



IN BRIEF

ENGENDERING GOVERNANCE TO PROMOTE PEACE AND SECURITY IN ZIMBABWE (MID-TERM EVALUATION)

Photo credit: UN Women Zimbabwe Country Office

Project description

Funded by the Irish embassy, the project aims to formulate, implement, and monitor strategies to promote women's participation in decision-making. UN Women aims to do this by working with national stakeholders, including the Government, Independent Commissions (Zimbabwe Gender Commission, Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, the National Peace, and Reconciliation Commission), the Women in Local Government Forum, the Women's Parliamentary Caucus, African Women Leaders' Network (AWLN). The project delivers capacity building, technical assistance, and advocacy activities.

Evaluation overview

The mid-term evaluation serves to strengthen accountability and guide the rest of the project implementation period. The evaluation applied the criteria of: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability and Human rights and Gender equality. Data was collected from 48 stakeholders.

Key achievements

Leveraging the leadership of women in governance and peace building processes

- Facilitated the creation of the AWLN National chapter and one Provincial Chapter, provided technical support to the national chapter, and enhanced the capacities of women leaders to engage in conflict resolution.

Supporting young and senior women, particularly those left behind, to participate in national processes

- Provided technical support to the youth caucus, providing a safe space for young women to engage.

Enhancing the capacity of governance institutions to implement the Women, Peace, and Security agenda

- Strengthened decision makers' capacity to formulate, implement and monitor gender-sensitive policies in line with Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agendas
- Conducted and validated with government an assessment of barriers to women's participation at local government level
- Supported the development of a National Action Plan (NAP) for the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325
- Enhanced capacity of government & stakeholders on UNSCR 1325 and to draft national action plans
- Developed a Pocket Guide for women aspiring Councillors and Elected Councillors, and a Handbook for Parliamentarians on UNSCR 1325
- Engaged stakeholders to develop a costed roadmap to develop the Youth, Peace, and Security National Action Plan/Strategy
- Developed key knowledge products on Gender and Women's political participation
- Developed a Handbook on UNSCR 1325 for Parliamentarians

Conclusions

RELEVANCE

- The project was relevant to the governance, peace, and security context in Zimbabwe.

EFFECTIVENESS

2. The project has performed well in meeting its targets, although the following areas require more focus in the remaining implementation period:
 - *Of the five planned provincial chapters, only one has been established.*
 - *The mentorship program for the second cohort needs to be rolled out quickly, so young women can engage in the 2023 elections.*

EFFICIENCY

3. The project was managed fairly efficiently. However, stakeholder unavailability led to some delays in implementation.
4. Efficiency can be improved by reducing indirect costs which were 52% of program costs; and cutting costs by using government facilities and / or middle range hotels.

SUSTAINABILITY

5. Capacity building trainings for women including young women conducted through AWLN and CSOs; and capacity building trainings for government institutions ensures that the knowledge gained will continue to be used in the long term
6. The likelihood of sustainability is high, if AWLN can be strengthened to exist as an independent entity capable of existing beyond UN Women technical and funding support. Currently, the network is strongly intertwined with and reliant on UN Women.

HUMAN RIGHTS and GENDER EQUALITY

7. The project is centered and focused on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. The project can be more inclusive by ensuring there is strong participation by women with disability and those from grassroots communities in rural areas.

Lessons learned

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

1 For ownership and long-term sustainability, stakeholders need to be engaged throughout the project life cycle, from the design phase. In particular for sensitive issues, adequate time for stakeholder engagement is needed.

2 Capacity strengthening of national stakeholders is key to sustainability. While it has been important to support the AWLN, UN

Women needs to be mindful that structures and processes does not create dependency and reduce national stakeholders' sense of ownership.

3

Beyond capacity building, economic Empowerment initiatives are needed to ensure young women in particular have the financial resources to participate in decision-making processes and run leadership campaigns.

Recommendations

CURRENT PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Accelerate implementation of key outstanding outputs including: decentralization of AWLN chapters; rolling out of the mentorship program for young women; support for the finalization of the National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325 and the youth peace and security strategy

RECOMMENDATION 2:

UN Women should strengthen the administrative, resource mobilization and movement building capacity of the AWLN secretariat, including the Young Women Caucus, to ensure sustainability. UN Women should support AWLN to be registered as a legal entity, which will also support funding diversification.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

To increase inclusivity, UN Women should:

- Establish more provincial chapters, to better reach women at the grassroots level.
- Support marginalized women, including those with disabilities and from rural areas, to participate in capacity building activities. This could include providing logistical and funding support to attend training.

FUTURE PROGRAMS

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Changing attitudes, values and practices takes a long time. Capacity building and awareness initiatives should continue beyond the upcoming elections in 2023.