

# FINLAND: VOICES FROM THE FIELD

## Nepal



“When women are financially independent, they no longer have to be dependent on the men in their families.”

– Pushpa Sunar

**Pushpa Sunar** is employed in a community kitchen and her monthly income has been critical to sustaining her family during the COVID-19 pandemic.

With generous financial support from Finland, UN Women has been working with its partners to incorporate gender equality and social inclusion into Nepal’s responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has included practical measures, such as ensuring that vulnerable and excluded groups of women have access to food and nutrition through women-managed community kitchens across Nepal.

## Kenya



“I was discouraged from contesting...But I continued working with the community, I had the requirements.”

– Elizabeth Ruwa

**Elizabeth Ruwa** was appointed as a Member of the County Assembly (MCA) for Kwale, Kenya. Even with her involvement in local politics and community development over ten years, as well as her proven abilities to deliver for her community, she continues to face barriers to her political participation.

Through UN Women’s Women in Leadership Programme, supported by the Government of Finland, Elizabeth is further developing her leadership skills, while her community will benefit from dialogues to transform restrictive patriarchal norms.

## Fiji



“There is a need for female peacekeepers.”

— *Captain Anaseini Navua Vuniwaqa*

**Captain Anaseini Navua Vuniwaqa** of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces participated in the ninth edition of the Female Military Officers’ Course. The course aimed to bridge the gender gap in UN peacekeeping. Women currently represent only four per cent of the more than 80,000 UN Peacekeepers, despite their key role in preventing sexual violence during and after conflict, and their unique abilities to engage with the communities they serve, especially women and girls. “In the training, we learned about conflict-related sexual violence, about victims of war. And in war, women and children are classified under the most vulnerable people. They are the ones who are the most affected because when men are busy going out to war in certain conflict areas, the women are the ones who are left behind and they are not armed”, said Captain Vuniwaga.

## Morocco



“Advocating women’s right to equal representation in the decision making process is not only our duty towards women, it is our duty to our countries.”

— *Rula Alhroob*

UN Women, with funding from Finland, is supporting the programme “Citizenship, Leadership and Participation: New Pathways for Arab Women” with the goal of increasing women’s leadership and participation in the Arab States Region. In Morocco, five regional conferences were organized, which significantly strengthened the capacities of 3,248 elected women and future candidates in women’s leadership and decision-making. An increase in the number of female lawmakers in the country has led to significant legislative reforms related to anti-discrimination, domestic violence, family codes, inheritance, and child support and protection.

Photos: above left: UN Women/Caitlin Gordon-King; above right: Kimja Vanderheyden