



ENDLINE EVALUATION OF WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS (WLER) PROJECT

Final Report

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To be completed later.

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ACRONYMS

ADD International	Action on Disability Development
ALAT	Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania
CDOs	Community Development Officers
CODEPATA	Community Development Professionals Association of Tanzania
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DC	District Council
DED	District Executive Director
E4G	Equality for Growth
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
FDGs	Focused Group Discussions
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEF	Generation Equality Forum
GERAAS	Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
IDIs	In-Depth Interviews
iMES	Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System
IPs	Implementing Partners
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
LGAs	Local Government Authorities
LGTI	Local Government Training Institute-Hombolo
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
MC	Municipal Council
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MDS	Muthengo Development Solutions
MoCDGWSG	Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups
MWEDO	Maasai Women Development Organization
NEC	National Electoral Commission
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ORPP	Office of the Registrar of Political Parties
PD-MIS	Persons with Disabilities Management Information System
PMO-LYED	Prime Minister's Office Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disabilities
PO-RALG	The President's Office of the Regional Administration and Local Government
PWC	Pastoralist Women Council
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHIVYAWATA	Tanzania Federation of Disabled People's Organizations
SWOs	Social Welfare Officers
TADIO	Tanzania Development Organization
TASWs	Tanzania Association of Social Workers
TCO	Tanzania Country Office (UN Women)
TGNP	Tanzania Gender Networking Program
ToC	Theory of Change
TUSONGE	TUSONGE Community Development Organization
UDSM	The University of Dar es Salaam
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
VEOs	Village Executive Officers
WASEMI	Association of Women Councillors
WEOs	Ward Education Officers
WEOs	Ward Executive Officers
WiLDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa
WLER	Women's Leadership and Economic Rights
WWDs	Women with Disabilities
ZEC	Zanzibar Electoral Commission

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Women's Leadership and Economic Rights (WLER) project (2022–2025) was a four-year initiative with the **overall goal of ensuring 'Women's and girls' meaningful participation, leadership and economic rights are strengthened at local levels in Tanzania'**. This project was funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland with a total budget of 7.9 million Euros. WLER aligns with UN Women's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan and the Government of Tanzania's Generation Equality Commitments. WLER built upon previous phases of the Women's Leadership and Political Participation Project (Wanawake Wanaweza), shifting focus from national-level participation to specific challenges women face at the local government level, such as limited leadership and economic opportunities, discriminatory norms, and the disproportionate share of UCW.

The project implementation, led by the UN Women Tanzania Office, involved strategic partnerships with 12 partners, including six Local Government Authorities (LGAs), four Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and two academic institutions. It was implemented in 18 administrative councils across six regions: Pwani, Dar-es-Salaam, Singida, Arusha, Mtwara, and Lindi. The project adopted a multi-pillared approach combining strategies like inclusive and participatory community-oriented actions to transform gender norms, enhancing the capacity of LGA duty-bearers on data use and gender analysis, and supporting the review and implementation of gender-responsive laws and practices.

The WLER project's specific objectives and four outcome areas were designed to address systemic barriers:

- **Outcome 1:** Data and evidence-based gender and disability responsive strategies, practices, and participatory research action are built on women's meaningful participation at local levels.
- **Outcome 2:** Laws, procedures, and practices at LGA levels promote women's (with and without disabilities) voices, leadership, and economic rights and justice.
- **Outcome 3:** Gender norms and discriminatory behaviours and practices at local levels are transformed to promote women and girls' voices, meaningful participation, and leadership.
- **Outcome 4:** National and LGAs develop/strengthen laws, policies, and services that recognize and address the disproportionate share of UCW to promote women's leadership and participation in decision-making.

Evaluation purpose, objectives and scope

The endline evaluation served two primary purposes: accountability and learning, and informing the development of the next phase of the project (WLER Phase II/successor project) and the new UN Women Strategic Note (2028-2032). It specifically assessed the project performance against its targets and documented achieved outcomes. The evaluation covered the WLER project's implementation period from **December 28, 2021, to November 30, 2025**. It covered all 18 councils across the six project regions. The assessment criteria used were the OECD criteria of **Relevance, Coherence, Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Sustainability**, along with the additional criterion of **Gender Equality and Leave No One Behind (LNOB)**.

Evaluation objectives

The specific objectives were to:

1. Assess the **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability** of the WLER project approach.
2. Evaluate the Country Office's **comparative advantage/added value** in the thematic area.
3. Assess the project design, results framework, strategies, and implementation arrangements.
4. Assess how **gender equality principles and the LNOB approach** are integrated into the design and implementation.
5. Present key findings, draw **lessons learned and good practices**, and provide practical recommendations for sustainability, replication, and scaling-up.

Methodology

The evaluation used a **theory-based approach**, drawing on the project's Theory of Change (ToC) to test the validity of the design and the project's contribution to observed results. A **mixed-methods design** combined quantitative data (from project reports, monitoring systems, and national surveys) with qualitative data (gathered through fieldwork). The evaluation was utilization-focused, ensuring evidence informed the design of the forthcoming Joint Programme and the UN Women Strategic Note. The process adhered to the UN Women Evaluation Policy and UNEG Norms and Standards, mainstreaming **gender equality, human rights, and disability inclusion**. Data collection was gender-sensitive and socially inclusive, employing practices like separate discussions for women and men and providing specialized support (e.g., sign language, mobility transport) for Women with Disabilities (WWDs).

Data collection proceeded in two phases:

- **Phase 1 (Full Scope Evaluation):** Included a comprehensive desk review of core sources. Primary data collection involved visits to all six regions, utilizing **Outcome Harvesting workshops** (to identify and verify intended/unintended outcomes), **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)** (for strategic/institutional perspectives), **Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)** (for collective perspectives and shared experiences, grouped by thematic area/activity), and **In-Depth Interviews (IDIs)** (for detailed personal accounts/lived realities).
- **Phase 2 (Deep Dives):** Conducted in two purposively selected regions with maximum project convergence, focusing on KIIs, FGDs, and IDIs to test contribution pathways and explain "how change happened".

Findings

Relevance

WLER was closely aligned with the priority needs of women and girls and addressed interrelated barriers to their leadership and economic participation, including discriminatory gender norms, limited access to finance, unpaid care responsibilities and low confidence among aspiring leaders. Working through LGAs, women's networks and community actors strengthened local ownership and supported gender-responsive planning and action. The project's Theory of Change remained broadly valid, although the depth and coverage of results varied. Emerging priorities include affordable finance, advanced financial and digital literacy, post-training mentorship, stronger gender-based violence referral pathways, and adequately resourced participation for women with disabilities and young women.

Coherence

WLER was aligned with national and international gender equality frameworks and complemented the work of government, UN agencies, civil society and academic institutions. It contributed to incorporating 68 gender indicators into PO-RALG's Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System and socioeconomic indicators on women with disabilities into the Persons with Disabilities Management Information System. Partnerships with the Local Government Training Institute (LGTI) supported the integration of gender-responsive budgeting into institutional training and planning tools, while the University of Dar es Salaam trained 585 police officers and 84 journalists on Violence Against Women in Politics. Regional Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Working Groups also strengthened coordination among LGAs and CSOs, although collaboration across departments and at district and ward levels was less consistent.

Effectiveness

WLER documented results across all four outcomes, with particularly strong evidence of improvements in gender-responsive planning, women's participation and selected institutional practices. However, the depth, coverage and sustainability of results varied across interventions and locations.

Outcome 1: Data- and evidence-based strategies. The project strengthened the capacity of duty-bearers and women's networks to use gender and disability data in local planning and budgeting. Seventy-four gender-responsive micro-plans were developed, of which 36 were implemented, supporting locally identified actions such as improved sanitation facilities for women and childcare services. Some LGAs also strengthened their

gender-responsive budgeting practices, although the completeness and routine use of gender- and disability-disaggregated data remained uneven.

Outcome 2: Laws, procedures and practices. WLER contributed to national electoral reforms addressing Violence Against Women in Politics and supporting the establishment of Gender and Social Inclusion desks within political parties. At the local level, 32 ward tribunals were reconstituted to meet requirements for women's representation, while several LGAs advanced by-laws addressing gender equality and harmful practices, including *Jando* and *Unyago*. Nevertheless, the formal adoption and consistent implementation of some reforms remained incomplete.

Outcome 3: Gender norms and women's leadership. Leadership development strengthened women's confidence, skills and participation in community decision-making and electoral processes. The 2024 local government election data indicated a larger proportional increase in elected women in WLER-supported councils in Singida than in non-WLER councils. Household and community interventions also contributed to joint decision-making and greater public support for women's leadership: 78 male leaders signed commitments to support women's participation, and four women were elected to the Marya Council Secretariat in participating Maasai communities. However, progress was uneven, and public support sometimes coexisted with continuing household constraints on women's control over income and leadership decisions. Women with disabilities faced additional financial, mobility and accessibility barriers.

Outcome 4: Unpaid care work. The project increased recognition of UCW and supported practical responses in selected locations. Community childcare centres were established in Ikungi, market authorities allocated childcare space at the Machinga Complex in Dar es Salaam, and participating women reported that clean-cooking stoves reduced cooking time by approximately one to three hours per day. These initiatives supported women's economic and leadership participation, but their coverage was localized and their continuation will depend on integration into government plans and budgets.

Efficiency

Working through existing government and community structures supported operational efficiency and reduced the need for parallel delivery arrangements. Training in results-based management and UN Women's financial procedures also strengthened partner accountability. However, delayed disbursements and administrative processes compressed implementation periods, while staff transfers affected continuity and institutional memory. The budget supported most core activities but did not adequately cover accessible transport, interpretation and mobility support for women with disabilities. Bureaucratic requirements and the suspension of some LGA loan facilities also limited women's access to finance. Although the project employed efficiency measures, the available evidence is insufficient to establish overall cost-effectiveness.

