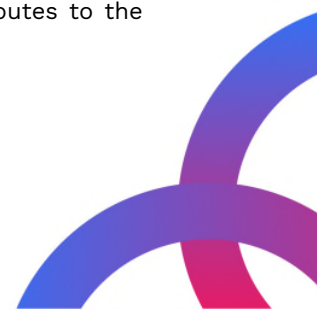
Recruitment and Retention

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
The organization has some rules and procedures for recruitment and retention of staff, though those are not completely developed and sometimes contradictory. Out-going staff are not interested in exit-interview, described the participants.	There are written recruitment procedures that include guidelines on announcing positions/advertising, collecting CVs, interviewing candidates, checking references, and making offers. The organization keeps data on leavers and conducts exit interviews.

Additional Insights

According to the Executive Director, the organization has approaches for retaining staff, but these are not documented. The organization's policies and guidelines do not specifically address transgender inclusion in the recruitment process.

There is no retention policy, but the ED mentioned that a good salary is the primary measure for staff retention. She stated that employees receive a good salary compared to other organizations in Bandarban. She added that management's women-friendly attitude also contributes to the retention of women staff at AKS.



There are no official policies or programs in place for women (or men) employees to advance in their careers. Employees have some opportunities for training and growth as provided by the project, but no formal skill development training exists beyond that.

Personnel Policies

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
The organization has a personnel policy. It describes disciplinary rules, provisions for leave, staff development and performance appraisal etc. But there is no system of obtaining consent and signature of staff. Participants consider that the policy needs updating.	Personnel policies and procedures are documented and include the recruitment and selection of staff, work schedule, employee salary and benefits, leave, performance grievance and disciplinary procedures, and ending employment (resignation, termination). There is a process for staff to sign the personnel manual, and these signatures are recorded.

Salaries & Benefits

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
Salary structure of the organization has been described differently in different documents. However, none is functional. The organization recognizes they are unable to implement their service rule and some major provisions of Labour Law have not been included in the service rule while claiming to practice those anyway.	The organization has a salary structure and documented benefits in the personnel manual. However, pay increases do not follow the salary grade and range framework as they depend on the project budget. Therefore, pay increases are not based on performance but are a flat 5% for all. The salary grade is reviewed and updated annually.

Staff Performance Management

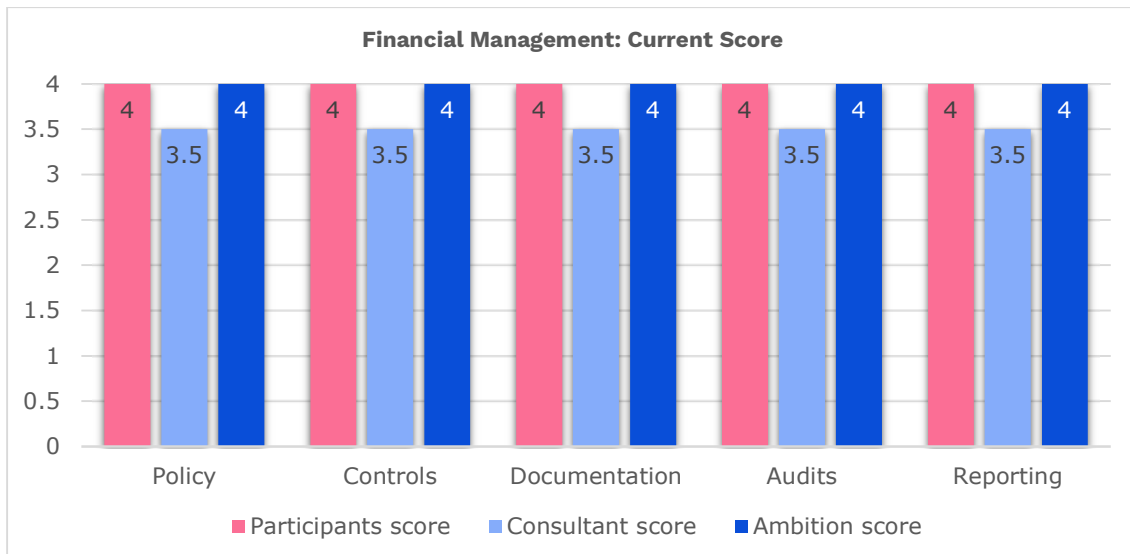
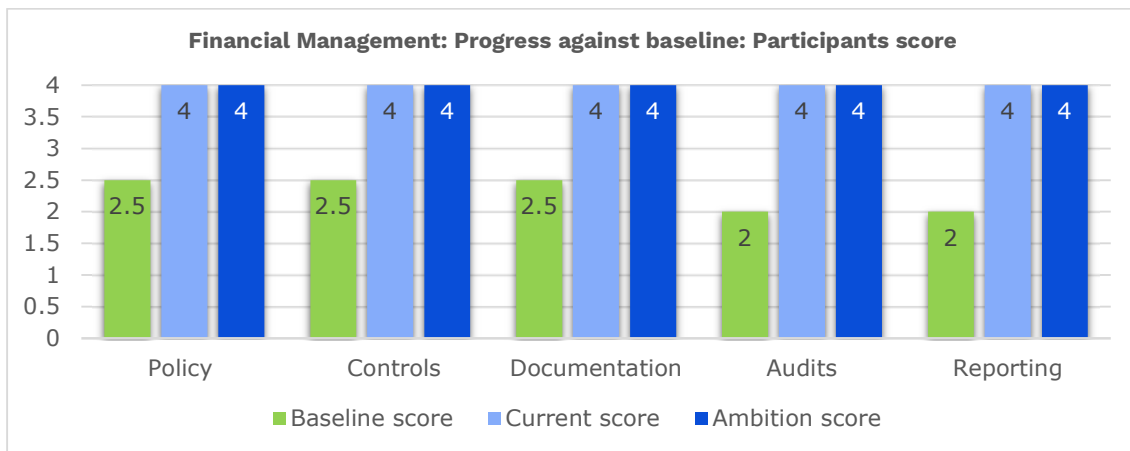
Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
The organization has specific system for staff performance evaluation. However, the evaluation only measures tasks performed and does not set any personal objective for the staff.	At baseline, the organization's staff performance evaluation system focused solely on task completion without setting personal objectives for employees. Since then, significant progress has been made, with the performance assessment process becoming more participatory. This improvement allows both staff and supervisors to jointly evaluate performance, encouraging open discussions on performance-related issues and promoting a more holistic approach to staff development



4.5. Financial Management

4.5.1. SCORE: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Financial Management	Baseline Score		Current Score		Ambition OCE score
	Participants	Consultants	Participants	Consultants	
Policy procedure	2.5	2.0	4.0	3.5	4.0
Financial Controls	2.5	2.0	4.0	3.5	4.0
Documentation	2.5	2.0	4.0	3.5	4.0
Audits	2.0	2.0	4.0	3.5	4.0
Financial Reporting	2.0	2.0	4.0	3.5	4.0
Average	2.3	2.0	4.0	3.5	4.0



4.5.2. FINDINGS: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

COMPARISON OF THE FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT TO BASELINE AND ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

Policy procedure

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
AKS has a Financial Policy Guideline. Approved in 2018, the document was not thoroughly reviewed and contains outdated information. Participants realize that the financial management system has gaps and needs improvement.	The financial policy is updated, and the organization maintains a properly functioning budget monitoring system. Financial staff have clearly defined roles, separating those who prepare payments from those who authorize them. Relevant personnel are aware of these policies.

