



TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE FINAL EVALUATION PREVENTION OF COVID-19 INFECTION AMONG VULNERABLE WOMEN & GIRLS IN DROUGHT-AFFECTED DISTRICTS (GURUVE & MBIRE) OF MASHONALAND CENTRAL

I. Background

1.1 Introduction

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women implemented a project on 'Prevention of COVID-19 infection among vulnerable women and girls in drought-affected districts (Guruve and Mbire) of Mashonaland Central Province in Zimbabwe' (from April 2022 – March 2023). The project intended to strengthen gender responsive prevention of and response to COVID 19 in Guruve and Mbire through enhancing access to COVID 19 testing and vaccination services, provision of PPE and improving knowledge and attitudes on COVID 19. The project was generously funded by the Government of Japan with the resources amounting to \$US740,740.00.

The project was aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) People Pillar. The project also contributes to the UN Women global Strategic plan on **SP Outcome 4 on Women's equitable access to services, goods and resources**. The objectives of the Project were achieved through collaborations with Government of Zimbabwe, Academic Institutions and civil society.

1.2 Context

More than a year into the Covid-19 pandemic Zimbabwe has recorded over 133 505 COVID-19 cases.¹ The country took a 'whole of government', 'whole of society' approach to respond to the pandemic and began rolling out the COVID-19 vaccination on 22 February 2021 as part of the comprehensive public health pillar of the response. However, despite the roll out of vaccination and other preventative programmes at national level, the extent of reach of these programmes in marginalised and hard to reach communities has been low. Mbire and Guruve districts in Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe are adversely and disproportionately affected by the pandemic due to the underlying impacts of COVID -19, climate induced drought and economic recession. From

¹ Government of Zimbabwe, Ministry of Health, and Child Care (2022) Covid 19 Situation Report 19 September 2022. 2 UNWOMEN (2022) Project Agreement Document - Prevention of COVID-19 infection among vulnerable women and girls in drought-affected districts (Guruve and Mbire) of Mashonaland Central Province in Zimbabwe Page 5 of 17_ Report_19 September 2022

May 26 to August 11, 2021, there was a drastic increase in COVID 19 cases being recorded from 1752 to 7707 in Mashonaland Central according to the Ministry of Health and Childcare situation reports, Guruve being one of the hot spots. Women and girls in the two districts are impacted by gaps both in the supply side of vaccinations and the demand side that hinders communities to make decisions related to vaccine uptake and adopt effective covid-19 prevention strategies. Evidence reveals that Guruve and Mbire districts has vaccinated only 45% of the eligible population. In addition, Covid19 vaccination and prevention in the communities has been affected by secondary waves of the virus and emergence of new and more transmittable variants (Omicron). The vaccine supply side is marred by limited availability of Covid -19 prevention and infection control supplies including PCR test kits. Each district is served by one outreach vehicle, making it difficult to increase accessibility of testing and vaccination services to remote communities within the districts who do not have clinics within the wards. On the other hand, the demand side is affected grossly by vaccine hesitancy and existing gender and social norms affecting update of vaccines. Existing key drivers of vaccine hesitancy include lack of demand generating and awareness raising activities for vaccine rollouts, myths related to risks of infertility in women, impotency in men, or risk of death myths based on religious grounds especially among the apostolic sects prevalent in the area, as well as fear of side effects coupled with limited knowledge on what to expect or medical follow-up if treatment needed.

Control of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) heavily relies on universal access to testing in order to identify who is infected; track them to make sure they do not spread the disease further; and trace those with whom they have been in contact. The recent surge in COVID-19 cases in Zimbabwe is an urgent national public health concern and requires coordinated efforts to facilitate social and behaviour change communication, scale up testing, provide PPE and administer vaccines to all citizens especially women and girls in Guruve and Mbire Rural districts as they are marginalized and secluded from mainstream programmes most of the time. Failure to ensure equal access to relevant information, goods and services for effective prevention of and response to COVID 19 may result in more COVID 19 cases and fatalities among women and girls in rural areas.