Sustainability

Sustainability prospects are strongest where interventions have been embedded in government systems, routine planning and budgeting, institutional curricula or community-owned mechanisms. LGAs demonstrated ownership by allocating resources to selected activities, while gender and disability indicators were incorporated into national data systems and gender-responsive budgeting was integrated into the LGTI curriculum. Gender-responsive planning and community-owned savings models such as VICOBA have relatively strong potential for continuation and replication. Sustainability is less certain for interventions requiring continuing financial and technical support, including disability-inclusive services, women's land-rights support and some unpaid care initiatives. Decisions to scale pilot models should therefore be supported by stronger evidence on their costs, outcomes and inclusion.

Gender equality and LNOB

WLER was designed with gender-transformative aims and incorporated Leave No One Behind principles into its institutional and community interventions. It strengthened the capacity of LGA duty-bearers to apply gender-

and disability-responsive approaches and supported women with disabilities to participate in the review of the National Disability Policy. Nevertheless, equitable participation and benefits were not consistently achieved. Accessibility costs, stigma, mobility barriers and limited geographic coverage affected women with disabilities and women in remote areas, while young women and men were less systematically engaged. Inconsistent reporting of disaggregated and LNOB indicators also limited the ability to demonstrate reach and outcomes.

Conclusion

Overall, WLER provided a relevant and coherent response to the interconnected institutional, economic and social barriers affecting women's leadership and economic rights at the local level. Its principal added value was linking women's agency and collective action with local government systems, community engagement and practical support. The evaluation found the strongest and most sustainable results where project approaches were incorporated into established planning, budgeting, data and training systems or supported through community-owned mechanisms.

However, results were uneven across locations and groups. Institutional and procedural changes were more consistently demonstrated than sustained changes in women's economic circumstances, household power relations and social norms. Financial barriers, implementation delays and insufficient resources for accessibility and follow-up limited the reach and depth of results, particularly for women with disabilities, young women and women in remote areas. WLER therefore made a credible contribution to women's leadership and economic rights and established foundations for continued progress, although achieving change at scale will depend on stronger connections between institutional reform, economic opportunities, accessible services and sustained household- and community-level engagement.

Summary of key recommendations

The evaluation provided practical, forward-looking recommendations:

Recommendation	Priority	Responsibility
Scale the VICOBA model to increase women's access to micro-loans and advocate for policy change to reduce bureaucracy and costs of accessing LGA loans.	High	LGAs (lead), UN Women, PO-RALG
Include financial literacy training as part of business training for women's groups, coupled with appropriate mentorship (after training support).	High	LGAs (lead), UN Women, PO-RALG
Create a project Technical Coordination Platform alongside the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) to include technical staff for periodic reviews and joint field visits, enabling them to track progress and resolve delivery bottlenecks.	High	UN Women (lead), PO-RALG, PMO-LEYD, Ministry of Gender
Conduct operational research for each pilot (PAR, model families, CCRO support, VICOBA model) to document lessons, provide clear scale-up recommendations, and influence the wider gender system.	High	UN Women (lead), Responsible Parties, LGAs
Make family-level interventions (joint planning/task-sharing) a core, sequenced pathway delivered alongside community endorsement and access to administration services.	High	UN Women (lead), LGAs (CDO/SWO), KCs/ward structures
Allocate dedicated budget lines for accessibility (transport, assistive devices, sign language) and strengthen partnerships with community-based Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) for outreach and co-design.	High	UN Women, LGA (DCDO), PMO-LYED
Provide pre- and post-budget supportive reviews that engage grassroots and LGAs, complemented by refresher trainings in LGAs that lag behind, and provide orientation to councillors to entrench gender responsive planning and budgeting .	High	UN Women (lead), LGAs, PO-RALG
Provide financial and technical support for disability data collection in the six regions to update the PD-MIS and strengthen institutionalization by integrating tools into government guidelines.	High	UN Women, PMO-LEYD (lead on PD-MIS), PO-RALG (lead- iMES)

BACKGROUND

1.1 Context of the project

The Tanzanian socio-economic and political context was considered in the conception of the “Strengthening Women and Girls’ Meaningful Participation, Leadership, and Economic Rights at the Local Levels in Tanzania” (2022-2025) “, also known in short form as Women’s Leadership and Economic Rights (WLER) project. The project builds on the Women’s Leadership and Political Participation Project (Wanawake Wanaweza) Phase II (2017-2021) and Phase I (2014 – 2017) that identified discriminatory gender norms, behaviours and practices and limited women’s economic opportunities as among the key barriers to women’s leadership at the local government levels. As opposed to the two phases of the Wanawake Wanaweza that focused on women’s leadership and decision-making in the political institutions at national level, the WLER project took a shift to tackle several challenges that women face at the local government levels. These are barriers to women’s meaningful participation, limited leadership and economic opportunities, as well as disproportionate share of care responsibilities between women and men.

Specifically, detrimental cultural, religious, and traditional values, economic and time poverty, gender gaps in policies and strategies are key challenges that affect women at local level. The WLER baseline study in the six project regions corroborated these challenges. The study found that gaps exist in the laws that disproportionately affect women’s representation in leadership and decision-making positions; discriminatory social norms, traditions, and practices that impinge on women and girls’ ability to achieve their economic rights and participate in leadership and decision-making at the household, community and local government levels; low levels of awareness about the legal framework, rules and regulations that govern gender equality issues, coupled with a low level of education; low representation of women at all levels of LGA structures; fewer women than men own land, houses, or livestock whether individually, jointly with the spouse, or with someone else; discriminatory attitudes particularly customary laws restricting women’s inheritance; women, particularly the female adults of the household are primarily responsible for domestic care work such as fetching water, cooking, washing, feeding and bathing children with 49.0 per cent of respondents perceiving responsibility of fetching water in the household is the responsibility of the female adults.¹

Because of the widespread socio-cultural, economic and structural barriers, women in Tanzania are still underrepresented in all spheres of public life particularly in local and community levels. They formed 5.2 and 6.5 percentage of all elected local councillors during the 2015 and 2020 general elections respectively² and 2.7 percent of all council chairpersons during the 2020 elections.³ Economically, urban poverty rates are significantly higher among female-headed households (20.3 per cent) than among male-headed households (14 per cent).⁴ The share of employed women per population ratio (EPR) dropped from 73.3 in 2014 to 70.1 percent in 2021 while that of men dropped from 80.9 to 80.1 percent during the same time.⁵ Indeed, females’ EPR are lower than that of males and is the lowest in Zanzibar with 49.8 percent for females vis-a-vis 73.6 percent for males.⁶ As such, women are much more likely than men to be time poor as they spend almost four times as much time on unpaid domestic and care work.⁷ In most aspects, therefore, Tanzania remains below the average of the global index (67.8) for gender equality by scoring 55.7 points and therefore ranking 112th out of 144 countries globally.⁸ The country ranks 55th out of 146 countries globally in the 2025 Global Gender Gap Index.

¹ UN Women Strengthening Women and Girls’ Meaningful Participation, Leadership, and Economic Rights at the Local Levels in Tanzania: Baseline Study Report (Undated).

² National Electoral Commission (NEC) 2015&2020 elections reports.

³ UN Women (Undated) Baseline Study Report: Strengthening women’s leadership and economic rights p.1.

⁴ Tanzania Household Budget Survey, 2020 as cited in the WLER Baseline Study Report p. 1.

⁵ URT Integrated Labor Force Survey 2020-2021 p. 32.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ OECD (2022), Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI) Country Report for Tanzania, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/06621e57-en>; Tanzania Household Budget Survey, 2020) as cited the WLER Baseline Study Report (Undated) p. 1.

⁸ 2022 SDG Gender Index.

1.2 Description of the project

Based on the context presented above, Women's Leadership and Economic Rights (WLER) (2022-2025) was a four-year project with the overall goal of ensuring *'Women's and girls' meaningful participation, leadership and economic rights are strengthened at local levels in Tanzania'*, aligning to UN Women's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan: *continuing to promote the voice, leadership, and economic rights of women at all levels including young people, and other marginalized groups*. The project is funded by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland with a total budget of 7.9 million Euros. It was implemented by UN Women Tanzania Office in partnership with the Government of Tanzania Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), LGAs, CSOs including organizations that promote rights of women with disabilities, the private sector organizations and academic institutions.

The specific objectives of the WLER project are to increase the number of women in leadership and decision making positions and their voices at local government levels through promoting gender-responsive norms, behaviours and practices; strengthening capacities of women leaders, enhance collection and use of sex and disability responsive data and enhancing women's economic rights including by piloting gender and disability transformative innovative measures such as care services in line with the Government of Tanzania's Generation Equality Commitments. These project specific objectives are organized into four outcome areas:

- i. Data and evidence-based gender and disability responsive strategies, practices, and participatory research action is built on women's meaningful participation at local levels.
- ii. Laws, procedures, and practices at LGA levels promote women's (with and without disabilities) voices, leadership and economic rights and justice.
- iii. Gender norms and discriminatory behaviours and practices at local levels are transformed to promote women and girls' voices, meaningful participation and leadership.
- iv. National and LGAs develop/strengthen laws, policies, and services that recognize and address the disproportionate share of UCW to promote women's leadership and participation in decision-making.