Additional Insights

AKS maintains the following documented financial systems:

- A tally financial system is maintained.
- Petty cash is managed.
- Vouchers are preserved.
- A double-entry bookkeeping system is used.
- The Chart of Accounts tracks expenses and advances through budget coding, including sub-grant expenses and advances to individuals.
- Written VAT policies include tracking and reimbursement procedures.
- A system for determining exchange rates is in place.
- The budget accounts for different funding sources and projects.
- A budget tracking tool, integrated into Tally, includes projections.
- Cash flow management is handled through bank reconciliation statements.
- Payment vouchers are prepared by the Finance Coordinator (FC), checked by the Project Coordinator (PC), and signed by the Executive Director (ED).

The organization lacks a properly maintained budget monitoring system and does not have an internal audit system

Financial Controls

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
There are few financial control mechanisms in the organization. Financial Policy Guideline provides inadequate control system. Limited control procedures available (adjustment of advance) are not followed.	The organization has a documented financial control system, including written mechanisms for financial controls and a separation of duties among financial staff, specifically between those who prepare and authorize payments. There is a signatory authority/approval matrix involving the Executive Director (ED), Treasurer, and Project Director (PD). Designated individuals (Finance Coordinator) manage financial files, and all transaction documents must be signed by the ED and adjusted within seven days. The control



	mechanisms also include maintaining procurement policy in each purchase.
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Documentation

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
Policy guideline for financial documentation is insufficient. No proper acknowledgement form, voucher, receipts are available.	The organization uses a formal and well-maintained documentation process. It employs electronic banking with separate individuals responsible for initiating and approving payments. Financial documentation is securely stored and access to books, records, and cash is restricted to the finance head. Receipts, approvals, and payment vouchers are retained for 5 years.

Audits

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
The organization has specific system for audit of its accounts. ED presents a summary of audit report in EC meeting and the full report is available for concerned persons. But it is acknowledged that a more systematic sharing is needed. Organization tries to implement audit findings, but resource limitation is a barrier to full implementation. Management discusses implementation of audit findings with finance staff which is termed by the participants as casual, and no resolution is taken from the discussions.	The procedure for conducting routine financial audits is documented. AKS undergoes regular audits, and recommendations are implemented. Audit reports are shared with Board in meetings and are accessible at the board level

Financial Reporting

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
AKS described its financial reporting as inadequate and not up to date. The organizational account (mother account) does not have many transactions and not regularly maintained. AKS feels that the organizational reporting system needs to be developed and overall financial management system should be followed as done in the projects.	The organization follows documented protocols for completing and submitting financial reports, and it maintains these procedures. • Written procedures are in place for financial reporting. • Reports are submitted on time and according to the deliverable schedule. • Reports align with the project manual. • There is a link between project financial reports and the annual financial account.



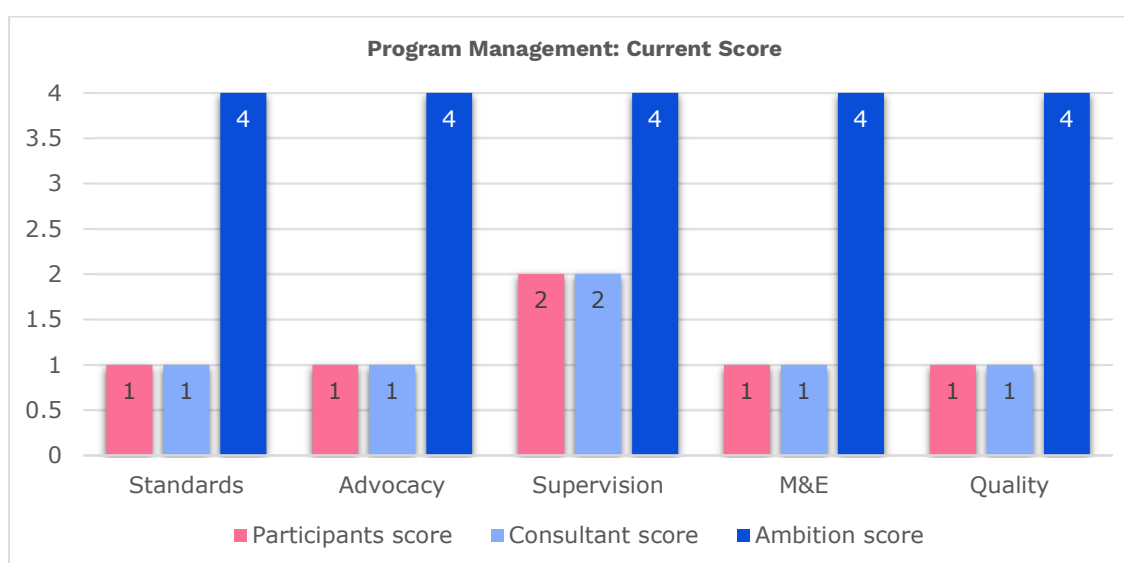
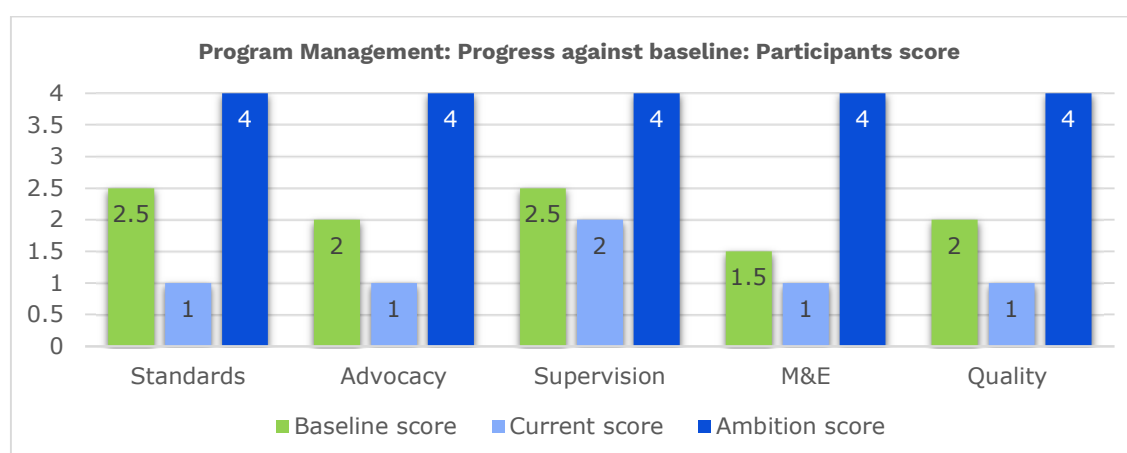
	• The Finance Head is designated to prepare financial reports. • The Project Director is responsible for reviewing and signing off on reports.
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4.6. Program Management

