

NATIONAL CONSULTANT TO CONDUCT AN END OF PROJECT EVALUATION FOR THE SAFE MARKETS PROJECT (EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH SAFE, RESILIENT, GENDER RESPONSIVE FOOD MARKETS AND SYSTEMS IN RESPONSE TO COVID 19 IN ZIMBABWE)

1. Background and introduction

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN Women) has been implementing a project titled, 'Empowering women through safe, resilient, gender responsive food markets and systems in response to Covid 19 in Zimbabwe' (2020-2022). The project sought to empower vulnerable women marketers for recovery and resilience from socio economic shocks and the Covid-19 epidemic through effective participation in safe, inclusive and violence free markets as last mile food distributors. The project was funded by the MPTF Covid 19 Recovery Fund.

The project was a response to the Covid -19 pandemic to alleviate the impact of Covid-19 on the informal sector. The project was also a response to the UN Framework for socio-economic response to COVID-19 which demonstrates the UN's commitment to the Covid -19 response at the country level. The project model also aligned to the UN Women flagship programme on Women economic empowerment through providing gender responsive safe markets, improving the economic base and financial security of women marketers as well as support establishment of E solutions to support both the supply and demand sides of markets.

Zimbabwe has the second largest informal economy in the world and COVID-19 restrictions have brought the economy to a virtual standstill. Vendors largely operating in the informal economy have a low ability to adapt to changes in market conditions and to cope with any external shocks and vulnerabilities. Food markets in Zimbabwe do not work in a manner that is profitable to the farmers and vendors, who rely entirely on this income, as lots of produce goes to waste. Women vendors continue to face a myriad of challenges such as a lack of fixed prices of their products; oversupply of products such as tomatoes which then drives down the price as most small-scale farmers farm by season; lack of storage capacity; lack of diversification and limited markets which leads to a congested supply system. These challenges are the result of various structural issues. In addition, in most cases markets are not compliant with public health, occupational safety requirements, green energy solutions, and gender related needs making it difficult for women to continue with business as usual during the crisis. The lack of an enabling environment to support women's viable businesses as well as their participation in decision making also limits engagement of women and girls in economic activities. The situation has been particularly worse for women and marginalized groups with lower literacy levels who may not have the skills or capacity to obtain safe and viable income generating opportunities and who rely on markets for their sustenance. Globally, digital solutions are emerging as a key pillar in the global fight against COVID-19 yet in Zimbabwe the progress towards harnessing this potential has been slow. In this regard, there is need for an online system that harnesses technology to link the food markets with the informal sector vendors who are currently on lock down and cannot easily move to purchase goods.

The Covid-19 outbreak necessitated the need to scale up and broaden the conceptualization of safe markets to include safety from SGBV and disease outbreaks, whilst integrating green energy solutions. The design of safe market infrastructure will therefore comply with COVID-19 and occupational safety and health (OSH) management systems to ensure prevention and mitigation of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases, whilst ensuring renewable energy and ozone friendly dimensions are integrated. This will go a long way towards ensuring that women do not lose their income during public health emergencies and continue to operate in public spaces that are free from violence.

2. Description of the Project

UN Women, ILO and UNDP implemented a joint program under the United Nations Country Team (UNCT's) coordinated response to COVID 19. The programme leveraged on ongoing activities of agencies -which allowed the agencies to coordinate to address the challenges outlined. The UN Country Team will be the key platform for coordinated action at the country level. This also allowed the agencies to jointly respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. The programme focused on empowering women working in the markets ensuring that they are supported from Covid-19 related socio-economic shocks.

Theory of change

Outcome 1: Improved livelihoods of women marketers & vulnerable groups through safe, gender responsive market infrastructure and systems

Outcome 2: Enabling a gender responsive policy framework and institutions responsible for administration, regulation, and monitoring of food supply systems

IF markets are functional, safe, inclusive, integrate green energy and digital financial services solutions, and are violence free, **AND** if women have access and participate in last mile food distribution markets, are economically empowered including through e-solutions, and influence decisions on governance of food supply chain management THEN women's livelihoods are improved, and they are able to recover from the impacts of COVID 19 and become more resilient to socio-economic shocks

Priorities of the project

The safe markets project prioritized the following which is in line with the overall project objective of empowering women through safe, resilient, gender responsive food markets and systems in response to Covid 19 in Zimbabwe:

- To capacitate local institutions to review, develop and implement regulations and by laws that ensure OSH compliance and gender sensitive food marketplaces is strengthened
- To support markets to have infrastructure and systems that are sensitive to women's needs, complies with occupational health and safety regulations, and accompanied by mechanisms and structures to prevent and address gender-based violence and harassment.
- To Improve economic base and financial security for women marketers.
- To develop inclusive E-solutions for safe markets established to promote more effective food market access by consumers
- To develop mechanisms for women's voice and agency to participate in market leadership structures are strengthened

2. Purpose (and use of the evaluation)

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess progress towards achievement of goals and objectives of the Project at national levels against the standard evaluation principles of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and outcome since its inception in 2020. The evaluation will provide an in-depth assessment of the results against 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 best practices and key lessons to inform future programmes.