WLER project was implemented in six (6) Regions namely: Pwani, Dar-es-Salaam, Singida, Arusha, Mtwara, and Lindi. These regions represented three domains: **Coastal** (Pwani and Dar-es-Salaam regions), **Northern&Central** (Arusha and Singida regions), **Southern** (Lindi and Mtwara regions).

The project covered on average three councils in each of the six regions amounting to a total of eighteen (18) administrative councils in six regions. These districts are:

1. **Mtwara** (Tandahimba District Council, Mtwara District Council, and Mikindani Municipal Council)
2. **Lindi** (Ruangwa District Council, Ruangwa District Council, and Lindi Municipal Council)
3. **Arusha** (Arusha City Council, Monduli District Council and Karatu District Council)
4. **Singida** (Ikungi District Council, Mkalama District Council, and Singida Municipal Council)
5. **Dar es Salaam** (Kinondoni Municipal Council, Temeke Municipal Council, and Ilala Municipal Council)
6. **Pwani** (Chalinze District Council, Kisarawe District Council, and Kibaha Town Council)

UN Women worked with and provided technical and financial support to 12 partners (See Table 2), including the six LGAs, four CSOs, and two academic institutions to deliver the WLER Project four outcomes in the six project regions and 18 councils of Tanzania. To amplify efforts and foster collaboration and coordination at the local level, UN Women and five Regional Secretariats (Lindi, Mtwara, Arusha, Singida, and Pwani) established Regional Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Coordination Groups to provide a platform that fosters joint efforts and collaboration and sharing experiences and best practices to promote gender equality and women's empowerment at local levels. The four major project components are detailed in Annex 2.

UN Women adopted a multi pillared approach in the project implementation. As per the WLER Project Document (ProDoc), a long-term, action-based approach was adopted to advancing women's leadership, meaningful participation, economic rights and addressing the disproportionate share of UCW by women and girls. Specifically, the project was implemented through a combination of strategies and approaches to ensure effective delivery of the project objectives and outcomes. A co-creation process between UN Women and

responsible parties from national and local levels contributed to the identification of context specific intervention approaches that were implemented in respective regions and councils. **The co creation process worked during the inception phase** between January and December 2022. This phase involved extensive consultations and meetings with various government ministries and departments, local government authorities in the 6 project regions, local government training institutions, and CSOs including those promoting women's rights and the rights of women with disabilities, women leaders, women's groups and cooperatives at the local levels (district, ward, village, street and vitongoji) and the media. The goal of this consultative process **and co-creation** was to gather specific information, suggestions, and recommendations to inform the development of strategic, tailored, and context specific interventions.

The project had a diverse group of beneficiaries that included:

- **Women:** The overarching target group, including those in various leadership positions, entrepreneurs, and those benefiting from economic empowerment initiatives.
- **Women with Disabilities (WWDs) / Persons with Disabilities (PWDs):** A specific focus group facing compounded challenges, whose rights and perspectives are actively promoted through targeted strategies.
- **Young girls:** Targeted for leadership and economic empowerment initiatives, especially through school clubs that also strategically engaged young boys to become change champions in their communities.
- **Community members/grassroots networks:** Engaged through dialogues, awareness campaigns, and participatory action research to transform social norms.
- **Community facilitators:** Including CDOs, planning officers, land officers, legal officers, SWOs, and other local government officials and community actors who are capacitated to drive gender-transformative initiatives.
- **Right-holders:** Individuals, groups and institutions who are empowered to advocate for gender-responsive strategies and practices.
- **Male leaders, influencers and change makers:** Engaged to promote women's participation and leadership and transform gender norms. This also includes "Bajaji drivers", religious and traditional leaders.
- **Women leaders in cooperatives and entrepreneurs:** Supported to enhance their capacity in businesses and address UCW and nurturing their leadership aspirations.
- **Women leaders at the grassroots level through Grassroot Gender Transformation Networks:** Engaged to promote gender transformation by addressing the underlying causes of inequalities in the communities through participatory action research and development of action plans/micro plans in collaboration with the LGA's and community members.
- **Households:** Especially in joint decision-making processes and financial management.
- **Religious and traditional leaders:** Engaged under the outcome 3 in changing social norms and tackling harmful practices. For example, **Kungwi and Nyakanga** involved in adolescent initiation rites were supported to challenge deeply rooted harmful social norms and to incorporate life skills and engage in alternative income-generating activities.

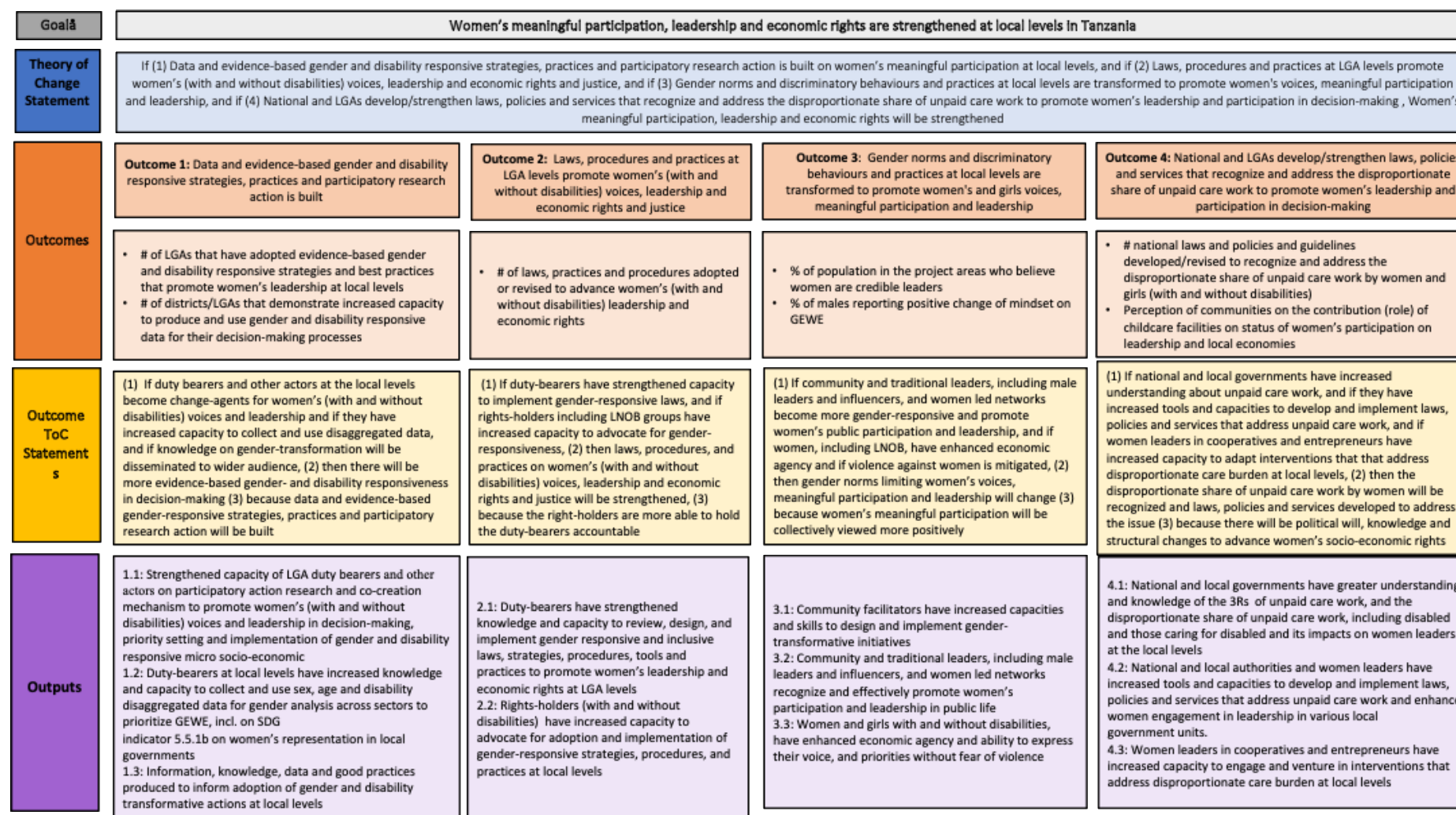
Project Theory of change (ToC)

The WLER Project's Theory of Change (ToC) is built on the premise that strengthening women's and girls' meaningful participation, leadership, and economic rights at local levels in Tanzania will be achieved through a multi-faceted approach. The ToC Statement articulates that this goal will be achieved if:

- i. Data and evidence-based gender and disability-responsive strategies, practices, and participatory research action are built on women's meaningful participation at local levels.
- ii. Laws, procedures, and practices at Local Government Authority (LGA) levels promote women's (with and without disabilities) voices, leadership, and economic rights and justice.
- iii. Gender norms and discriminatory behaviours and practices at local levels are transformed to promote women's voices, meaningful participation, and leadership.
- iv. National and LGAs develop/strengthen laws, policies, and services that recognize and address the disproportionate share of UCW to promote women's leadership and participation in decision-making.

The full ToC is included in Annex 3, with the below diagram showing the key information.

Figure 1: Theory of Change Diagram



Source: Project Proposal

Stakeholders of the project

UN Women identified and worked with several strategic partners and allies. These are central government, local government authorities, training institutions, CSOs, women's rights organizations and networks, women with disability organizations, media particularly community radios, community facilitators, women's economic empowerment forums, the private sector – such as banks, as well as religious and traditional leaders. Table 2 describes key project partners and their roles.

