



IN BRIEF



FINAL PROJECT EVALUATION ON 'WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT IN THE TRANSITIONAL PROCESS IN SOUTH SUDAN'

Photo: STEWARD WOMEN

Project description

The project aimed to create awareness on the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) and to advocate for the effective implementation of 35 percent of women's representation quota in the Executive through proactive advocacy for effective and genuine participation and representation of women and girls in peace and security processes.

Funded by the Government of Canada, the project was implemented in two phases between February 2018 to January 2020 and April 2020 to March 2022, with a budget of 3.2 million Canadian Dollars.

Evaluation overview

The evaluation serves to assess the extent to which the project has achieved its goal, purpose and objectives. The evaluation applied the criteria of: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability and Human rights and Gender equality.

Key achievements

- Increased recognition of the importance of women's participation and appointment of women in key leadership positions that they had never occupied before.
- High-level engagement of the media through gender responsive capacity building training for media practitioners and the participatory development of a Media Advocacy Strategy which increased visibility of project activities.

- Although targets for women's participation are yet to be met, milestones have been achieved as there has been an increase in the number of women assuming leadership positions, a result of amplified voices and advocacy.

Conclusions

RELEVANCE

- The project objectives were relevant to the Women Peace and Security (WPS) context in South Sudan; the peace and security needs and concerns of women and girls; and in alignment with the development trajectory and priorities of the country, UN Women and the funding partner.

EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

- Implementation and delivery of outputs was generally done in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
- There were disruptions to implementation caused by COVID-19, insecurity in some states and natural disasters.

SUSTAINABILITY

- The project established a foundation for technical and organizational sustainability through ownership and capacity strengthening of partners at both national and sub-national levels, including grassroots women's groups and networks.
- Financial and political sustainability of the women's movement, government institutions and Implementing Partners is at risk without external funding support.

Lessons learned

The evaluation identified the following lessons with significance beyond the program:

1 **Seconding a gender advisor** to be embedded within transitional institutions to provide technical support on gender mainstreaming and capacity building, will lead to increased recognition of the importance of women's participation

2 **Flexibility and adaptability** by Implementing Partners and funders is needed when implementing a project in a volatile and unpredictable environment to ensure minimal disruption to project implementation.

3 **Women should be empowered from grassroots up to national level** through awareness creation, capacity strengthening and movement building to enable them to effectively advocate for and claim their rights.

4 **Leaving No one Behind** to enable persons with disability (PWD) to effectively participate in development programmes and activities, special measures are required to facilitate their participation and their voices to be heard.

5 **Long term investment** in terms of time and funding is needed as attitudes and practices that fuel gender inequality and GBV do not change over short periods of time.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Implement Phase 3 of the project until at least after the elections to consolidate the gains made to date, keep the momentum created by the project and to address the significant gender gaps that remain.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Expand project activities to cover more rural areas in line with the Leaving No One Behind guiding principle as peace and security concerns of women and girls are higher compared to urban areas.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Enhance participation of PWD through budgeting and providing for their special needs such as mobility, assistive devices and helpers.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Disaggregate project data by disability status so that the level of inclusion or exclusion and participation of PWD in the project can easily be determined.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Develop communication products that are easily accessible and consumable by grassroots communities by producing them in the language spoken by the community; in a format that is easily understandable by the less literate and accessible to PWD such as pictorials and audio.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

Increase male participation and engagement through conducting more gender awareness dialogue sessions and peace and security capacity training targeting more men and boys and traditional and religious leaders particularly in rural areas.

RECOMMENDATION 7:

Continue with community awareness and training on gender equality, human rights and participation of women in peace and security processes as part of efforts to breakdown gender barriers.

RECOMMENDATION 8:

Increase project and UN Women visibility by implementing more robust media strategies.