2. Description of the project

Following the development of the COVID-19 Vaccine Demand Strategy in April 2021, Zimbabwe has seen an increase in the uptake of the vaccines. This is indeed a commendable achievement towards containment of the pandemic, however overall vaccination and other preventative programs at national level, the extent of reach of these programs in marginalized and hard to reach communities has remained low. Mbire and Guruve districts in Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe are amongst hardest to reach districts, are adversely and disproportionately affected by the Covid 19 pandemic and its underlying impacts which are further compounded by climate induced drought and economic recession. In these two districts women and girls are highly negatively impacted by inequality and gaps both in the access and utilization of available vaccines.

Covid 19 Vaccine uptake and adoption of effective covid-19 prevention strategies were also hindered by both supply and demand related factors. On the supply side, there was limited availability of Covid -19 prevention and infection control supplies including PCR test kits. Each district was served by one outreach vehicle, making it difficult to increase accessibility of testing and vaccination services to remote communities within the districts who do not have clinics within the wards. On the demand side is there were elevated levels of vaccine hesitancy compounded by existing gender and social norms affecting uptake of vaccines. Key drivers of vaccine hesitancy include lack of demand generating and awareness raising activities for vaccine rollouts, myths related to risks of infertility in women, impotency in men, or risk of death myths based on religious grounds especially among the apostolic sects prevalent in the area, as well as fear of side effects coupled with limited knowledge on what to expect or medical follow-up if treatment needed.

2.1. Programme Implementation Strategy

In response to these gaps and as part of ensuring that such hard-to-reach areas have access to Covid-19 prevention services and accessories, UN Women with funding support from the Government of Japan complemented the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) efforts to contain the pandemic. UN Women worked in partnership with Lower Gurove Development Association (LGDA), the GoZ line ministries including Bindura University of Science to implement on the programme on prevention of COVID-19 infection among vulnerable women and girls in Mbire and Gurove Districts. The project aimed is to enhance access to COVID 19 testing and vaccination services, provision of PPE and improving knowledge and attitudes on COVID 19. A baseline assessment was done which helped to track the progress and the contribution that the project has in changing the situation of women and girls in Mbire and Gurove.

2.2. Priorities of the project

The project prioritised strengthening gender responsive prevention of and response to COVID 19 in Gurove and Mbire through enhancing access to COVID 19 testing and vaccination services, provision of PPE and improving knowledge and attitudes on COVID 19 by March 2023.

- Improve distribution of COVID 19 infection control supplies including PCR test kits and Covid 19 vaccinations. With the changing circumstances and guidance from WHO, PCR testing was no longer a priority and the focus was on vaccinations.
- Increase knowledge and understanding on Covid -19 prevention and vaccination through social behavior change strategies to promote uptake of Covid -19 vaccination in Mbire and Gurove districts.
- **500** Vulnerable women and girls in Gurove and Mbire are equipped with knowledge and skills to develop Personal Protective Equipment (i.e., face masks, sanitizers and soap) with the support of Bindura University and Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender, Small and Medium Enterprises Development.

3. Purpose (and use of the evaluation)

3.1 Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess progress towards achievement of goals and objectives of the Project at district levels and how it contributes to the national level against the standard evaluation principles of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and outcome since its inception in April 2022. The overall purpose of the evaluation is to provide an in-depth assessment of the results against the outcomes of the project and performance in terms of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact. The evaluation is expected to identify lessons learned, good practices, and factors that facilitated/hindered achievement. Through this, it aims to contribute to accountability, learning and decision-making including practical recommendations to inform the management and coordination of future projects related to this thematic area and other related initiatives on humanitarian response.

3.2. Users of the Evaluation

The evaluation report will be used to inform the design of UN Women's future work around humanitarian response and mitigation. Specific users will include the Embassy of Japan (Government of Japan), UN Women Programmes team, government ministries, UN Agencies, development partners Academia and CSOs. UN Women will be specifically responsible for developing management responses and action plans to the evaluation findings and recommendations. The final evaluation report will be made publicly available on the UN Women Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation (GATE) System <http://gate.unwomen.org/>. It will also be disseminated during regional, national and district meetings.