Table 1: Partnership arrangements and roles

Group	Stakeholder	Project role	Main function or contribution
Development partner	Government of Finland	Donor and strategic oversight partner	Funded project implementation and participated in strategic oversight and project governance with UN Women.
United Nations	UN Women	Project lead and accountable entity	Led project design, management, coordination and oversight in partnership with the Government of Finland and implementing stakeholders.
Central government ministries and agencies	President's Office–Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG)	Responsible Party and Project Steering Committee co-chair	Provided policy direction and oversight for LGA implementation; supported coordination across the 18 participating councils; and strengthened gender-data collection through the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System.
	Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups (MoCDGWSG)	Responsible Party and Project Steering Committee co-chair	Oversaw and coordinated gender equality policies and interventions concerning women and special groups. Its Permanent Secretary co-chaired the Steering Committee, while its designated focal point participated in technical coordination.
	Prime Minister's Office–Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disabilities (PMO-LYED/Persons with Disabilities Unit)	Responsible Party	Provided policy direction and technical oversight concerning labour, youth and disability inclusion; promoted the rights and perspectives of women with disabilities; and supported the strengthening of disability-data collection through the Persons with Disabilities Management Information System.
Local and regional government	Association of Local Authorities of Tanzania (ALAT)	Partner and institutional beneficiary	Supported engagement with local government authorities and the dissemination and potential replication of gender-responsive local governance practices.
	Municipal and district councils in the six project regions	Responsible Parties and institutional beneficiaries	Delivered project interventions and strengthened the capacity of local actors to translate national policies into gender-responsive and inclusive action.
	Regional Secretariats	Regional coordinators and facilitators	Led Regional Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Working Groups in Lindi, Mtwara, Arusha, Singida and Pwani, facilitating coordination, knowledge exchange and joint advocacy among LGAs and CSOs.
	Community Development Officers, Social Welfare Officers, planning and land officers, Ward Education Officers, and village and ward executive officers	Local implementation actors and facilitators	Coordinated and supported community-level delivery, outreach, referral, planning, monitoring and follow-up across relevant project components.
Civil society responsible parties and partners	Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP)	Responsible Party	Implemented interventions addressing discriminatory gender norms, behaviours and practices in Pwani, Dar es Salaam, Lindi and Mtwara.
	TUSONGE Community Development Organization	Responsible Party	Implemented grassroots interventions addressing discriminatory gender norms, behaviours and practices in Arusha and Singida.

Group	Stakeholder	Project role	Main function or contribution
	Action on Disability and Development International (ADD International)	Responsible Party and disability-inclusion partner	Strengthened forums of women with disabilities and supported policy influence, leadership participation and economic rights for women with disabilities.
	Tanzania Development Information Organization (TADIO)	Responsible Party	Implemented community-radio initiatives promoting women's leadership and economic rights in selected project regions.
	Tanzania Gender and Sustainable Energy Network (TANGSEN)	Responsible Party	Implemented interventions addressing UCW and promoting clean-cooking solutions, including complementary activities in Ikungi District Council, Singida.
	Equality for Growth (E4G)	Partner and beneficiary organization	Contributed relevant experience and stakeholder perspectives concerning women's economic rights and participation.
Academic and training institutions	Local Government Training Institute–Hombolo	Responsible Party	Strengthened the capacity of local government actors to apply gender-responsive and inclusive strategies, procedures and planning tools supporting women's leadership and economic rights.
Academic and training institutions	University of Dar es Salaam	Responsible Party	Delivered transformational leadership and Violence Against Women in Politics training for women leaders and other relevant stakeholders across the six project regions.
Academic and training institutions	Tengeru Institute of Community Development, Institute of Social Work and Stella Maris University	Partner and institutional beneficiaries	Participated in project learning and capacity development and supported the wider institutional uptake of gender-responsive approaches.
Community media organizations	Jamii FM Community Radio, Standard Radio, LUMEN Radio, Ruangwa FM and Nachingwea FM	Media partners and beneficiaries	Supported public communication and community engagement on women's leadership and economic rights through activities coordinated with TADIO and participating LGAs.

1.3 Evaluation purpose, scope and objectives

The evaluation served two purposes: 1) accountability and learning; 2) informing the development of the next phase of the project. It specifically assesses the project performance against its targets while assessing how the project shifted power dynamics and strengthened women's agency in decision making including documenting outcomes that it has achieved. Lessons learned and recommendations were provided for strategic policy and programmatic decisions, organisational learning, and accountability to broadly inform programming decisions in the advancement of women's leadership and participation in the decision-making processes. Finally, the evaluation feeds into the development of a successor Joint Project between UN Women and UNFPA that builds on much of the WLER project. The evaluation also fits into the development of the new UN Women Strategic Note (2028-2032).

The evaluation covered the implementation period of the project from 28 December 2021 to 30 November 2025. It involved two phases – the first phase – considered as the full evaluation; and a second phase designed as a deep dive evaluation. The purpose of phasing the evaluation was to allow the process, findings and lessons of the first phase to feed into the development of the successor joint project with UNFPA to be completed by end of September 2025 and the second phase to provide insights from the last quarter of implementation which ended by 30 November 2025. The evaluation covered all the six regions of the project and the urban rural contexts in which it was implemented. While a sample of two districts was selected in each of the project regions for extended primary data collection, all districts were covered in the secondary data collection and analysis providing a full picture of the project implementation. It also covered all activities of the project.

Evaluation objectives

The specific objectives of this evaluation were to:

- i. Assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the WLER project approach during the implementation period, including taking stock of project achievements, and results against set targets, challenges, and opportunities.
- ii. Evaluate the Country Office's comparative advantage/added value in the thematic area as compared with key stakeholders, including donors and particularly UN agencies.
- iii. Assess the project design, results framework, strategies, and implementation arrangements including sustainability plans.
- iv. Assess how gender equality principles and the LNOB approach are integrated into the design and implementation of the project.
- v. Present key findings, draw lessons learned, and good practices and provide a set of practical, clear, and forward-looking recommendations that will allow TCO to support the sustainability of results achieved, as well as the replication and scaling-up of project interventions (WLER project phase II).

1.4 Evaluation framework

The evaluation was guided by the evaluation framework presented in **Annex 4**. The evaluation framework provided the key questions and evidence that was collected to answer the main evaluation questions presented in the evaluation framework.

1.5 Evaluation users and uses

Table 2: Evaluation users and uses

Audience	Primary interest and intended use of the evaluation	Dissemination products and engagement
Relevant staff in partner government institutions	Project results and contributions in Tanzania; institutional ownership and sustainability; potential for scaling or institutionalizing effective approaches; lessons and recommendations for similar programmes and organizational change	Policy brief; evaluation summary; validation and dissemination workshop
Responsible Parties implementing the project	Project performance and implementation challenges; recommendations for improving delivery; sustainability and potential for replication or scale-up; lessons for designing and implementing similar projects	Evaluation summary; full evaluation report; validation meeting
National NGOs and CSOs	Project results and contribution to women's leadership and economic rights; opportunities to improve, adapt or replicate interventions; lessons relevant to future civil society programming	Evaluation brief; targeted dissemination or learning session
Academic and research institutions	Evidence on project performance and change pathways; lessons from the intervention models; evidence gaps and opportunities for further research	Evaluation summary; relevant knowledge products and research outputs
WLER participants and rights holders	Changes achieved through the project; how participants' perspectives informed the findings; sustainability of project-supported activities; opportunities for continued participation and accountability	Accessible and adapted evaluation summary in Kiswahili and English; community-level feedback sessions
Relevant staff in UN agencies	Project results and UN Women's contribution; opportunities for coordination and complementary programming; lessons for similar interventions and organizational learning	Evaluation summary; full evaluation report; inter-agency learning session
UN Women at country, regional and headquarters levels	Overall project performance; strategic and operational recommendations; sustainability and scale-up potential; lessons for future programming, partnerships and organizational learning	Evaluation summary; full evaluation report; validation meeting; internal learning session
Development partners, particularly the Government of Finland	Achievement of results and use of resources; sustainability and institutional ownership; recommendations for future support; potential for replication or scale-up; lessons for similar investments	Evaluation summary; full evaluation report; validation and strategic discussion

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

1.6 Evaluation design

The evaluation used a theory-based approach, drawing on the ToC (Figure 1) to test the validity of the design and the project's contribution to observed results. The ToC expanded analysis beyond the results framework, clarified causal pathways, underpinned outcome harvesting, and helped test assumptions. A mixed-methods design combined quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data were drawn from project documents, project financed studies and monitoring reports and national surveys. Qualitative data, gathered primarily from right-holders and stakeholders, provided depth to address the evaluation criteria. Gender equality, human rights, and disability inclusion were mainstreamed throughout, consistent with the proposal and evaluation questions.

The evaluation was utilisation-focused. Evidence informed the design of the next Joint Programme that continued WLER workstreams, contributed to the UN Women Strategic Note (2028–2032), and supported sustaining gains through scale-up or improvement by UN Women and partners in Tanzania. To reinforce use, stakeholders participated in planning, review, and validation. The team worked with the ERG to review outputs and ensure broad consultation. Data collection was gender-sensitive and socially inclusive. Practices avoided reinforcing power dynamics (e.g., separate discussions for women and men; safe spaces for women). Data were sex-disaggregated and assessed equitably for women and men and for marginalised groups (women with disabilities, women in hard-to-reach areas, young women). Women with disabilities were interviewed separately with support (e.g., sign language, mobility transport allowances).

1.7 General approach

The evaluation was guided by the UN Women Evaluation Policy and UNEG Norms and Standards and other documents⁹. The team signed the Evaluation Consultants Agreement Form (UNEG Code of Conduct) and adhered to independence, impartiality, credibility, avoidance of conflicts of interest, and accountability.

