



Summary: Means to Lead

Since 2024, Jago Nari Unnayan Sangstha (JNUS), in partnership with SKUS and funded by UN Women, has been implementing the project “Means to Lead: Empowering Rohingya Refugees and Host Community Women through Leadership, Learning, and Self-Reliance,” administering two Multi-Purpose Women Centers (MPWCs)—one in Camp-3, Ukhiya and another in Whykong, Teknaf. The project focuses on building the leadership, vocational skills, and self-reliance of women from both Rohingya refugee and host communities, providing training, mentorship, and income-generating opportunities. Through these efforts, women are empowered to participate actively in community decision-making, gain economic independence, and strengthen social cohesion. By fostering confidence, skills, and resilience among vulnerable women, the project aligns with and advances the mission and vision of JNUS to create sustainable, inclusive, and empowered communities.

Means to Lead: Empowering Women Through Leadership, Learning & Self-Reliance

Funded by UN Women and implemented by Jago Nari Unnayan Sangstha (JNUS) in partnership with SKUS, the Means to Lead project is dedicated to strengthening the leadership, resilience, and economic empowerment of women from the Rohingya refugee and host communities of Cox's Bazar. As a local women-led organization, JNUS brings deep community experience and a gender-responsive approach to ensure women and adolescent girls receive inclusive and meaningful support.



"Learning today, leading tomorrow."
Adult Education Program

By operating two Multi-Purpose Women's Centers (MPWCs) located in Camp-3, Ukhiya, and Whykong, Teknaf, the project reaches some of the most marginalized women from both Rohingya and host communities. The centers provide a wide range of services—from protection and psychosocial support to leadership training, livelihood development, and community engagement.

At the heart of this project lies a commitment to gender equality, dignity, and resilience. The approach is holistic, addressing immediate safety needs while also building long-term capacities to ensure that women can lead meaningful and economically independent lives. As a women-led local organization, JNUS ensures that programming reflects the lived experiences of women and promotes culturally appropriate, community-centered solutions.

The Means to Lead project is more than a set of activities—it is a pathway that helps women move from vulnerability to empowerment, from silence to voice, and from dependency to self-reliance. It aligns strongly with UN Women's global mandate on women's leadership and JNUS's mission to promote justice, equality, and opportunities for all women.

Where We Work

The project operates through two Multi-Purpose Women's Centers (MPWCs):

- Camp-3, Ukhiya (Rohingya community)
- Whykong, Teknaf (Host community)

These centers serve as safe, accessible, and supportive spaces for women and girls.



"Art becomes empowerment." Block batik training brings creativity, confidence, and income opportunities.

Key Activities and Services

1. Skills Development & Livelihood Training

Tailoring, handicrafts, block batik, embroidery

Life-skill sessions and small business development

Market linkage support for women entrepreneurs,



"With every stitch, she sews a new beginning."
Women mastering tailoring skills at the MPWC.



"Dreams begin here." Young girls find confidence and connection through learning sessions at the MPWC.

2. Leadership & Capacity Building

Women's leadership sessions

Confidence building, communication, and decision-making training

Community engagement for women's participation in social structures

3. Protection & Psychosocial Support

Case management and referrals for GBV survivors

Psychological first aid and counseling support

Awareness sessions on safety, rights, and well-being.



"Voices rising for change." Community members connect to understand rights, services, and support systems.



"Threads of courage, colors of hope."
Participants attend tailoring training.

4. Learning & Community Support

Literacy and numeracy classes

Child-friendly and adolescent-friendly engagement activities

Awareness events, group discussions, and peer support circles

5. Information, Services & Access

Information on legal, health, and social services

Referral pathways through coordination with partners

Safe, women-only spaces for learning and interaction.



"One conversation can change a life." Peer to Peer Learning Session.

Name: Sumi Akter (Pseudonym)

Age: 34

Village: Nayapara



Story: Sumi Akter is 34 years old. Within six years of her marriage, her husband passed away, leaving her as the sole earner for her family of four, including her three sons. Despite the hardships, she refused to give up and became the only source of income for her household.