4.6.1. SCORE: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Programme Management	Baseline Score		Current Score		Ambition OCE score
	Participants	Consultants	Participants	Consultants	
Standards for project implementation	2.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.0
Advocacy & Networking	2.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	4.0
Internal supervision	2.5	1.0	2.0	2.0	4.0
M&E	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.0
Quality Assurance	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	4.0
Average	2.1	1.2	1.2	1.2	4.0



4.6.2. FINDINGS: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

COMPARISON OF THE PROGRAM AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION TO BASELINE AND ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

Standards for project implementation

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
ASK has no standard implementation plan of the organization. Projects are implemented following rules and regulations described in project plan. Some of the rules in Project Plan gets difficult to follow because of practical setting of Bandarban. Difference between local language and mainstream (Bangla) language creates a barrier. There are few skilled local people while mainstream people cannot speak local language. Difficulty of physical communication (it is a hilly and remote area) is another challenge they must deal with.	The organization lacks a project implementation strategy or set of guidelines. Projects are implemented following the rules and regulations described in the project plan. The Program Director (PD) is responsible for maintaining these rules and regulations.

Additional Insights

AKS prioritizes women's voices in decision-making regarding implementation.

Advocacy and Networking

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
AKS considers much focus is given on advocacy but does not have any written strategy. They have no specific person for advocacy or any system of documenting the process and results of advocacy.	The organization does not follow a documented plan or strategy for its advocacy activities. Additionally, the organization does not have a formal, dedicated team or staff members for advocacy work; instead, three staff members, including the Executive Director (ED), handle these responsibilities informally.

Additional insights

AKS is involved with several coalitions, including IFES, Oxfam-BWHP, and the Durbar Network. According to the Executive Director (ED), AKS identifies and engages stakeholders for its advocacy initiatives through stakeholder mapping exercises and maintains communication through personal contact.

An example of a successful partnership is with BNPS, where joint efforts secured commitments from Karbaris to implement changes in marriage registration and land rights for women under traditional law.

Participants mentioned courtyard meetings, human chains, theater, silent movements, door-to-door awareness campaigns, and lobbying as their advocacy activities.



According to the ED, advocating for women's rights in Bandarban is challenging. There are only three women's rights organizations in Bandarban: one is too far away, and another is not activism-based. She mentioned that the advocacy networking is crucial for advancing women's rights.

Internal supervision

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
AKS has no internal supervision plan for its programs and projects. Projects have supervision plan detailed out in respective project implementation plan. Organizational events are implemented based on isolated plans which are not reviewed by management. Participants consider that they have trained supervisors, but they are not skilled in modern tools and techniques.	The organization does not have a written internal supervision plan. There is an informal supervision system through meetings, but it is not documented. Feedback is provided as needed

Additional insights

Both formal and informal feedback is provided, including written and oral. Positive feedback is given when field experiences or opinions are shared. According to the participants, the organization creates a safe and supportive environment for providing feedback empathetically. Written feedback from supervisees to supervisors is collected and reserved in a file, and efforts are made to implement program changes based on the feedback.

Example of providing sensitive feedback: Offering a supportive gesture, such as a hug, after giving hard criticism by the ED.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
Organization does not have any monitoring system or person responsible. Projects are monitored by its staff using monitoring framework developed for the project.	The organisation has no monitoring and evaluation plan.

Additional insights

According to the PC, the project doesn't have the monitoring tools, but they collect data and upload the data in the MIS system of MJF. The PC mentioned that they collect data by discussing with the beneficiaries, assessment and survey.



Quality Assurance

Baseline Findings for improvement	Progress
There is no system of quality assurance in the organization. Understanding the concept of quality assurance in the organizational context needs strengthening.	The organisation does not have quality assurance plan/strategy.

Additional insights

There is good practice but not documented.

Example of good practice:

During events like workshops or day observances, the ED reviews the agenda, concept notes (which are not detailed and are often presented as bullet points.), and the implementation process. Occasionally, a review meeting is held afterward to discuss lessons learned. Participants acknowledge that both practices help ensure quality and improve future events. However, they recommend documenting these processes rather than relying on memory.