- i. **Independence:** The team had no stake in the outcome, was not involved in implementation, and did not benefit from findings.
- ii. **Credibility:** A tested mixed-methods design, appropriate to the assignment, ensured robust evidence with participation from key stakeholders and right-holders. Analytic framing aligned with UNEG Standards, UN Women report standards, and GERAAS.
- iii. **Accountability:** Findings and recommendations were validated with stakeholders. Where disagreements arose, the team sought additional evidence to revise or substantiate findings.
- iv. **Validation and triangulation:** Multiple sources and methods enabled triangulation. Quantitative data assessed progress against the results framework. Qualitative methods—outcome harvesting, FGDs, KIIs, IDIs – validated performance signals and explained change pathways. Respondents for FGDs and IDIs were structured by outcome. Validation steps included: preliminary findings with the project team; a draft-report session with the ERG; and a final validation with wider stakeholders. Conflicting evidence was weighed and conclusions made based on which side the evidence weighed more. There were also consultations with UN Women as well on such evidence.

1.8 Evaluation methodology

The evaluation applied a theory-based, mixed-methods and gender-responsive approach to assess WLER's results, implementation experience, sustainability and contribution to observed changes. It combined secondary

⁹ UN Women Evaluation Handbook, "How to manage gender-responsive" – supports determination of gender and human rights responsive evaluation approaches, UNEG Guidance "Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation" – human rights and gender equality evaluation approaches, UN Women Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS) – provide guidance on the expected quality of the evaluation outputs; and UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation – inform on evaluation principles and ethical considerations.

and primary evidence and was guided by the project's Theory of Change, results framework, OECD-DAC criteria, gender equality and Leave No One Behind principles.

Data collection was conducted in two phases. Phase 1 provided broad coverage across all six project regions and examined variations in implementation, partnerships and context. Phase 2 undertook targeted follow-up across regions and stakeholder groups to address evidence gaps, verify contribution claims and explore selected change processes in greater depth. Consistent evaluation questions, ethical standards and analytical approaches were maintained across both phases.

Secondary data review

The secondary review established the project's documented performance and identified issues requiring verification through primary data collection. Sources included the Project Document and Theory of Change, results framework, annual and quarterly reports, partner reports, workplans, monitoring records, baseline and thematic studies, financial and administrative information, and relevant national and UN policy frameworks.

Documents were reviewed against the evaluation questions and OECD-DAC criteria using an annotated evidence matrix. Project indicators were compiled in an Indicator Catalogue containing definitions, baselines, reported results, data sources and available disaggregation. Data inconsistencies, changes in indicator definitions and gaps in disaggregation were documented and followed up through primary data collection. Monitoring and administrative data were analysed descriptively against available baselines and targets and disaggregated by sex, age, disability and location where feasible.

Primary data collection

Primary data collection used Key Informant Interviews, Focus Group Discussions, In-Depth Interviews and Outcome Harvesting workshops.

- **Key Informant Interviews** gathered strategic, institutional and operational perspectives from UN Women, government institutions, the donor, Responsible Parties, local authorities, CSOs, academic institutions and other UN actors.
- **Focus Group Discussions** explored participants' collective experiences of project relevance, women's leadership and economic participation, social norm change, disability inclusion, UCW and the sustainability of results.
- **In-Depth Interviews** captured individual experiences and sensitive issues that could not be adequately explored in group discussions.
- **Outcome Harvesting workshops** brought together government, Responsible Parties and community-level actors in all six regions to identify and verify intended and unintended outcomes and examine WLER's contribution alongside other influencing factors.

Site and respondent selection was purposive and multi-stage, covering regional, council, ward and community levels. Selection considered the project's geographic coverage, urban and rural contexts, intervention types, evidence gaps and the availability of stakeholder groups with direct experience of WLER. Sampling sought diversity by sex, age, disability status, location and type of project engagement. Detailed site selection, respondent categories and data-collection coverage are presented in the annexes.

Phase 2 follow-up

Phase 2 was conducted during the first quarter of 2026 to address evidence gaps identified after Phase 1. Physical fieldwork was undertaken in Dar es Salaam, Lindi and Pwani, while virtual interviews extended coverage to Arusha, Mtwara and Singida.

A total of 24 qualitative engagements were completed: 13 Key Informant Interviews, nine Focus Group Discussions and two In-Depth Interviews. These explored school-based interventions, gender-responsive planning and budgeting, disability inclusion, local by-law processes, community-level norm change, women's leadership pathways and partner experiences of implementation. Outcome Harvesting workshops were not repeated during this phase. The detailed Phase 2 sample and geographic coverage are provided in the annexes.

Data analysis, triangulation and validation

Qualitative evidence was transcribed and translated where necessary and analysed thematically using an OECD-DAC-aligned coding framework. NVivo supported coding and comparison across stakeholder groups, regions and thematic areas. Quantitative monitoring and administrative data were cleaned, checked for consistency and analysed descriptively against baselines and targets where comparable data were available.

Evidence was triangulated across documents, monitoring data, interviews, group discussions, individual accounts and Outcome Harvesting workshops. Differences between sources were examined to identify inconsistencies or contextual explanations rather than assuming convergence. Preliminary findings were reviewed with the Evaluation Management Group and relevant stakeholders through validation processes to clarify interpretations and address evidence gaps.

1.9 Ethical considerations

The evaluation was implemented in accordance with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines and UN Women's Evaluation Policy. Ethical safeguards will be applied at every stage to protect the rights, dignity, and wellbeing of participants. This includes obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, promoting inclusivity, and adhering to the "do no harm" principle. Table 8 outlines the key ethical principles and how they will be applied in this evaluation.

Table 3: Ethical considerations

Ethical Principle	Application in the Evaluation
Informed Consent	Participants will be informed of the evaluation purpose, their role, voluntary participation, and right to withdraw. Written or verbal consent will be obtained before data collection.
Confidentiality and Anonymity	Personal identifiers will be removed from all transcripts, analysis, and reporting. Quotations will be anonymised and attributed only by stakeholder category and location.
Do No Harm	Data collection will be conducted sensitively to avoid psychological, social, or reputational harm, particularly when discussing gender and disability-related issues.
Inclusivity and Accessibility	Venues will be accessible, and reasonable accommodations (e.g., sign-language interpretation, adapted materials) will be provided for participants with disabilities.
Safeguarding	All data collectors will be trained on safeguarding and referral pathways in case of disclosures of abuse or rights violations.

1.10 Limitations of the evaluation

There were several limitations to the evaluation provided below.

- Inclusion of women with disabilities:** Identification and mobilisation of women with disabilities were limited; in most districts FGDs could not be convened and were replaced with IDIs (exception: Kibaha–Mukuza). Participation was low and skewed by disability type due to accessibility constraints.
- Government stakeholder participation:** Availability of key officials was constrained by staff transfers and the pre-election period; in Dar es Salaam only Community Development Officer (CDOs) were available.
- Beneficiary identification and mobilisation:** Risks of selection bias were present where some beneficiaries had prior exposure to similar interventions. Mobilising young women was challenging as they were not a specific target of the project. "Model family" application was inconsistent across sites, and implementation modalities varied.
- Verification of statistics:** Many reported figures could not be verified during fieldwork; several were rough estimates or unknown to officials.

FINDINGS

This section presents the findings of the evaluation. They are organised according to the OECD criteria of Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, Gender and LNOB. A last section on considerations for Phase 2 has been added in line with the TOR. Within each criterion, the evaluation answers questions drawn from the evaluation framework (under detailed questions) in **Annex 2**.

1.11 Relevance

Summary of findings

The evaluation finds the project well-aligned to women's and communities' priority needs effectively in several domains: it fostered women's leadership, agency and voices at community level; advanced gender-responsive budgeting and institutional practice within LGAs; enabled progress on women's land rights; catalysed evidence-informed by-laws addressing harmful practices; confidence and skills of women strengthened to engage in leadership positions, and initiated positive – though incomplete – shifts in social norms through community, traditional and religious leaders. For a future phase, consideration should be given to scaling coverage from participation to power; deepening economic empowerment beyond basic training to include accessible capital, advanced financial literacy, market linkages and value addition; systematically addressing UCW ; strengthening male engagement with a broader Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) approach; ensuring dedicated, resourced intentional inclusion of women and girls with disabilities (assistive devices, interpreters, accessible infrastructure and flexible finance); building intergenerational mentorship pipelines for young women and protections in markets; streamlining access to LGA loans and decentralising essential IDs; standardising business training (with mentorship); and emphasising “research-into-use” so evidence consistently drives LGA decisions and practice.

Are the interventions addressing a priority need for women and girls – including those with disabilities?

Finding 1: The project largely addressed the needs of women and those with disabilities to fully realise their leadership and economic rights. The necessity of the interventions is based on addressing deeply entrenched challenges across economic, leadership, and social domains.

A primary challenge addressed is the low participation and representation of women in leadership and decision-making processes, particularly at the local level. The project addressed this by empowering women to participate in leadership positions through addressing several barriers that affect women. The interventions aimed to transform the deeply embedded negative social norms, discriminatory practices, and the prevailing patriarchal system that often views women as weak or incapable of leadership and their role being in the home.