4. Objectives (evaluation criteria and key questions)

The specific objectives of the evaluation are guided by Development Assistance Cooperation (DAC) evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency sustainability and impact. The evaluators will develop specific review questions, samples of which are set out below for each objective. The objectives of the evaluation are to primarily:

Relevance:

- To assess the extent to which the Project has been conceptualised, planned and designed to respond to national, regional and international normative frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment.

The suggested questions for the relevance criterion are;

- How relevant is the project (design, including planned activities and target outputs and outcomes) to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries, national, regional and international priorities?

Effectiveness and Impact:

- To assess progress in achieving planned project goal, outcomes and outputs stated in the project document, any intended and unintended effects on gender equality, women's rights, including the use of innovative approaches.
- To assess whether the project reached the targeted beneficiaries at the project goal and outcome levels and the extent to which the project generated positive changes in the lives of targeted and untargeted in relation to issues of project addressed by this Project? What are the key changes in the lives of those women?
- Assess the replicability of the Project at national scale, the ownership of the Project by the government and the contribution of the Project in building the capacity of the government to drive the gender equality and women's rights. The evaluation will also assess the contribution of the Project in strengthening the capacity of partners in complementing government efforts and collaboration.
- To identify and document any key contributions and added value of short term and long term intended and unintended, positive and negative effect of the project.
- To document the benefits of the project to society.
- To document the Most Significant Changes (MSC), if any brought by the Project to date.

The suggested questions for the effectiveness criterion are;

- What are the main effects of project activities (positive and negative, direct or indirect, intended or unintended)? Has the project achieved its planned objectives and results within its specified period?
 - To what extent can the changes/results that have been achieved be attributed to the inputs, strategies, actions and outputs of the project?
- Has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country?
- What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the Project objectives?

Efficiency:

- To measure how economically the project resources/inputs were converted to results, considering inputs and outputs i.e. assessing value for money and management of the budget. The evaluation will assess whether the Project's strategies and interventions deliver Value for money. Document examples of cases in the project where Value for money successes and/or failures are evident.

The suggested questions for the criterion are;

- Has the project implementation strategy and execution been economical, efficient and cost effective? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?

- To what extent does the management structure of the intervention support efficiency for project implementation?

Sustainability

- To assess sustainability of results as well as document the strategies that have been put in place to ensure sustainability of results. The evaluation will assess the possibility of continuation of benefits accrued to date from the project intervention and recommend any other strategies for sustainability based on lessons learned from other projects and evaluations. The evaluation should consider the following dimensions of sustainability:
- To assess sustainability of the results given the level of ownership generated, effective partnerships established, and capacity strengthened through processes. The evaluation should assess the strategies which have been put in place by UN Women and partners to enhance sustainability and document or present any best practices from within the project or other similar projects.
- Community level sustainability – assess ownership, participation and inclusion of national duty-bearers and rights-holders.

The suggested questions for this criterion are;

- How are the achieved results, especially the positive changes generated by the project in the lives of women and girls, going to be sustained after this project ends.

Gender Equality and Human Rights

- To assess how gender and human rights considerations been integrated into the project design and implementation.
- To review how attention to/integration of gender equality and human rights concerns advanced the area of work?

The suggested questions for this criterion are;

- To what extent has gender and human rights considerations been integrated into the project design and implementation?

5. Scope of the evaluation

5.1. Time frame for the evaluation:

The final evaluation will provide an assessment of the Project from Project inception in **April 2022 to March 2023**.

5.3 Geographical coverage:

The evaluation will be conducted at **provincial and district level**. The evaluator will discuss with stakeholders involved in the project that includes government ministries, CSOs and Academia to observe progress and achievements.