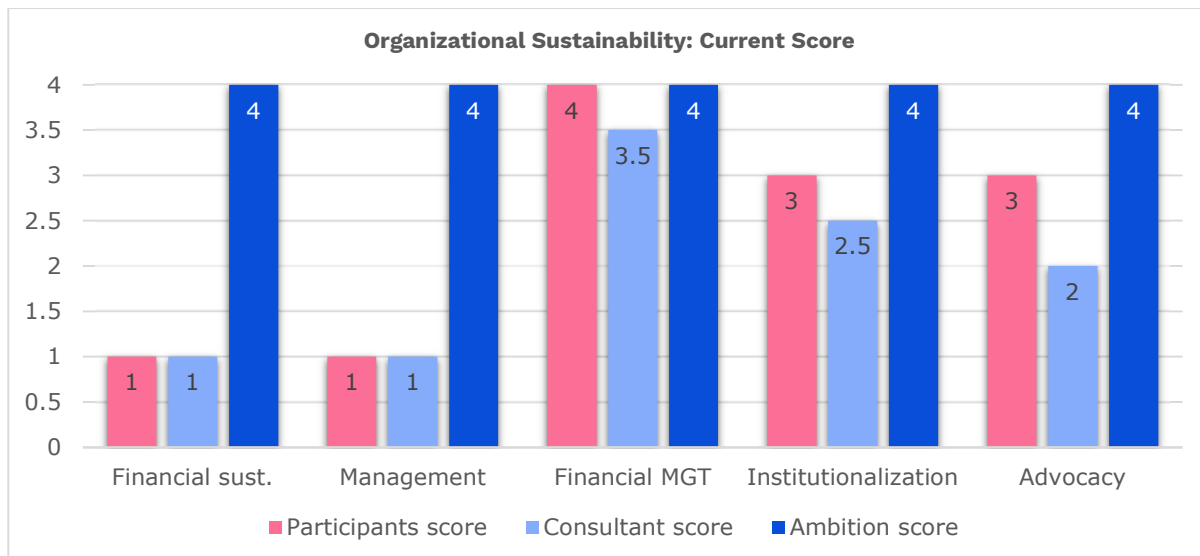


4.7. Organizational Sustainability

(Organizational sustainability was not assessed during baseline)

4.7.1. SCORE: ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Organizational Sustainability	Score		Ambition OCE score
	Participants	Consultants	
Financial sustainability	1.0	1.0	4.0
Organizational management, programming, and sustainability	1.0	1.0	4.0
Organizational financial management	4.0	3.5	4.0
Institutionalization of gender equality	3.0	2.5	4.0
Advocacy and Networking for women rights	3.0	2.0	4.0
Average	2.4	2.0	4.0



4.7.2. FINDINGS: ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

COMPARISON OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY TO BASELINE AND ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

Financial sustainability

(financial sustainability was not assessed during baseline)

The organization has not yet developed a sustainability plan, though sustainability strategies are outlined in the strategic plan. Only project funding is the major funding source. The ED stated that they have plan to develop sustainability plan.

Organizational management, programming, and sustainability

Indicator 1110

Baseline Findings	Progress
Organizational management capacity of AKS has major gaps. It has no strategic plan, no resource mobilization and fundraising strategy.	The situation has been improved; especially in financial management but still there is major capacity gaps in program management. Resource mobilization and fundraising strategy yet to be developed. The organization's organizational management capacity is at basic level.

Organizational financial management

Part of indicator 1110

Baseline Findings	Progress
AKS has an inadequate financial management system. Financial management system is dependent on project and donor prescribed rules and procedures.	AKS has made significant progress compared to the baseline findings. They have developed all necessary policies and procedures and implement them regularly. The organization's financial management capacity is rated as strong according to participants' scores, but ranges from moderate to strong based on the consultant's score.

Institutionalization of gender equality

Indicator 1210

Baseline Findings	Progress
Institutionalization of gender has several facets. AKS has a gender policy which could not be accessed. The policy does not have strategy. Understanding of gender and practice of gender understanding therefore	AKS's gender policy is comprehensive and knowledge about gender equality is adequate but the skill of institutionalizing gender equality is somehow limited. AKS needs to embed



remains uncertain. It has been clearly stated that the organization has no capacity to make gender-focused investment, human or material resource.	practices, policies, and a culture of equity within the organization. The organization's capacity for institutionalizing gender equality is rated as moderate according to participants' scores, but ranges from basic to moderate based on the consultant's score.
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Advocacy and Networking for women rights

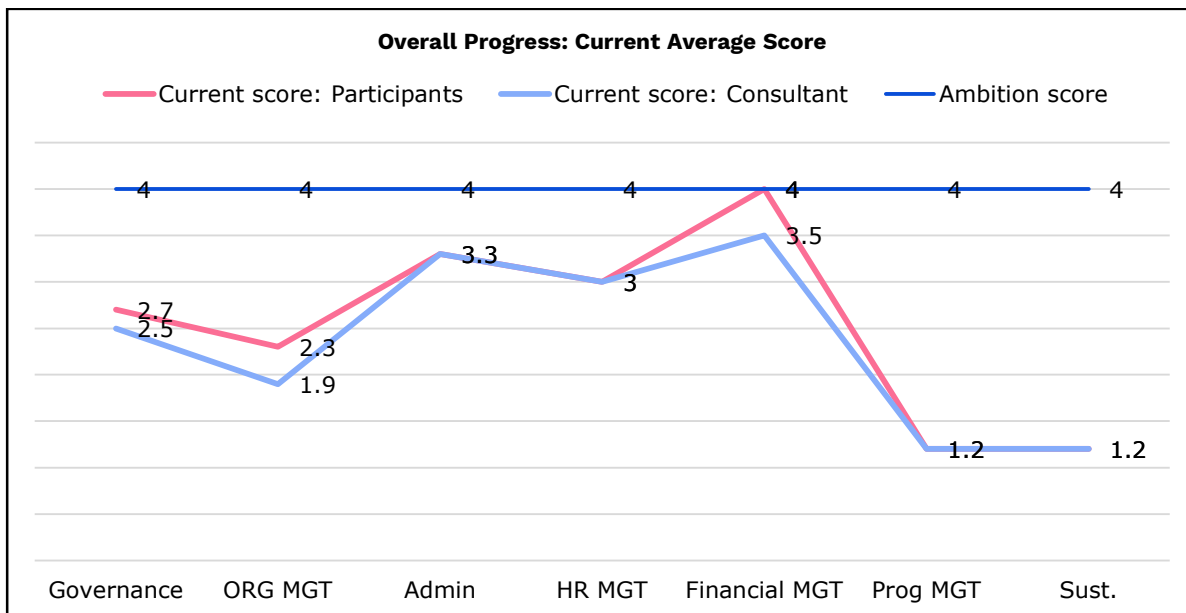
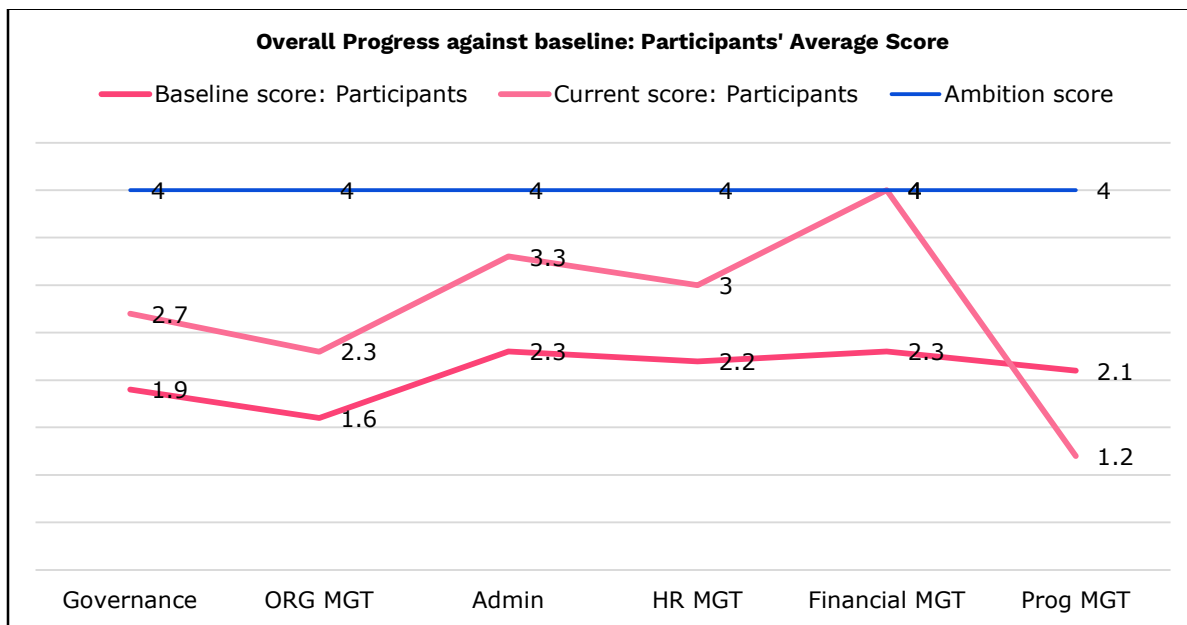
Indicator 1210, 1211, 1212 & 1300