“According to the culture and society of Lindi the interventions were right considering the nature, norms and values that are present in the municipal. The culture and norms sometimes not fair to girls and women. There is gender inequality, violence against women, women's oppression and attitudes in communities that women cannot contest and have a high position in a community or lead a community. Women must remain at the home and take care of the children. They have to play their sexual roles and satisfy the men in their homes.” – KII with SWO, Lindi municipal, Lindi region

“Traditions and social attitudes are the main challenges that affect women to participate in leadership. In many villages, a woman leading is still seen as ‘Not normal.’ People openly say, ‘That job is for men.’”
– FGD with male influencers, Chalinze district, Pwani region

Lack of financial resources was identified as a significant barrier for women's leadership and political participation, especially in terms of their ability to cover election expenses and mobilise campaigns. According to the baseline survey undertaken by the project in 2022¹⁰, women's limited participation in the local economies was due to their lack of opportunity to access loans for starting their own businesses, and

¹⁰ UN Women (2022) Baseline Report: Strengthening Women's and Girls' Meaningful Participation, Leadership, and Economic Rights (WLER) at the Local Level in Tanzania.

pervasive financial struggles. The interventions promoted women's access to finance and supported entrepreneurship initiatives.

Knowledge and skills to navigate the political landscape and confidence to stand before communities including men were also noted as low among women limiting their ability to contest in leadership selection processes. By providing leadership training to women the project aligned with this priority need.

“Low self-confidence is real. After years inside a system telling women, they ‘can’t,’ some hesitate even when given a chance.” – FGD with male influencers, Chalinze district, Pwani region

“The biggest barrier used to be mindset. With the trainings we’re getting, it’s now easier for women to contest. Having a woman President for the county is a real confidence boost, women, including young women, can see it’s possible for a woman to lead at that level, more so at grassroots level.” – FGD with women leaders, Kibaha district

“Leadership begins as a calling but is sharpened through leadership training. Women need more training to build confidence and courage to contest in politics and leadership.” – IDI with former women councilor, Tandahimba district

The project targets economic challenges that hinder women's participation in society. Discussions with women entrepreneurs highlighted limited access to capital, financial literacy, knowledge of markets (especially selecting appropriate businesses), basic business management skills, and value addition as the main challenges they faced. Lack of capital was the most mentioned and top of the list of challenges. The project rightly focused on promoting women's capacity to access loans, including the 10% interest-free loans provided by LGAs, and supporting the formation and strengthening of entrepreneurship groups like VICOBA (Village Community Banking). Despite extensive efforts to train women's groups to access loans from LGAs, some groups had not received any loans partly due to what respondents noted as a lengthy and difficult application process and the high costs they had to incur (as much as TSH30,000). Therefore, ensuring application processes for LGA loans are gender responsive was an important issue to consider in addition to building women's demand for such. Village Community Banking (VICOBA) groups provided women access to micro-loans to further support performance of women owned businesses. While these were viewed as inadequate to meet businesses expansion needs of women, they filled a gap in the absence of the government loans or other financial products.

“Not much. The project only gave us awareness and entrepreneurship training, but no funds or loans to improve our economic status.” – FGD with women entrepreneurs, Tandahimba district

“Yes. The big new challenge is money. Before, the main barriers were fear, violence, and low confidence. Training and awareness have helped, and violence feels lower now. Even capable women struggle if they don’t have that basic economic muscle. So economic power has become the main obstacle for many women.” – FGD women entrepreneurs, Kibaha district

The business training provided to women's groups built an important foundation for entrepreneurship. The evaluation highlights the opportunity to deepen this support through financial literacy and market development initiatives, which were mentioned by women as most needed after access to capital. Addressing challenges related to land rights and ownership, as women often cannot inherit land. Interventions supported women in acquiring land ownership rights, formalising land, and receiving title deeds, which can be used as collateral to access loans.

“The project also supported women economically, helping them formalize land ownership, which reduces dependency on men and lowers exposure to GBV linked to economic vulnerability.” – FGD with traditional initiation instructors, Mtwara municipal council

The project specifically addressed harmful traditional practices and UCW. The disproportionate share of UCW limits women's time for leadership and economic activities. Interventions focused on recognising UCW burden for women find strategies to reducing its impact e.g., through advocating for shared domestic responsibilities (male engagement) through advocacy in the communities as well as national level policy advocacy and providing labour saving technologies and social infrastructure such as clean cooking

energy and child care centres. Through community-led micro plans and gender-responsive budgeting processes, the project also integrated care considerations into local development priorities, including improved access to water, clean energy etc. Addressing GBV (physical, emotional, and economic) is a key priority. The project provides awareness on GBV, child marriage, and rushed divorces.

“They target critical community needs, such as access to land titles to economically empower women and tackling gender-based violence. These interventions have directly impacted women.” – KII SWO Tandahimba

The project was designed to directly benefit women and girls with disabilities. Although inclusion strategies were well planned and implemented, dedicated interventions were insufficient to reach desired number of women with disabilities. Specific challenges, such as accessibility and the high costs associated with PWD participation (e.g., need for personal assistants, translators, and assistive devices), require more targeted and financed solutions. This is discussed in more detail throughout the report.

To what extent are the approaches of implementation (partners, modalities of SBC) appropriate to address the needs of women and girls?

Finding 2: Implementation approaches were generally appropriate and strengthened local ownership, but uneven integration, coverage and follow-up limited their ability to address the full Theory of Change.

Implementation in the regions was preceded by participatory formative processes, including workshops with regional and district stakeholders in each project region. These workshops informed the selection of participating districts and wards and the interventions to be implemented in each location, taking account of their specific contexts. This process strengthened regional and district stakeholder ownership and supported the development of context-specific interventions. It was consistent with the project’s intention to have LGAs lead implementation and deliver interventions responsive to locally identified needs.

The approach contributed to effective interventions, including VICOBA groups, model families and Grassroots Gender Transformative Networks. However, it also presented limitations in addressing the project’s Theory of Change comprehensively, which assumed that multiple integrated interventions were required to address the interrelated causes of women’s limited leadership and economic rights. As each LGA prioritized the interventions considered most relevant to its context, other connected causal barriers were sometimes not addressed. The participatory design approach would therefore benefit from stronger alignment between locally selected interventions and the causal factors and change pathways identified in the overall project Theory of Change.

Working through LGAs¹¹ was an appropriate strategy that supported delivery of the project’s objectives. It increased the motivation and ownership of district councils and provided the project with institutional leverage to advance gender-responsive actions, including gender-responsive planning and budgeting and the issuance of Certificates of Customary Rights of Occupancy to women. The ownership generated through this approach also supported the institutionalization and potential continuation of project interventions, as discussed further under the **Efficiency and Sustainability sections**.

As discussed further in **Section** Error! Reference source not found., the selection of civil society Responsible Parties was generally appropriate and enabled the project to build on their technical expertise, established initiatives and presence in targeted districts. Action on Disability and Development provided expertise in identifying persons with disabilities and advising on appropriate disability-inclusive support.

Community-level delivery mechanisms involving traditional and religious leaders, male influencers and community volunteers were also relevant to the needs of women and girls. Grassroots Gender Transformative Networks and Knowledge Centres supported community-led gender-responsive planning and action. The involvement of different council departments—including social welfare, legal affairs, lands, planning, community development and Opportunities and Obstacles to Development officers—strengthened implementation and facilitated delivery of interventions requiring cross-sectoral expertise.

¹¹ The project funded LGAs to implement project activities through the Community Development Offices.

Engagement with male influencers, traditional leaders and the media was an important component of social norm change, although its intensity and effectiveness varied. Recommendations for strengthening this approach in the successor Joint Programme are discussed further in **Section 0**.

During the evaluation, women were asked about the influence of relationships with their husbands or intimate partners on decisions to start or continue a business or pursue a leadership position. They were also asked about the influence of community attitudes and opinions on these decisions. Across the discussions, women identified relationships with intimate partners as a major determinant of their choices. Most explained that they would discuss a proposed activity with their husbands until agreement was reached and that, if agreement was not possible, they might withdraw from the activity to protect the relationship. Participants in Lindi Municipal Council and Mtwara Municipal Council described divorce or the threat of divorce as a particularly significant influence on women's decision-making.

The model-family intervention was therefore an appropriate response. It sought to strengthen joint decision-making, improve intimate-partner relationships and promote a more equitable sharing of household responsibilities. It also supported women's participation in decisions concerning household income, including income from agricultural production in which women were principal producers. Addressing these household dynamics was important for enabling women to exercise leadership and economic rights while mitigating potential tensions associated with women's empowerment. However, given the importance of intimate-partner relationships to women's economic and leadership decisions, the limited application of the model-family approach across districts reduced its potential contribution.

Although relationships with husbands and intimate partners influenced women's economic and leadership decisions, community perceptions were particularly important when women considered taking up public leadership positions. This required changes in men's attitudes towards women leaders and aspirants. However, as noted earlier and discussed further in **Section 0**, male engagement produced uneven results and required a broader social and behaviour change approach. This could combine interpersonal communication through influencers with social-mobilization initiatives such as joint dialogues and practical workshops. Participants also identified role models, mentorship and Information, Education and Communication materials as important for reinforcing training and increasing its effectiveness.

Approaches to business training varied across regions and did not consistently address the full range of skills required by women entrepreneurs. Market analysis—including the identification of viable products and services—and financial literacy were repeatedly identified as gaps. Women entrepreneurs also emphasized the importance of mentorship to help them apply the skills acquired through project-supported training. At the time of the evaluation, UN Women had begun addressing these gaps by engaging financial institutions to provide training in market analysis, market linkages and financial literacy. However, this support was still at an early stage, and evidence of its results was not yet available.

Outcome 1 focused on generating evidence to influence policy and programmatic decisions at national and LGA levels. Stakeholders generally perceived that evidence generation had not consistently translated into improvements at the LGA level. This suggests that the evidence-generation approach required a stronger “research-to-use” model connecting research products with specific users, policy processes and implementation decisions.

