# Bangladesh



**Organization:** Footsteps Bangladesh
**Location:** Kurigram and Nilphamari Districts, Bangladesh
**Solution:** Empowering women in converting flood disaster into economic opportunity in Bangladesh
**Factsheet Period:** First round of UNDP AFCIA funding (16 months); Second round of UNDP AFCIA funding (12 months)




**An initiative supporting women in Bangladesh develops portable filters to clean water @Footsteps Bangladesh**

In Bangladesh, women and girls are over ten times more likely than men to collect water for their households, which increases their vulnerability to safety risks while traveling long distances and reduces the time available for education or income-generating activities (UNICEF and WHO, 2023).This risk is especially significant due to the floods that submerge almost 25% of the country annually (LSE, 2023). To provide access to drinking water during a crisis, Footsteps Bangladesh has designed and distributed the 'Dreamwater' filter, a portable device that cleans 15,000 litres of water with its five stage UV and ultrafiltration process, removing 99.99% of contaminants. The solution empowers women from low-income, rural communities to become entrepreneurs, using the device for household use, disaster response and water entrepreneurship.

## Key achievements

- Deployed Dreamwater portable filters on the ground with an enhanced filtration system to process 25,000 litres per cycle, with advanced nano silver cartridges for contaminant removal
- Conducted 35 successful awareness sessions covering behavioural changes, disaster resilience, and adoption of safe drinking water and the Dreamwater Portable Filter, engaging over 4,000 community members
- Trained more than 100 women as Dreamwater entrepreneurs, providing them with a monthly income of up to US$98 through the sales of clean water
- Provided up to 400 litres of filtered water per day during Kurigram flooding in July 2024, where Dreamwater entrepreneurs were the first responders to the crisis
- Benefited approximately 2,316 individuals with access to treated surface water

## Social impact

- Boosting the social and economic status of women as first responders to disaster and entrepreneurs in their local communities
- Improving health outcomes through clean drinking water
- Strengthening community resilience during times of flooding







## Adaptation benefits

- Providing vulnerable communities with a reliable source of clean, drinkable water, especially during flooding season in flood-prone areas
- Training communities for flood and cyclone preparedness to increase climate resilience

## Innovation

- Filters have been upgraded with a significantly lighter and more compact model, improving distribution and accessibility for women
- An advanced filtration system provides clean water access in times of crisis and emergency

## Replication potential

- The portable filter technology is scalable and can be deployed internationally in areas with low access to drinking water
- The curriculum of climate awareness sessions can be replicated and adapted in other communities with similar contexts

## Funding snapshot

- UNDP-AFCIA grant: US$ 235,000 (initial grant: $125,000; Scaling grant: $110,000)

| Investability | |
|---|---|
| Revenue per year | 67 devices have been sold, creating $12,000 in revenue (50% profit margin). |
| Sustaining criteria | The initiative's operations are predominantly funded by grant funding. Expected to generate revenue from device sales and renting from 2026. |
| Financial innovation | Exploring microcredit schemes for women to purchase Dreamwater filters and sell filtered water to their local communities. |
| Expected return | Projected to reach US$430,000 in revenue by 2030, driven by a dual revenue strategy based on direct sales and rental of portable water filters. |

ADAPTATION FUND Climate Innovation Accelerator

ADAPTATION FUND

To read their story, visit UNDP-AFCIA

To watch their video, click here

To contact the initiative, visit Footsteps Bangladesh