



IN BRIEF

FINAL EVALUATION OF THE “WOMEN AND GIRLS ACCESS TO JUSTICE THROUGH EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND GENDER RESPONSIVE INSTITUTIONS (ACCESS TO JUSTICE)” PROJECT.

Photo: UN Women Photo Gallery: Launch of the Multi sectoral Training Manual 2021

Project description

The project aimed to [strengthen integrated service delivery and accountability systems](#) for managing Gender Based Violence (GBV) cases across Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOS) from entry to exit and to upgrade eleven selected High Court Circuits and Chief Magisterial areas into Regional Centers of Excellence.

The project commenced on 1st November 2019 and ended on 30th March 2023 with a budget of approximately 2.2million USD.

Evaluation overview

The evaluation aimed to examine how the project contributed to harnessing the capacities of women towards the goals of providing access to justice (A2J) to victims of GBV.

Key achievements

- The A2J project developed a costed strategy for institutionalization of a specialized justice system for effective management of GBV cases against women and girls. Phase 2 of the project is expected to operationalize this strategy.
- Under the project, 785 JLOS actors had their capacity strengthened to provide quality essential GBV services and to fast-track cases of GBV and other forms of discrimination.

- The project strengthened the system capacity of 3 JLOS institutions to provide quality essential services and to fast-track cases of GBV and other forms of discrimination.
- The A2J project increased the knowledge of 6140 people (4954 female) on their rights and where to access GBV related services.

Conclusions

RELEVANCE

- The project was aligned to Uganda’s policy and legal frameworks as well as to legal and policy frameworks at international and regional levels that promote gender equality, access to justice, equitable access and utilization of services while protecting women and girls from GBV and harmful norms and practices.

EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

- The project achieved most of its targets, outputs and outcomes.
- Resources allocated were substantial and contributed to the achievement of the relevant outputs.

SUSTAINABILITY

- The key sustainability strategies adopted by the A2J project included working within; a) the existing policy and strategy frameworks; b) structures and systems strengthening in the key justice institutions and with the District Local Government (DLG); and c) multisectoral capacity building through technological and technical advancements at the national, subnational and community levels.

Lessons learned

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

1 Building on successes, achievements and lessons from previous and ongoing programmes is important. A2J built on and leveraged efforts of the ongoing projects such as the EU Spotlight Initiative and UNJGBV.

2 Survivor centered, trauma informed, gender sensitive and human rights-based approaches are crucial in responding to risk and vulnerability and the unique needs of the GBV survivors to enable them to be confident and have the self-esteem needed to pursue justice throughout the justice chain.

3 Finding a delicate balance between strengthening GBV response and prevention is crucial given that both strands are essential in improving access and the quality of justice.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1:

There is need for key stakeholders to further consolidate, strengthen partnership and collaboration between the Judiciary, Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Uganda Police Force and relevant District Local Government departments in all project processes including design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Engage with donors to advocate for long term funding to enable adequate time for project inception, implementation and improvement to the quality of outputs and deliverables as a means of realizing greater impact.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Donors should consider a second phase of the A2J project aligned to the strategy/options paper and the service delivery standards.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Fast track the review and finalization of detailed and concrete Service Delivery Standards and Procedures covering all the steps towards delivering Quality Integrated Justice Services to ensure coordination and harmonization of the delivery of justice to GBV survivors.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Consider different approaches of implementing capacity building in financial management and accountability. This will facilitate building competencies of Implementing Partners in timely reporting for funds received to address the delays in accountability and implementation of project activities.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

Consider investment in social norm change at the institutional and community level to complement the A2J components of the project as social norms may deter reporting of cases and may continue to justify violence against women and girls.

RECOMMENDATION 7:

Strengthen the Monitoring and Evaluation system to collect baseline information and populate all indicators in the results framework to facilitate tracking impact.