There were nevertheless important examples of evidence influencing policy and institutional practice. Research on *Jando* and *Unyago* cultural practices in Lindi and Mtwara sought to inform revisions to the teachings provided to young people during initiation ceremonies. The findings contributed to regional authorities promoting the development of by-laws regulating these practices. The by-laws had subsequently been developed and were awaiting approval by councils in districts across the two regions. Another example was the integration of gender indicators into PO-RALG's Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System. Further information is presented in **Section 1.13.1.2** and Error! Reference source not found..

Stakeholders across the participating districts consistently reported that the project's geographic coverage was limited, reaching only a small number of wards and villages and leaving many women and girls unreached. Expanding both geographic coverage and the number of participants was constrained by the available budget and the risk that broader coverage would dilute the intensity and quality of support. Within

these constraints, the project's decision to target districts and wards with comparatively greater needs was reasonable. Nevertheless, limited coverage reduced its ability to generate results at scale and reinforced the importance of institutionalizing and replicating effective approaches through existing local systems.

To what extent does the project address the causal problems facing women including integration/complementarities of the different interventions to support women and girls in LGA?

Finding 3: Through its four outcomes the project addresses the main causes of women's deprivation of economic and leadership rights.

It addresses both practical and strategic needs of women through shifting social norms, removing policy, legislative and institutional bottlenecks for women's participation in leadership and economic activities. These challenges are confirmed by several studies conducted by the project including the baseline survey; a qualitative study on women's participation in decision making at the local level; and an in-depth study on strengthening meaningful participation, leadership, and economic rights for women and girls at the local level in Tanzania.

One challenge mentioned in the qualitative study on women's participation in decision making at the local level and baseline survey are the political bottlenecks that include the use of sexual corruption against women. Other issues identified were institutionalised negative perspective of women's capacity to lead within political parties and hence the limited involvement of women outside seats allocated for the quota system. While it indeed tried to address these challenges, importantly so, through the revision of the electoral laws (see more in Section 1.13.1.2) and political parties Act which recognised and outlawed GBV in the political space, to effectively address these gaps, the project needed to work with political parties. However, this was not possible as the Government of Tanzania had requested no electoral assistance from the UN in Tanzania. The project's theory of change (TOC) integrates women's political participation and leadership and economic rights, recognizing their deep interdependence. Lastly, the three levels of focus of national, regional and local provided the enabling environment while directly addressing challenges that have immediate bearing on women in communities.

Finding 4: Based on the sources, the project's assumptions largely held true, leading to significant outcomes, although the depth and sufficiency of the changes were often constrained by scale, deeply embedded cultural norms, and time limitations.

The project's theory of change (TOC) had several assumptions underpinning the causal linkages as follows:

- Data will unveil the bottlenecks for low proportion of women representatives and provide evidence-based solutions;
- Strengthened capacity of duty bearers will create willingness for LGAs to implement gender-responsive laws, budgets, and other procedures;
- Capacity strengthening of community facilitators will be effective to change social norms, and enhance women's voices, participation and leadership; and
- Authorities recognize the issues around UCW and are willing to take necessary actions to accelerate change.

Assumption 1: Data will unveil the bottlenecks for low proportion of women representatives and provide evidence-based solutions

This assumption largely held true. The project emphasised collecting and using sex-disaggregated data to inform project interventions and identify specific bottlenecks, resulting in evidence-based solutions and ultimately gender-responsive decision-making. The work on by-laws to regulate *Jando and Unyago* cultural practices that reinforced the patriarchal system and heightened vulnerability of girls to child marriage, early pregnancies and school dropout were formulated after project led studies in Lindi and Mtwara regions. Several studies mentioned earlier, also unearthed several bottlenecks for women's leadership and economic rights that can form the basis of interventions that promote these rights – not only for the WLER project but for other projects supporting the same objectives. The project's analysis, such as the situational analysis survey, was used to determine the status of women in leadership and economic activities, thereby

influencing LGA plans. Monitoring data was also used as evidence to improve project effectiveness during implementation

"I can boldly say that WLER project added value to the district's initiatives. For instance, through WLER's Situational analysis survey we were able to determine the number of women participating in leadership and economic activities." – KII with DCDO, Ikungi district

"I can confirm yes, because LGA at ward and village level are including gender issues as one of key meeting agenda. But also, at district level, Community Development Officers are capturing gender segregated data of women participating in economic and leadership activities." – KII with Planning officer, Ikungi district

The project's contribution to the development of the disability data collection tool and the PD-MIS, and subsequent data collection will likely enhance support for women with disabilities from the updated database of their locations and issues. Support for engendering the iMES will support gender responsive programming by LGAs ensuring national data is available that supports gender responsive service delivery and support. Land officers also contributed official records to establish a baseline of women landowners, which helped tailor strategies for issuing titles.

"This was a crucial step because the project required verified figures to establish a baseline of women landowners. I recall sitting with the project team, being asked questions like: 'How many women currently hold land certificates? What challenges do you see in this process?' Our office provided the official records, and those figures became the foundation for the strategies that followed. Without such data, any interventions would have lacked a solid basis." – KII with Land office, Kibaha district

Assumption 2: Strengthened capacity of duty bearers will create willingness for LGAs to implement gender-responsive laws, budgets, and other procedures

This assumption held strongly regarding LGA capacity, willingness, and changes in institutional practice and budgeting. Across all districts LGAs showed a commitment and willingness to apply GRB principles, in some districts e.g. Ruangwa, and Lindi municipal, budget plans would not pass without gender issues being identified.

"Yes, there are clear changes. We now consider gender in our budgets, and staff actively check with the project focal person to make sure gender issues are included. We are more sensitive to these issues, and we take time to review and reconcile plans with the budget, so inclusion is not missed." – KII with Planning office, Kibaha district.

"Gender responsive budgeting has taken up. There was national guidance but we did not have the capacity to implement them. The project trained us and we see now if councillors and council management have not identified the issue of gender, they will not pass the budget." – KII with CDO, Lindi municipal.

LGAs strengthened organisational practices by prioritising services for PWDs including women with disabilities, and pregnant women in hospitals. Construction policies are now adhered to more strictly to ensure gender-responsive public buildings (e.g., ramps, elevators for PWDs, private menstrual hygiene rooms in schools, breastfeeding facilities in markets). LGAs adapted by-laws or operationalized action plans on specific gender issues, such as developing village by-laws, child care by-laws, and beginning the process to regulate harmful traditional practices like *Jando and Unyago* in Lindi.

"It is true that here in Ikungi DC, WLER project facilitated development of by-laws to advance use of child care centres. Village by-laws of 2024 restricted women to bring children to the market to advance use of established child care centres These are important by-laws that help to increase women participation in economic activities." – KII with Legal officer, Ikungi district

Assumption 3: Capacity strengthening of community facilitators will be effective to change social norms, and enhance women's voices, participation and leadership

This assumption held successfully and produced significant initial results, though the change process remains incomplete due to the deep-rooted nature of social norms. Interventions (including working with civil society, traditional/religious leaders and male champions) led to a noted reduction in negative male attitudes towards women's participation. Community perceptions shifted, and women are now viewed as

leaders who are “accepted and valued”. Traditional leaders reported that their views changed dramatically after project trainings and exposure to examples of successful women leaders (See more discussion in Section 1.14.1.2, effectiveness). Leadership training and mentorship successfully built women's confidence, courage, and grit. This directly translated into increased action. More women began participating actively and speaking up in community and *mtaa* meetings.

“In meetings and committees’ women now talk without fear. Some are elected as members or even chairpersons. Savings groups have also multiplied. More women are starting small businesses. Their confidence has grown—something we never saw before.” – FGD with Traditional leaders, Chalinze

“Yes, women are now participating actively in village local meetings and raise their voice in different agenda.” – FGD with traditional leaders Majengo

Assumption 4: Authorities recognise the issues around UCW and are willing to take necessary actions to accelerate change

This assumption held, as institutional recognition and initial actions were evident, supported by observable changes in household behaviour.

Authorities recognized that the unequal care responsibilities limits women's participation in leadership and economic activities. Some LGA staff (not in the majority) now explicitly focus on UCW when planning and budgeting.

“There is also a change in what we understand. Before, some gender issues were not well known to us. Now we can name them and plan for them. A good example is unpaid work, we now recognize how much time it takes from women and how it limits their chances to engage in income-earning activities. With that awareness, we try to plan in ways that reduce that burden or at least take it into account when we budget. Overall, the approach is more intentional, and the knowledge among staff has improved.” – KII Planning officer, Kibaha district

“The gender training opened our eyes to unpaid care work — it consumes women’s time and blocks economic participation. We now educate communities to share these duties so women can engage in the economy.” – KII CDO, Kibaha district

“Yes; there are changes. LGA staff have improved in the way they approach O&OD by focusing on men involvement in unpaid care work.” – KII with O&OD focal person Arusha city council

Although authorities recognised the issue, UCW was not a strong focus in all project locations (e.g., Mtwara). Furthermore, male participation in UCW was sometimes highlighted as an area needing stronger engagement, as some resistance persists (e.g., being “labelled “weak men”).

What new needs or priorities have emerged among different categories of women and girls?

Finding 5: Based on the project monitoring, KIIs, and FGDs, several new or persistent, previously unmet needs and priorities have emerged among different categories of women and girls, particularly women entrepreneurs, youth, and women with disabilities (WWDs). Many stakeholders asserted that the needs remain largely the same – focusing on capital, leadership training, and rights awareness.