The evaluation will be guided by UN Women Evaluation Policies and United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) guidelines on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in evaluation (<http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1616>) and the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for evaluation. The following key principles will be respected: **national ownership and leadership; fair power relations and empowerment; participation and inclusivity; independency and impartiality; transparency; quality and credibility; innovation.**

6. Evaluation design (process and methods)

The evaluation methodology will be developed by the Consultant and presented for approval to the **Evaluation Reference Group**. The methodology should use a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods and a desk review of Programme overview should be done. It should be utilisation focused, gender responsive and explicitly outline how it will integrate a human rights-based approach and explore the possibility of utilising participatory methods for developing case studies. Data should be disaggregated by sex and according to other relevant parameters.

These complementary approaches will be deployed to ensure that the study:

- responds to the needs of users and their intended use of the evaluation results;
- provides both a substantive assessment of project results, while also respecting gender and human rights principles throughout the evaluation process, allowing for the participation and consultation of key stakeholders (rights holders and duty-bearers) to the extent possible.
- utilises both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods to enhance triangulation of data and increase overall data quality, validity, credibility and robustness and reduce bias and will consider among other processes a desk review, meetings, consultations, workshops with different groups of stakeholders.
- consider data collection instruments and methods for example interviews, observations, focus groups, and site visits.
- take measures to ensure data quality, reliability and validity of data collection tools and methods and their responsiveness to gender equality and human rights

6.1 Data collection methods

Some of the data collection tools to be used during the evaluation are:

- **Desk review**

The Consultant will consult all available documentation in preparation for the review, including Programme documents, minutes of the meetings; quarterly reports, annual reports, assessment reports and Programme implementation and research reports from UN Women implementing partners, and this documentation will be made available in good time.

- **Interviews with Key Informants**

The team will conduct a range of interviews with key informants and stakeholders and will visit and interview relevant stakeholders and key staff at UN Women and Government of Japan.

- **Focus group discussions**

The team will conduct focus group discussions with direct and indirect beneficiaries of the Programme.

- **Significant stories**

During the interview the evaluators will support beneficiaries of the Programme to document their stories on how the Programme has impacted on their lives.

7. Stakeholder participation

Key stakeholders to be considered include UN Women, project partners, the funding partner, MWACSMED and MoHCC and Bindura University. Following UNEG Evaluation guidelines and UN Women Evaluation Policy the evaluation will aim at systematically engaging all key stakeholders throughout the process. The evaluation will establish a management and reference group and members of these groups will be involved at various stages during the evaluation process. This includes, among other things, providing comments on the TOR, reviewing the draft evaluation report, discussing the draft evaluation recommendations, and supporting the utilisation and dissemination of the evaluation findings. Further information on evaluation management arrangements and roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders is provided below in the TOR under Management of the evaluation section.

8. Expected timeframe and deliverables

The expected activities and deliverables for the Midterm evaluation and the estimated number of working days are listed below. The specific number of working days for the evaluation may be adjusted depending on the discussion with the Evaluator.

Activity	Working days
Conduct desk review	4

Drafting and presentation of evaluation inception report, data collection tools and instruments	2
Presentation of the methodology in an inception meeting	1
Field work including presentation and validation of evaluation findings to stakeholders	6
Data Analysis	3
Prepare draft evaluation report	4
Incorporation of feedback and comments from stakeholders and finalize evaluation report	2
Presentation of the findings at a validation workshop to be organised by UN Women.	1
Production of final report incorporating comments from stakeholders	2
TOTAL	25

The evaluation consultant is expected to provide:

Deliverable 1: Present and discuss an Inception Report to the Management Group and Reference Group at an inception meeting. An inception report which contains an **evaluation objectives and scope, description of evaluation, methodology/methodological approach, the evaluation questions**, data collection tools, **data analysis methods, key informants/agencies, detailed work plan and reporting requirements**. It should include a clear evaluation matrix relating all these aspects and a desk review with a list of the documents consulted.

Deliverable 2: First draft report to UN Women. The Draft evaluation report (30 pages max excluding annexes) which should be delivered within the agreed timeframe in the work plan to allow stakeholder discussion of the findings and formulation of recommendations.

Deliverable 3: Submission of second draft report incorporating feedback from the management group.