Users of the Evaluation

The evaluation report will be used to inform the implementation of the remainder of the project's implementation period and the design of future project. Specific users will include UN Women Project staff, government ministries, chapter 12 commission, UN Agencies and development partners. 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.

3. 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;

- Are the activities and outputs of the Project consistent with the intended impacts and effects?
- How relevant is the project to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries, national, regional and international priorities?

Effectiveness:

- 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.

The suggested questions for the effectiveness criterion are;

- To what extent has the project made sufficient progress towards its planned objectives and results /has the project achieved its planned objectives and results within its specified period?
- Has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country?
- In which areas does the project have it's the least achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can they be overcome?
- In which areas does the Project have the greatest achievements? How can UN Women build on or expand these achievements?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
- 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 efficient and cost effective?
- To what extent does the management structure of the intervention support efficiency for project implementation?
- Has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
- Have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost-effective? In general, do the results achieved justify the costs? Could the same results be attained with fewer resources?
- Have Project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?
- Does Project governance facilitate good results and efficient delivery?

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.
- Scaling up for sustainability - The evaluation should ascertain the possibility of scaling up of the interventions in Zimbabwe.
- Sustainability challenges and mitigatory strategies – the evaluation should identify possible challenges that might affect sustainability of the project and suggest solutions to overcome them.

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.

Project Outcomes and Impact

- 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 this criterion are;

- What are the main effects of project activities? This should include positive and negative changes produced by the project's interventions, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

- To what extent can the changes/results that have been achieved be attributed to the inputs, strategies, actions and outputs of the project?

UN Women's technical and resource management, coordination role in the delivery of the Project

- To review how adequate, efficient, effective and responsive UN Women is in achieving the technical and resource management role for the project.

The suggested questions for this criterion are;

- To what extent is UN Women effective and responsive in achieving the technical and resource management role for the project?

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?
- How has attention to/integration of gender equality and human rights concerns advanced the area of work?

4. Scope of the evaluation

5.1. Time frame for the evaluation:

The end of project evaluation will provide an assessment of the Project from Project inception in June 2020 to April 2022.

5.2 Programmatic focus:

Assess progress towards achieving expected results, measured against the revised log frame and compare original and revised log frame to assess original plans and identify reasons for the changes and document lessons learnt from the process. Identify and document any short term and intermediate results achieved as a result of the project. Assess progress towards achieving project outcomes by the end of the project implementing period.

5.3 Geographical coverage:

The evaluation will be conducted at national level. The Evaluation team will discuss with stakeholders involved in the project that includes government ministries and departments, local authorities, market committees and CSOs and 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.

5. 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 gender, peace and security Programme 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 partner (Helpline), 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 Ministries and government agencies, Programme beneficiaries, key staff at UN Women, ILO and UNDP.

- **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.

6. Stakeholder participation

Key stakeholders to be considered include UN Women, project partners and other key government departments. 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.

7. Expected timeframe and deliverables

The expected activities and deliverables for the end of project 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 evaluation team. The evaluation will be conducted for 25 days over a period of two months.

Activity	Working days
Conduct desk review	4
Drafting and presentation of evaluation inception report, data collection tools and instruments	3

Field work including presentation and validation of evaluation findings to stakeholders	8
Data Analysis	2
Prepare draft evaluation report	5
Incorporation of feedback and comments from stakeholders and finalize evaluation report	3
TOTAL	25

The evaluation team 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. (5 pages max excluding annexes).

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.

List of Interviewees

Method	Respondent
<i>National level</i>	
	UN Women
	NSSA
	Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development
	Ministry of Lands, Agriculture Water and Rural Resettlement
CSOs	Helpline
	Oxfam
Local Authorities	Harare City Council

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.

8. Management of evaluation

To ensure independence of the evaluation team, 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

9. 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 team is also responsible for the dissemination of all methodological tools such as questionnaires, conducting interviews; group discussions etc.

10. Evaluation team composition, skills and experiences

10.1 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;
- 10 - 15 years' experience and knowledge in conducting gender responsive evaluations (quantitative and qualitative methods).
- Extensive experience in conducting evaluations with a focus on gender equality, women's empowerment. Specific evaluation on Governance and Women Political participation will be an added advantage.
- 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 team 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.

11. 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'. The consultants must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on it. The consultants must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UN Women and partners.

12. Submission of Proposals

The local Consultant is required to submit the following: (i) Technical proposal accompanied with his /her CV. Technical proposals should not be more than 5 pages excluding annexes and should not repeat the TORs. CV should be no more than 5 pages.