Baseline Findings	Progress
As a WRO, advocacy and networking by AKS needs integration of gender understanding, stakeholders' mapping, and knowledge management system.	AKS holds fair understanding of gender concepts and women rights but the skill to develop advocacy/networking strategy embedding gender equality is limited. The organization's capacity for advocacy and networking is rated as moderate according to participants' scores, but it is at basic level based on the consultant's score.



5. Summary of the Baseline and Current OCE Score:

Sections	Baseline score (average)		Current score (average)		Ambition OCE score
	Participants	Consultants	Participants	Consultants	
Governance	1.9	1.5	2.7	2.5	4.0
Organizational Management	1.6	1.5	2.3	1.9	4.0
Administration	2.3	1.3	3.3	3.3	4.0
Human Resource Management	2.2	2.2	3.0	3.0	4.0
Financial Management	2.3	2.0	4.0	3.5	4.0
Programme Management	2.1	1.2	1.2	1.2	4.0
Total average	2.1	1.6	2.8	2.6	4.0
Organizational Sustainability	NA	NA	2.4	2.0	4.0



6. Feminist approach

Participation: Comprehensive involvement of men, women, and adolescents from various ethnicities within the community.

Inclusion: Inclusion of masculinity and people from various religions and ethnicities.

Empowerment: Efforts are made to enable women to make their own decisions and choices.

6.1. Perception of AKS About Feminist Approach

AKS is a feminist learning organization. For them, a feminist approach means addressing gender-based violence (GBV), supporting women through affirmative actions, creating an enabling environment for marginalized women to express their opinions, and empowering them to make decisions. Another key aspect of their feminist approach is changing the masculinity mindset, particularly among men, towards women, and enabling women to prevent GBV. AKS also believes that a feminist approach involves breaking traditional power practices and hierarchical attitudes. As a feminist and human rights organization, AKS prioritizes work for justice.

The ED said, the word feminist approach is very new, and I heard it since the MJF funded project started. I am still learning about feminism.

The PC emphasized that, at all levels of the organization, we need more training and capacity-building support to understand this feminist approach.

The ED said, I never try to be a boss; I aim to be friendly with the employees. Instead of calling them to my desk, I go to theirs, making sure they feel comfortable approaching me. I want to create an atmosphere where I am both a mother and a friend to them. For instance, we have a Muslim colleague, so we stop music and other programs during the call to prayer (azan). We also celebrate everyone's birthday at the office, and I take an interest in their family problems and successes.

The feminism described by AKS can be referred to as **"Intersectional Feminism."**

Intersectional feminism acknowledges and addresses the multiple and overlapping social identities and related systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination. It goes beyond gender equality to include a focus on issues such as race, class, sexual orientation, and other social determinants that intersect and affect women's experiences and opportunities. This approach is holistic, aiming to empower marginalized women, challenge traditional power dynamics, and promote justice and human rights for all.

Example of empowering women: In Talukder Para, the rate of gender-based violence (GBV) is comparatively high. AKS developed a group of women called the "Lathial Women Group," trained to use sticks as weapons. They alert every household after 8:00 pm and enforce a ban on alcohol consumption and tourist activities after this time to prevent violence. As a result, violence against women has decreased, and women in the area are now empowered and most of the girls attend.



The Project Coordinator said, we include women, Karbari women, and adolescent girls, as well as Union Parishad chairpersons and social workers, in training and workshops on gender equality and women's rights. This allows men and women to exchange experiences and understand each other. We also send community women to national events to empower them. For instance, we sent 25 Karbari women to the IFES seminar.

6.2. Challenges in Promoting the Feminist Approach

The most challenging aspect is changing the masculine attitudes of men. According to the ED, many male staff members silently resist accepting women as leaders for programs or events. However, continuous informal mentorship from the ED is helping to shift these mindsets.

The ED shared that a male staff member observed significant discrimination against women in his family and community, seeing it as normal since childhood. He acknowledged needing time to change his own views but has started addressing discrimination against women and girls within his family.

The ED also noted that many women in superstitious and patriarchal indigenous communities are illiterate and believe that hard work might lead to being reborn as a man. Discussing women's rights in such contexts is challenging. Nevertheless, through the MJF project and other initiatives, discussions and mentoring are being used to sensitize beneficiaries about gender-based violence and how to address these issues.

Systematic barriers related to religious and ethnic minorities are being addressed through dialogue and tailored solutions. The key gap in the current feminist approach is acceptance among stakeholders. Capacity building is crucial for improvement.

Additionally, appointing a program coordinator for the project has been challenging. Most qualified candidates were men, so an inexperienced woman was appointed, requiring significant time for skill development.



6.3. Feminist Approach in Organization: Score

A feminist approach in financial management emphasizes equity, inclusion, and gender sensitivity in decision-making, budgeting, and resource allocation. These aspects were evaluated in the other five sections. Excluding these elements from financial management practices keeps them neutral or traditional, rather than actively promoting feminist values of equity, inclusion, and justice. As a result, Financial Management was not included in the score sheet.