Deliverable 4: Deliverable 4 will be in two parts i.e. (i) PowerPoint presentation of the second draft report to the management team including feedback from the reference group received through emails and feedback received from the management team. (ii) A template with feedback received from reference group members and how the comments have been addressed and incorporated in developing the draft report.

Deliverable 5: Presentation of the findings at a validation workshop to be organised by UN Women.

Deliverable 6: Production of final report incorporating comments from stakeholders. Final evaluation report (30 pages max excluding annexes) which should be structured as follows:

- Title Page, table of contents, acronyms
- Executive Summary (maximum five pages)
- Purpose of the evaluation
- Evaluation objectives and scope
- Evaluation methodology including consultation structures put in place during the evaluation process

- Context of subject
- Description of the subject
- Findings
- Lessons Learnt
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Annexes (including but not limited to: original Terms of Reference, List of documents reviewed, Data collection tools used, List of UN agencies, implementing partners, staff and other stakeholders consulted).

The evaluation report will follow quality standards outlined in the UNW Global Evaluation Report Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS), available at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/accountability/evaluation/decentralized-evaluations>. The evaluation consultant is expected to familiarize with the evaluation quality standards as they provide the basis for the final assessment of the evaluation report.

The evaluation will be conducted by a local Consultant with extensive experience in conducting evaluations with a focus on gender equality and women's rights. The Consultant will have an overall responsibility for the design of the evaluation process, and provide support in carrying out the research, finalising the relevant components of it and ensuring submission of a consolidated high-quality report.

9. Management of evaluation

To ensure independence of the evaluation consultant, UN Women M&E Team in the CO and the Regional Evaluation Specialist will manage the evaluation. The process will follow UNW standards as outlined in the UN Women Evaluation Handbook: How to Manage Gender-responsive Evaluation, available at <https://genderevaluation.unwomen.org/en/evaluation-handbook> and the CPE guidance available at <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/3/guidance-on-country-portfolio-evaluations-in-un-women>. The Management Group which is the Programmes Steering Committee is the decision-making body with the responsibility of approving reports i.e. the inception report and the evaluation report. Management Group TORs will guide the work of the Evaluation Management Group. The management Group will include:

- Country Representative or Deputy Country Representative
- Evaluation Manager
- Regional Evaluation Specialist

An Evaluation Reference Group will provide support for the evaluation at the technical level. They will review and provide comments to the inception report and the draft report. The Reference Group members will provide

comments on the inception report and draft report either through meetings or online via email communications. The role of the group will not lead to influencing the independence of the evaluation, but rather to ensure a robust and credible evaluation process and ensure the use of the evaluation findings and recommendations through formalized management responses and associated action plans. The work of the Reference Group will be guided by the agreed TORs for the Reference Group. The members of the Reference Group will be:

- UN Women programmes staff
- National government partners
- Development partners/donors
- Gender Results Group
- Civil society advisory group
- Evaluation Manager
- Regional Evaluation Specialist

10. Logistics

UN Women will facilitate this process by providing contact information such as email addresses and phone numbers of their respective partners. UN Women will oversee the logistics of the evaluation and provide support for the arrangements as needed. The evaluation consultant is also responsible for the dissemination of all methodological tools such as questionnaires, conducting interviews; group discussions etc.

11. Evaluation consultant composition, skills, and experiences

11.1. Selection of the Evaluation Consultant

Required Skills and Experiences:

A national consultant with the following skills and experience

- Master level and above educational background in social sciences or a related field.
- 8 – 10 years' experience and knowledge in conducting gender responsive evaluations (quantitative and qualitative methods).
- Documented previous experience in conducting gender-responsive evaluations.
- Extensive experience in conducting evaluations with a focus on gender equality, women's empowerment. Specific evaluation on Humanitarian response will be an added advantage.
- A strong record in designing and leading evaluations, extensive experience in applying qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods incl. data analysis skills.
- Extensive knowledge and understanding of Results Based Management methodologies.