Sumi is an active member of the Self-Help Group under the UN Women-funded project implemented by Jago Nari Unnayan Sanstha (JNUS) at the MPWC center. Through different sessions, she learned that women are not helpless and that, with determination, they can become self-reliant

Today, Sumi engages in agricultural activities, cultivating vegetables and raising cows, goats, and poultry at home. Through her hard work, she manages to support her family and ensure her children's education. She now stands as a symbol of resilience and success, inspiring other women in her community to overcome challenges and lead independent lives

নাম: সুমি আক্তার (ছদ্মনাম)

বয়স: ৩৪

গ্রাম: নয়াপাড়া

গল্প: সুমি আক্তারের বয়স ৩৪ বছর। বিয়ের ৬ বছরের মধ্যেই তার স্বামী মারা যান। তার ৩ ছেলেসহ মোট ৪ জনের পরিবার। পরিবারের সেই একমাত্র উপার্জনক্ষম ব্যক্তি। তিনি un-women project এ জাগো নারী উন্নয়ন সংস্থায় MPWC তে self help group এর একজন মেম্বর। অধিবেশন থেকেই তিনি শিখেছেন নারী অসহায় নয়। একজন নারী চাইলে আত্মনির্ভরশীল হতে পারে। তিনি এখন কৃষি কাজ করেন। সবজির চাষ করেন। বাসায় গরু, ছাগল, মুরগি লালন পালন করেন। এভাবেই তিনি তার ৩ ছেলেকে নিয়ে জীবিকা নির্বাহ করেন। তার সন্তানদেরকে পড়াশোনাও করাচ্ছেন। বর্তমানে তিনি একজন সাফল্যময়ী নারী।

Partnership for Impact

The collaboration between UN Women, JNUS, and SKUS brings together technical expertise, community trust, and a strong commitment to gender equality. UN Women provides strategic leadership and funding, while JNUS and SKUS deliver community-driven, culturally sensitive services through experienced teams on the ground.

Events Organized Under the Project

- Observation of International Women's Day, celebrating women's leadership and achievements
- 16 Days of Activism events, promoting awareness on GBV prevention and protection
- Showcasing Events displaying handmade products crafted by trained women, promoting income opportunities



"Say no to digital violence."
Participating 16 Days of Activism.



"From learning to earning." A powerful showcase of women's creativity and economic transformation.

Achievements:

- Thousands of women and girls have been reached through MPWC services since 2024
- A significant number trained in vocational skills, with earning income independently
- Women actively joining community discussions and decision-making processes
- Improved psychosocial well-being, with enhanced confidence and reduced distress
- Effective GBV case response and safe referrals provided
- Strengthened Rohingya–host community relationships through joint events and skill activities
- Successful product showcases boosting women's visibility and market access



Message from Executive Director



Sheuly Sharma

Executive Director

Jago Nari Unnayon Sangstha (JNUS)

The Means to Lead project reflects our deepest belief at JNUS: when women are empowered, entire communities rise. With the support of UN Women and in partnership with SKUS, we have created safe and transformative spaces in Camp-3 and Whykong, Teknaf, where women and girls can strengthen their voices, build skills, and reclaim control over their futures. Every day, we witness women taking bold steps toward leadership, economic independence, and resilience—proving that empowerment is not an aspiration, but a path they actively walk.

The progress achieved since 2024 is a powerful reminder of what collective commitment can accomplish. Women who once stood at the margins are now earning incomes, making decisions, and shaping community dialogue. Rohingya and host community women are learning together, supporting one another, and building bridges of trust and solidarity. These outcomes highlight the extraordinary strength that emerges when women are given opportunities, respect, and safe spaces to grow.

As we move forward, JNUS remains dedicated to nurturing this momentum. We will continue championing women's leadership, dignity, and self-reliance so that every woman—regardless of circumstance—can rise with confidence and lead with purpose. Means to Lead is more than a project; it is a movement toward a more just, inclusive, and hopeful future for all.