Feminist approach in Governance	Participants	Consultants	Ambition OCE score
Vision/mission	2.0	1.5	4.0
Organizational Structure	3.0	3.0	4.0
Board composition and responsibility	2.0	2.0	4.0
Succession planning	2.0	1.0	4.0
Average	2.4	2.1	4.0

Feminist approach in Organizational management	Participants	Consultants	Ambition OCE score
Strategic plan	2.0	2.0	4.0
Annual plan	3.0	2.0	4.0
Annual report	3.0	2.0	4.0
Knowledge management	1.0	1.0	4.0
Stakeholders' involvement	3.0	3.0	4.0
Strategy for fund raising	1.0	1.0	4.0
Internal communication	2.0	2.0	4.0
Decision making	4.0	2.5	4.0
Average	3.6	2.6	4.0

Administration	Participants	Consultants	Ambition OCA score
Operational Procedures and Systems	3.0	2.5	4.0
Gender and Culture	3.5	3.5	4.0
Average	3.3	3.0	4.0

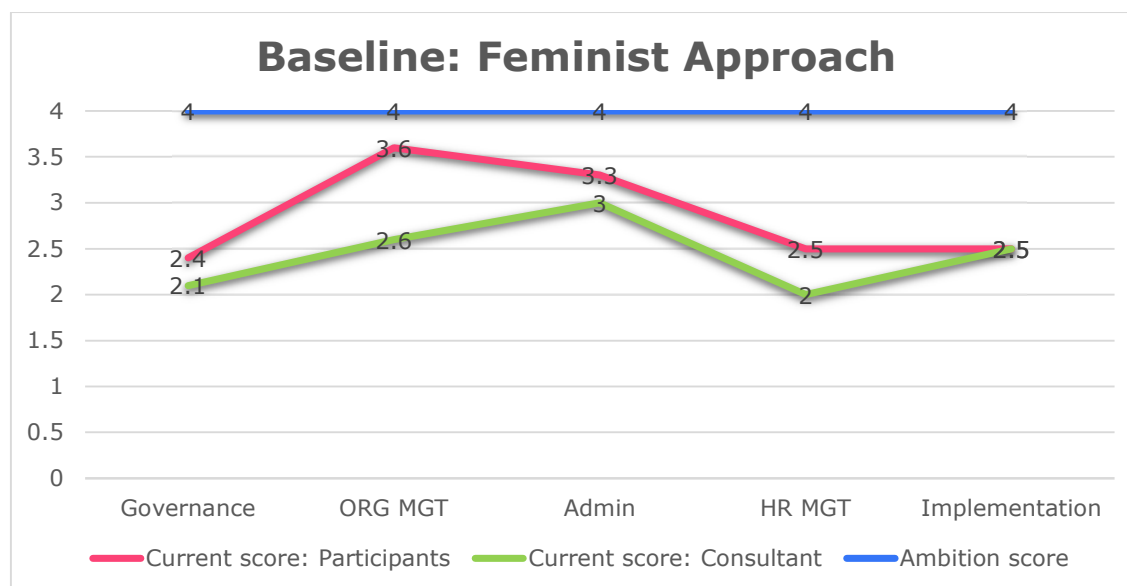
Feminist approach in Human Resource Management	Participants	Consultants	Ambition OCA score
Job description	3.0	2.0	4.0
Recruitment and Retention	2.0	2.0	4.0
Average	2.5	2.0	4.0



Programme Management	Current Score		Ambition OCA score
	Participants	Consultants	
Standards for project implementation	3.5	3.5	4.0
Advocacy and networking	1.5	1.5	4.0
Average	2.5	2.5	4.0

6.4. Summary of OCA score: feminist approach

Feminist approach in	Current score (average)		Ambition OCA score
	Participants	Consultants	
Governance	2.4	2.1	4.0
Organizational Management	3.6	2.6	4.0
Administration	3.3	3.0	4.0
Human Resource Management	2.5	2.0	4.0
Program Management	2.5	2.5	4.0
Total average	2.9	2.4	4.0



6.5. Reflection of feminist approach among beneficiaries

FINDINGS

Through an FGD with a group of members, it was revealed that their confidence has significantly increased. Empowerment was evident in their confident speech, appearance, body language, and gestures. Many participants acknowledged that adverse social norms towards women have significantly changed in their community and surroundings, although some noted that there is still a long way to go to fully break these norms.

Most members expressed that economic stability has elevated their status and reduced GBV. They now participate in family decisions, and their opinions are respected. The participants emphasized the interconnectedness of rights and empowerment, acknowledging that AKS interventions have brought about substantial changes in their lives.

Additionally, they shared some challenges with AKS interventions and provided recommendations for improvement.

The opinions were coded as follows:

Thematic code	Opinions	Number of opinions in category	Percentage of opinions
Confidence	• Economic Solvency Enhances Confidence	2	5.13
	• Knowledge Enhances Confidence	2	5.13
	Confidence	4	5.13
Empowerment	• Economic Independence Enhances Decision-Making Power	2	5.13
	• Respect for Opinions	3	7.7
	• Economic Empowerment Reduces GBV and Establishes Women's Rights	1	2.56
	• Establishing Women's Rights Leads to Empowerment	9	23.08
	Empowerment	15	12.82
Social norm	• Ongoing Efforts Needed to Break Social Norms	4	10.25
	• Changes in Social Norms	2	5.13
	Social norm:	6	7.69
AKS intervention	• Beneficial	6	15.04
	• Challenging	5	12.08
	• Recommendation	3	7.7
	AKS intervention:	14	11.60
	Total number of opinions	39	

To calculate the percentages for each thematic code based on the provided counts, following formula has been used:

$$\text{Percentage} = \left(\frac{\text{Number of opinions in category}}{\text{Total number of opinions}} \right) \times 100$$



ANALYSIS OF THEMATIC OPINIONS

The analysis of thematic opinions reveals a multifaceted impact of interventions aimed at empowering women. Economic empowerment, awareness, and continuous efforts to change social norms are pivotal in enhancing confidence, securing women's rights, and fostering respect for their opinions. The feedback underscores the effectiveness of AKS interventions while also highlighting areas that require ongoing attention and improvement.

CONFIDENCE

- **Economic Solvency Enhances Confidence** (5.13%): Economic empowerment is seen as a vital factor in building confidence among members, enabling them to take more active roles in decision-making processes.
- **Knowledge Enhances Confidence** (5.13%): Raising awareness about their rights and opportunities significantly boosts the confidence of the members, making them more assertive in their personal and professional lives.