- Experience and understanding of gender equality, human rights, and women's empowerment programming of UN agencies, development partners and government.
- Application and understanding of UN Mandates on Human Rights and Gender Equality.
- Knowledge of regional/country/ local context will be an asset.
- Proven experience and excellent networking and partnership skills with UN agencies, government and CSOs.
- Excellent communication skills, both verbal and written and strong presentation skills.
- Excellent spoken and written English (all deliverables to be in English). Working knowledge of Shona and/or Ndebele will be an asset.
- Capacity to work independently and use own equipment.

The independence of the evaluation consultant is outlined by the UNEG Norms and Standards as well by the UN Women Evaluation Policy. According to the UN Women Evaluation Policy, evaluation in UN Women will abide to the following evaluation standards: Participation and Inclusiveness, Utilization-Focused and Intentionality, Transparency, Independence and Impartiality, Quality and Credibility as well as Ethical Standards. UNEG Norms and Standards and the UN Women Evaluation Policy are publicly available under <http://www.unwomen.org/about/evaluation.php>;

The Evaluator is to act according to the agreed and signed TORs and to proceed according to all stated agreements.

12. UNEG Norms and Standards and Ethical Code of Conduct

This end of term evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation.' UN Women has developed the UN Women Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form² for evaluators that must be signed as part of the contracting process, which is based on the UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct. The signed Agreement will be annexed to the consultant contract. The UNEG Guidelines note the importance of ethical conduct for the following reasons:

- Responsible use of power: All those engaged in evaluation processes are responsible for upholding the proper conduct of the evaluation.
- Ensuring credibility: With a fair, impartial and complete assessment, stake- holders are more likely to have faith in the results of an evaluation and to take note of the recommendations.

²https://www.google.com/search?q=UN+Women+Evaluation+Consultants+Agreement+Form&rlz=1C1CHBD_enZW928ZW928&oq=UN+Women+Evaluation+Consultants+Agreement+Form+&aqs=chrome..69i57.1526j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

- Responsible use of resources: Ethical conduct in evaluation increases the chances of acceptance by the parties to the evaluation and therefore the likelihood that the investment in the evaluation will result in improved outcomes.

The evaluators are expected to provide a detailed plan on how the following principles will be ensured throughout the evaluation (see UNEG Ethical Guidance for descriptions): 1) Respect for dignity and diversity; 2) Right to self-determination; 3) Fair representation; 4) Compliance with codes for vulnerable groups (e.g., ethics of research involving young children or vulnerable groups); 5) Redress; 6) Confidentiality; and 7) Avoidance of harm. Specific safeguards must be put in place to protect the safety (both physical and psychological) of both respondents and those collecting the data. These should include:

- A plan is in place to protect the rights of the respondent, including privacy and confidentiality.
- The interviewer or data collector is trained in collecting sensitive information, and if the topic of the evaluation is focused on violence against women, they should have previous experience in this area.
- Data collection tools are designed in a way that are culturally appropriate and do not create distress for respondents.
- Data collection visits are organized at the appropriate time and place to minimize risk to respondents
- The interviewer or data collector is able to provide information on how individuals in situations of risk can seek support.

The evaluation's value added is its impartial and systematic assessment of the programme or intervention. As with the other stages of the evaluation, involvement of stakeholders should not interfere with the impartiality of the evaluation. The evaluator(s) have the final judgment on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation report, and the evaluator(s) must be protected from pressures to change information in the report. Additionally, if the evaluator(s) identify issues of wrongdoing, fraud or other unethical conduct, UN Women procedures must be followed, and confidentiality be maintained. The UN Women Legal Framework for Addressing Non-Compliance with UN Standards of Conduct and accompanying policies protecting against retaliation and prohibiting harassment and abuse of authority, provide a cohesive framework aimed at creating and maintaining a harmonious working environment, ensuring that staff members do not engage in any wrongdoing and that all allegations of wrongdoing are reported promptly, investigated and appropriate action taken to achieve accountability. The UN Women Legal Framework for Addressing Non-Compliance with UN Standards of Conduct defines misconduct and the mechanisms within UN Women for reporting and investigating. More information can be provided by UN Women if required.