



# YOUR IMPACT THROUGH HEALTH

IMPACT REPORT, MARCH 2020

## 4,559

women have been trained as **health leaders** in Asia

## 5,756,229

**community members are being reached** with better health and sanitation knowledge

This project is supported by the Australian Government through the Australian NGO Cooperation Program (ANCP).

An estimated 70 per cent of common illnesses in developing countries are preventable. But limited access to healthcare services and lack of basic sanitation knowledge mean many preventable illnesses continue to prevail. Thanks to your support, Opportunity International Australia's program partners in India and Indonesia, and recently in Bangladesh, are empowering women as health leaders. These women, having begun their journey as small loan recipients, elect to participate in basic health, hygiene and nutrition education which they share with community members. The health leader solution helps families on their journey out of poverty with improved health education and access to better quality healthcare.

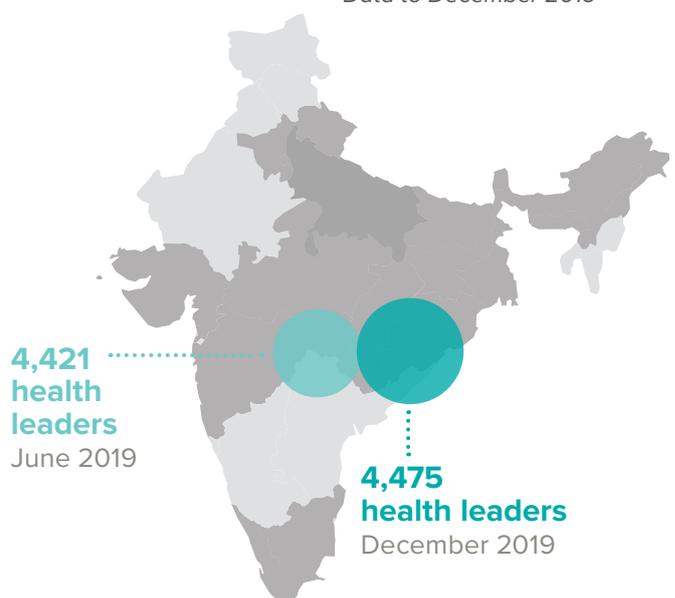
*Data to December 2019*

## INDIA REPORT

### HIGHLIGHTS

Education on health, hygiene and nutrition provided by the Community Health Leaders has been well-received, and community members have changed their behaviour, resulting in **improved health and cleaner neighbourhoods**. The digital literacy of the Health Leaders is improving through the program and some are now using the messaging application WhatsApp to receive health messages that are informed by Opportunity's program partners.

The Health Leader training slowed slightly over the past six-months as more focus was placed on strengthening the Health Entrepreneur and Basic Care Provider pilots. 215 Health Leaders **continue to earn income through the Health Entrepreneur pilot program**, selling basic sanitation products such as soap, which support change in behaviour like handwashing that is needed to prevent illness in communities.



106 Health Leaders have been trained as Basic Care Providers, equipping them to provide basic emergency assistance.

## LESSONS

The key to sustained income generation through selling health-related products depends heavily on securing reliable supplies of those products that also need to be accessible and affordable for the health entrepreneurs. Buying stock up-front presents a big risk and barrier for the health

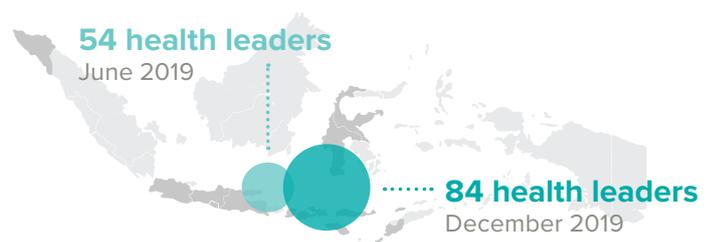
entrepreneurs given their low savings and the delayed return on their investment. The pilot is continuing to explore product suppliers and community demand to develop a scaled and sustainable supply chain that helps these women earn health-related incomes.

## INDONESIA REPORT

### HIGHLIGHTS

The program has expanded with **30 new Health Leaders in Indonesia** beginning an initial six-month training program to equip them to deliver health education in local villages. This second cohort of Health Leaders will begin reaching additional community members in 2020. So far, the first cohort of Health Leaders in Indonesia has **reached 162,479 community members with health and sanitation education**.

Work has begun on digital data collection tools using tablets or phones to gather information on the people benefitting from the health program.



### LESSONS

Expansion of the program depends on the successful recruitment of staff to train the health leaders, drive scale, manage the program, build links with government bodies, and explore other partnerships, for example with health insurance and telehealth providers.

## BANGLADESH REPORT

### HIGHLIGHTS

On the back of the success of the health program in India and Indonesia, Opportunity began a **new partnership with a large microfinance institution (BURO)** in Bangladesh to provide primary health care to women living in poverty. Offering financial services to more than 1.75 million women living in poverty in every district across Bangladesh, BURO is well placed to expand their offering with the addition of health education to improve the health and wellbeing of millions of families.

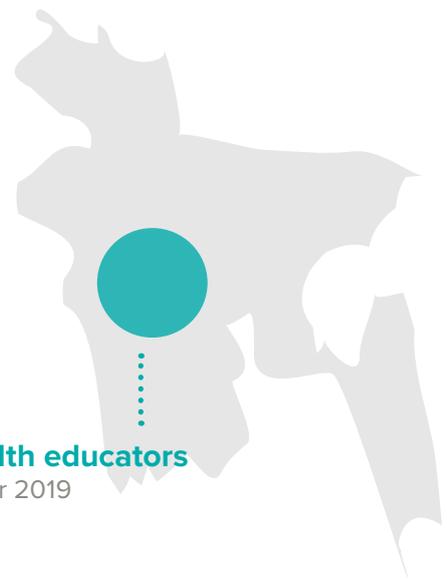
The program was designed by BURO with health curriculum developed for the Bangladeshi context with the support of an expert with previous experience developing community health programs for the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

## HIGHLIGHTS

Using a train-the-trainer model, **180 staff at BURO were trained as Health Educators** to, in turn, equip selected microfinance recipients to become Health Leaders. Health Leaders complete ongoing training with support and mentorship from the BURO Health Educators. In 2020, the women will begin providing health education to an average of 200 households each in their local communities.

## LESSONS

BURO has a long history of providing multi-layered solutions to the families it serves, through microfinance, health, education and other initiatives. The new health partnership will enable BURO to leverage some of its existing health initiatives—which include a hospital and telemedicine pilot—to provide **more integrated health services to more clients**. With the Health Leaders providing health, they can also build community support to use other health initiatives, such as diagnostic and referral services, and low-cost access to doctors.



**180 health educators**  
December 2019

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