EMPOWERMENT

- **Economic Independence Enhances Decision-Making Power** (5.13%): Economic independence not only boosts confidence but also enhances decision-making power within families and communities.
- **Respect for Opinions** (7.7%): The increasing respect for women's opinions within their families and communities is a significant indicator of their growing empowerment.
- **Economic Empowerment Reduces GBV and Establishes Women's Rights** (2.56%): Economic independence is recognized as a key element in combating gender-based violence (GBV) and securing women's rights.
- **Establishing Women's Rights Leads to Empowerment** (23.08%): A strong emphasis is placed on the establishment of women's rights as a foundation for their overall empowerment.

SOCIAL NORMS

- **Ongoing Efforts Needed to Break Social Norms** (10.26%): There is a clear acknowledgment that continuous efforts are required to dismantle deeply ingrained social norms that hinder women's progress.
- **Changes in Social Norms** (5.13%): Positive changes in social norms are being observed, reflecting the impact of sustained advocacy and awareness initiatives.

OPINION ABOUT AKS INTERVENTION

- **Beneficial** (15.04%): A significant portion of participants found AKS interventions to be highly beneficial, contributing positively to their confidence, status, and overall empowerment.
- **Challenging** (12.08%): Some participants identified challenges within the AKS interventions, indicating areas where improvements are needed.
- **Recommendations** (7.7%): Participants provided constructive recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of AKS interventions, highlighting the need for continuous improvement and adaptation to better meet their needs.



REMARKS BY THE FGD PARTICIPANTS ABOUT

EMPOWERMENT

- I have been here from the beginning. I was afraid to talk in front of people. With the support of AKS, I bought a sewing machine with the support. I earn money from sewing clothes. I bought a cow with my income. I sold that cow this Eid. Now I am not afraid.
- I don't ask my mother when I go to college, meetings, or clubs. My parents want to know my opinion when they purchase any gift for a relative's marriage/program. I can make all decisions in my family as I am the breadwinner. I can purchase goods of my choice with my income.
- I did not know how to raise my voice. After joining here, I learned how to raise my voice. I stopped a child marriage and dowry. I bought a goat, and it gave birth to two kids. My cousin's marriage was fixed last year. Before the marriage, the groom demanded 3 lakh taka for his business. When I heard that, I went to the police station and complained about it. The police have not yet arrested them, but the marriage was stopped.
- In our religious program (pujo), I can give opinions to community on decorating the pujo bedi and mandop, decorating the marriage stage.
- I think everyone has the right to do what they want. In our area, there is one woman who wears clothes like a man and cuts her hair like a man. She didn't change her sex, but her attitude is like a man. I used to laugh at her. Now I don't laugh at her. I think she has the right to do what she wants.
- I learned how to talk with people. I can talk with people now. I learned about women empowerment, the disadvantages of child marriage, and gender. I went to Rangamati from here, which is a great achievement for me. I can make decisions about myself: what I read, where I go, what I do, etc. I stopped a child marriage in our area with the help of AKS. I learned sewing and I sew my own clothes. I want to study more and work in an NGO.
- In our area, there were no women in meetings/shalish; now, women are included in social meetings/shalish.
- Before, people gossiped when we went outside; now, people take it easily. Our family members also go with us to meetings and see that it is for a good reason. Now, our families insist we do what we want.

SOCIAL NORMS

- In our area, most people are Muslim. We cannot wear clothes by choice. But if we don't wear burkhas, people still bully us. We don't like to wear burkhas, but we need to wear them because of society.
- There are a few boys in our neighbourhood who sexually harassed us. I told my friends not to talk with them. My father has two marriages. I am always afraid of my father; he always tortured my mother. I don't like my father.
- There are still differences between men and women. Not all women can go outside when they want. There is a patriarchal view of people. There have security problems. Parents still fear for their daughters' security. Men get more priority than women. Especially in villages, women are not treated like men. What we know from joining here, the other communities don't know because they do not get the training our community received.



AKS INTERVENTIONS BENEFITTING THEM

- We can get other training from different places, but gender training and women empowerment training we will not get from anywhere else. That is very important to know. It changes our view and life.
 - We learn from monthly meetings, but we cannot see anything. If AKS use slides and videos in the meetings, it would be more effective.
-

AKS INTERVENTIONS CHALLENGING FOR THEM

- AKS don't ask us about program design but ask us about the participants—who would be good for this program, who can join, etc.
 - Getting a loan is a challenge
 - Without getting a certificate from the king, we cannot get a job
 - Limited seats for the training
-

RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT AKS INTERVENTIONS

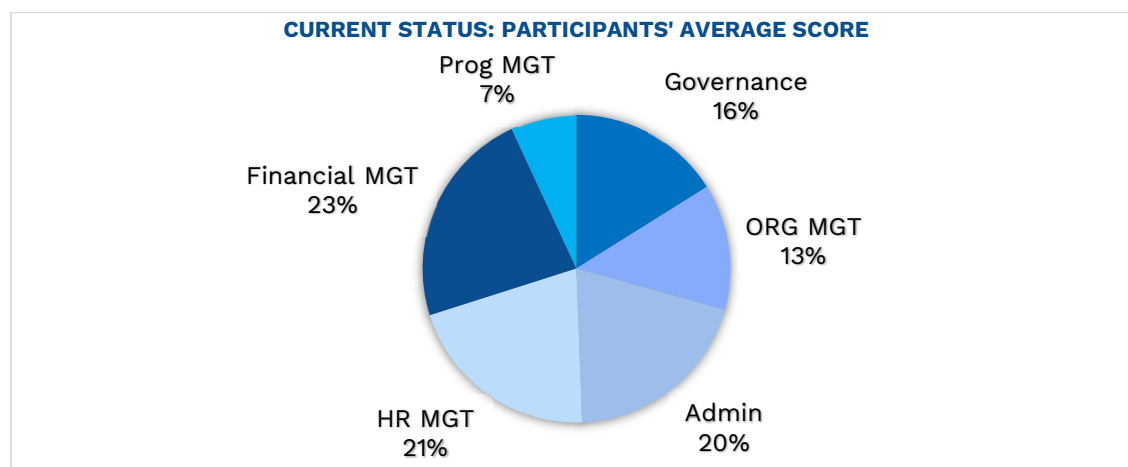
- if guardians are involved in the meetings, it will be good. Then the family will learn to support their children
 - The training I received from the project; I want to provide that training to the community.
 - We can tell the girls what we learn, but we cannot provide training to the community.
 - If the project provides sewing training and karate, it will be good.
 - There are some games in the meetings and cultural programs that we like the most. AKS intervention.
-



7. Conclusions

7.1. Strong areas and areas for improvement

Analysis of information from workshops, interviews, and documents led to the identification of key areas where AKS has made progress and where further strengthening is needed.



STRONG AREAS

AKS's strongest areas include well-aligned policy procedures, particularly in financial management, human resources, and administration. However, other practices, such as internal communication and decision-making processes, remain undocumented. While staff opinions are considered in decision-making, the specific levels of staff involvement are not clearly defined, leading to an ad-hoc approach that can introduce bias. The ED mentioned that informality fosters a friendly environment, but formalizing these processes is essential for consistency.

PROMISING AREAS

Advocacy and networking present challenges for AKS due to the lack of aligned organizations. AKS should explore alternative advocacy strategies, although its stakeholder involvement and beneficiary support are commendable. Efforts to uplift community members to board positions are positive, but mentoring these board members about the organization and its operations is crucial. Board members, especially the EC, should focus on fundraising, overseeing operations, and controlling financial management.

AREAS FOR ATTENTION

Conceptual clarity is needed for AKS to decide whether it wants to be known as a human rights organization, a gender learning organization, or a feminist learning organization. This decision will guide the alignment of policies, practices, systems, culture, programs, and resources.

LEAST STRONG AREAS

One area for improvement is mainstreaming gender equality. AKS has policies and a gendered culture, but actions are primarily affirmative, lacking gender programming, gender budgeting, and transformative approaches. AKS needs to clearly define its feminist approach, distinguishing between women-focused, gender equality, and feminist approaches, and ensure this is reflected in all policies and practices.

Program Management need structured planning, guidelines, and strategies, particularly in M&E systems and quality assurance. Considering the organization's age, succession planning,



sustainability planning, and a fundraising plan are vital. Vision, mission, goals, objectives, annual plans, and annual reports should all be aligned. Documentation is important for effective knowledge management.

Based on score of the self-assessment, following are the least strong areas of the organization which may be considered as priority areas in planning intervention

Governance	Score
Board composition and responsibility	2.0
Succession planning	2.0
Organizational Management	Score
Strategic plan	2.0
Annual plan	2.0
Annual report	2.0
Knowledge management	2.0
Strategy for funding resources	1.0
Internal communication	2.0
Human Resource Management	Score
Recruitment and Retention	2.0
Programme and Project Implementation	Score
Standards for project implementation	1.0
Advocacy & Networking	1.0
Internal supervision	2.0
M&E	1.0
Quality Assurance	1.0

7.2. Recommendations

BOARD COMPOSITION AND RESPONSIBILITY:

- Provide orientation for board members to clarify their responsibilities.
- Ensure the board includes members with diverse perspectives, including intersectional, sectoral, or class-based representation.

SUCCESSION PLANNING:

- Develop and implement a succession plan focused on cultivating second-line women leaders.

STRATEGIC PLAN, ANNUAL PLAN, AND ANNUAL REPORT:

- Break down the strategic plan into an operational plan that aligns with the annual plan.
- Ensure the annual report is aligned with the annual plan and clearly identifies and mainstreams the feminist approach.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:

- Develop a comprehensive knowledge management strategy and process documentation.
- Document and manage knowledge related to feminist theories and practices.



STRATEGY FOR FUNDING RESOURCES:

- Develop a strategic plan for securing funding.
- Prioritize core actions based on the needs and priorities of target beneficiaries.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION:

- Develop an internal communication strategy to enhance information flow and engagement.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION:

- Create a retention strategy to maintain staff and introduce mentoring programs to develop leadership skills.

STANDARDS FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION:

- Develop guidelines and standards to ensure consistent and effective project implementation.

ADVOCACY AND NETWORKING:

- Given the limited presence of women's rights organizations, develop alternative advocacy strategies to address this gap.

INTERNAL SUPERVISION:

- Implement supportive supervision practices, establish a two-way feedback mechanism, and provide clear guidance.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

- Establish metrics and benchmarks to monitor progress on gender equality initiatives.
- Regularly review and report on progress, using data to inform adjustments to policies and practices.

QUALITY ASSURANCE:

- Develop a robust quality assurance framework to ensure high standards across all activities and initiatives.



7.3. Template for action planning

Action Area	Major Strategy	Activities	Period		
			2024-2025	2026	2027
Area: Governance					
Board Composition and Responsibility	• Mechanism for orienting members about organizational operations and roles and responsibility. • Develop membership criteria including inclusiveness				
Succession planning	• Develop and implement a succession plan • Develop mechanism for growing second-line women leaders.				
Area: Organizational Management					
Strategic Plan, Annual Plan, and Annual Report	• Break down the strategic plan into an operational plan • Align annual report with the annual plan • Incorporate feminist approach into strategy				
Knowledge Management	• Develop knowledge management strategy and process documentation. • Develop process of creating knowledge base on feminist theories.				
Strategy for funding resources	• Develop a strategic plan for securing funding.				
Recruitment and Retention	• Develop a staff retention strategy				
Area: Program Management					
Standards for Project Implementation:	• Develop guidelines and standards				
Advocacy and Networking	• Develop alternative advocacy strategies				
Internal Supervision	• Develop process for supportive supervision practices				
Monitoring and Evaluation	• Develop monitoring system				
Quality Assurance	• Develop a quality assurance framework				



7.4. Participants

MDF Facilitator	AKS Participants
Saifuddin Mahmud Mushfique Ara Shimul	OCE Workshop: 2nd and 3rd July 2024
	Participants 1. Dawnai Prue Naly, Executive Director 2. Akhyai Mong, Program Director 3. Ukya Sing Marma, Deputy Program Director 4. Lallian kim Diana, Program Coordinator 5. Aung kya Ching Marma, Finance & Admin Officer (WVL-B Project) 6. Py May Ching Marma, Program Officer 7. Pausing Mro, Community Facilitator 8. Kulsuma Akter, Community Facilitator
	KII: 3rd July 2024
	Participants 1. Dawnai Prue Naly, Executive Director 2. Painmrau Marma, Board Member 3. Lallian kim Diana, Program Coordinator 4. Aung kya Ching Marma, Finance & Admin Officer (WVL-B Project)
	FGD: 3rd July 2024
	Participants 1. Jodi Bawm 2. Yeasmin Akter 3. Any Ki Ki U Marma 4. Sapla Chuki 5. Khumi Prue 6. may U marma 7. Sajeda Akter 8. Nu hla may 9. Liza Akter





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