The following areas emerged as critical new priorities that require enhanced or specialised interventions in future programming:

- **Economic empowerment:** The approach to economic empowerment was a primary focus, beneficiaries highlighted that the initial approach must be deepened to ensure sustainability and growth. The need for low or no interest capital was a universal and persistent need yet accessibility was limited despite changes for administrative requirements for increase women’s access to the loans. Beyond basic training, there is a strong need for: (1) advanced financial literacy to help women separate capital from profit (or “*stop eating the capital*”) and manage loan repayments effectively; (2) digital literacy training and access to computer and internet to support loan applications submissions for the government 10% loans; (3) market access and linkages. Women need support to identify and access new, reliable markets, including online marketing skills and training to process products to participate in the

international market; (4) innovation and Value Addition. Lack of innovation is a bottleneck, as women often engage in the same activities (e.g., selling vegetables, poultry). They need exposure to new business ideas and training on preservation, value addition, packaging, and quality standards (e.g., affordable labs/mobile clinics for checks and barcodes); and (5) addressing bureaucratic obstacles. Women face challenges with cumbersome and long bureaucratic procedures when accessing LGA 10% loans and difficulty with business documentation and compliance (licensing, taxes).

- **Specialised needs for women and girls with disabilities:** While WWDs were included in training, the priority emerging need is for concrete, practical, and targeted support to facilitate genuine participation and economic independence. These include access to assistive devices, interpretation services, accessible infrastructure, and support to escorts in community level meetings¹². Discussions with women with disabilities also noted that loan finance needs to be adjusted to their reality, including flexible repayment plans and a dedicated budget line to cover accessibility costs (e.g., hiring a personal assistant). Concerns arose regarding the low inclusion of WWDs in groups where work requires high physical ability (e.g., sewed production), suggesting a need for projects tailored to specific disabilities. For women with disabilities, issues of climate change (specifically concerning productivity and resources) emerged as priorities that were not comprehensively addressed in Phase 1. There is an explicit need for evidence-based interventions focused on how to mitigate climate change effects on WWDs
- **Needs of young women and girls:** The project targeted girls through school clubs. Young girls who leave school were not a target from the project design. Nonetheless, while girls are active in school, after they finish secondary school there is a gap, and there are no follow-up activities or mentorship to keep them engaged in leadership or economic pathways as one group of young women from Kibaha district noted, *“Mentorship. Pair us with women leaders who are also entrepreneurs. We need to see role models who balance both”*. Young women running businesses or campaigning need protection measures as they are often experienced gender-based violence in markets. Others noted that there was need to increase the number of young women in the programme activities as noted by the SWO from Singida, *“...young women and male beneficiaries were not adequately reached. The interventions should also aim to reach younger male and young women for effective change”*. This is an area that could be considered in a new project.
- **Male engagement:** There is a specific request to target boys (youth) with early education on values, laws, rights, and responsibilities to prevent the recurrence of negative attitudes in the next generation. *“Do not forget boys. They need early education on values, laws, rights, and responsibilities. If we don’t prepare boys today, tomorrow we will face the same negative attitudes again.” – FGD male influencers, Chalinze district.*

“The project should also try and incorporate the youth (both sexes) and include men so that there is no societal imbalance. If they do not grow at the same level, men will begin to see women as threats. As a result, there is a potential for GBV as women will be more confident and self-aware of what they can be.” – FGD with women in leadership, Kibaha district

Boys were included in the girls’ clubs on a ratio of 70:30 (girls:boys) to address knowledge and attitudes towards girls and women’s role and capacities.

- **Systemic, community, and care-related needs:** Many women lack NIDA identity cards, which are required to access loans. The process at district offices is long and costly. There is a need to decentralise NIDA registration services to local government offices. While some progress was made (e.g., plans for a centre in Machinga Market), there is still a need for childcare corners at community meetings, entrepreneurship trainings, and market venues to support mothers balancing care work with business/leadership activities. Awareness of GBV has increased, leading to higher reporting. However, interventions must move beyond awareness to the referral and resolution side, ensuring follow-through until cases are resolved, potentially by collaborating more closely with legal officers as noted by an SWO from Chalinze, *“It should also go beyond awareness for example on GBV. They now know*

¹² In all the events/workshops trainings, e.tc supported by WLER, the project supported the escort costs for women with disabilities.

what it is and they know they should report it. But what missing or what needs strengthening is not only the referral pathway but also the resolution side, like to follow through a case) until it is resolved". This was also supported by a CDO from Arusha city council who noted that, *"Beyond awareness, there is need for strong partnerships between all the stakeholders. To put an end to GBV. For example, strong partnership between CDOs and legal officers is required to ensure cases are seen to finality".*

- **Male engagement:** Although men's attitudes have changed significantly, male champions need stronger, continuous engagement and support to confront resistance and negative labels ("weak men") from traditional elements of the community. A new, specific social challenge emerged in some areas, where an increasing number of [young] men are abandoning their families. This leaves women (especially in places like Baraa ward, Arusha) alone to raise children, impacting household welfare and requiring targeted interventions on joint decision making.

What can be done to address these new needs and priorities?

Finding 6: The project partners and beneficiaries identified several key actions needed to address the priorities that emerged during the project implementation, focusing increasing effectiveness, reaching those less reached, deepening specialised skills, and improving exiting interventions.

Table 4: Suggestions from stakeholders to address the new needs

Key area	Suggested actions
Economic empowerment	• Address barriers that women face in access in zero interest government loans – bureaucracy, cost of application etc. • Training must continue with a strong focus on advanced financial literacy to help women manage cash flow, separate capital from profit, and avoid misusing funds. • Projects should find reliable markets for final products by providing market access linkages and supporting women to identify and access new business ideas. Technical support should be provided on preservation, value addition, packaging, and quality standards. This requires institutionalizing product/quality support (such as mobile labs, packaging clinics, and barcode access). • The government should be lobbied to decentralize NIDA registration services to local government offices (e.g., once a week) to enable women to access necessary documentation for loans. • Continue efforts to allocate budgets for surveying community land and facilitate women's access to land title deeds. The LGA should provide land officers with support (equipment, transport) to reach remote villages and guide women through the CCRO process.
Specialised needs for women and girls with disabilities	• Future phases should focus on providing practical support/supporting gear, including wheelchairs, white canes, hearing aids, and other working tools. Consulting WWDs before purchasing devices is crucial to ensure they are the right fit. • Sign language interpreters and experts should be deployed during the implementation of interventions, and Community Development/Social Welfare officers can be trained on sign language. There must be strict adherence to gender-responsive needs in the construction of public and service buildings, including accessible markets and toilets. • While WWDs have access to loans from the 2% of council budgets, loan finance should be adjusted to their reality, including flexible repayment plans and a budget line for accessibility costs (e.g., hiring a personal assistant). • Develop specific curricula and tailor-made interventions for WWDs. Interventions should target the unreached WWDs and ensure WWDs are actively involved in social matters. • Interventions should be developed to address the issue or effect of climate change on women and youth with disabilities, providing targeted education on climate change to help women groups manage investment timing.
Needs of young women and girls	• Provide mentorship, including role models for girls after they finish secondary school inspire them for leadership and business; and involve schools early so boys learn new norms.

Key area	Suggested actions
	Strengthen protection for young women from GBV in markets.
Systemic, community, and care-related needs	Community-based solutions must be implemented to reduce the burden of UCW. This includes supporting the adoption of clean cooking energy, and establishing childcare corners/centres at meetings, trainings, and markets. Water services should be brought closer to reduce the time women spend fetching water. Move beyond GBV awareness to the resolution side by strengthening follow-up until cases are resolved. This requires stronger collaboration between CDOs and legal officers and training the justice system. Implement protection measures like hotlines and legal support for young women and entrepreneurs facing harassment.
Male engagement	There is a need for stronger, continuous engagement of men. This should include focusing one WLER objective specifically on men, traditional, and religious leaders and engaging more religious and traditional leaders. Male engagement should be strongly focused on land rights issues, encouraging men to allocate or jointly register land with women, and make joint decisions, in the household. This should be balanced with community level work of engaging community leaders and institutions.
Enhancing leadership capacity	Scaling up and prioritizing of refresher trainings and mentorship for councillors, village and MTAA leaders, and targeted transformational leadership training for the new ones coming in. There is need to support mechanisms that address sexual corruption within political parties and discrimination of women by party leaders in the nomination processes.

1.12 Coherence

Summary of findings
The evaluation highlights that the WLER project achieved strong coherence by strategically aligning with the UNSDCF (2022–2027) and leveraging multi-level collaborations with UN agencies, national ministries, LGAs, CSOs, and academic institutions. UN Women’s leadership in coordination platforms – such as the Enabling Environment Outcome Group, Gender Equality Human Rights Working Group, and work with PO-RALG – ensured complementarity with national systems and reduced duplication of interventions. Notable achievements include strengthening iMES with gender indicators, jointly updating the PD-MIS with UNFPA for enhanced disability data, and leveraging the UN joint programme basket fund to support women aspirants’ leadership training. The project’s partnership with LGTI-Hombolo institutionalised gender-responsive budgeting within the government’s planning cycle, while collaboration with UDSM provided politically neutral spaces for sensitive training such as Violence Against Women in Politics (VAWP), reaching over 650 police officers, 84 journalists, and 26 EMB officials. Coordination with FAO, WFP, TGNP, and regional GEWE working groups amplified synergies, enabling more consistent messaging on women’s empowerment, UCW, and economic inclusion. These partnerships not only expanded reach and cost-effectiveness but also enhanced sustainability by embedding gender-responsive practices into existing government and partner systems.

What collaborations are there with other UN agencies and their value addition?

Finding 7: The WLER project involves collaborations with other UN agencies primarily through high-level coordination mechanisms, strategic alignment with national frameworks, and targeted joint initiatives, especially concerning data systems and future programming.

The project indicators and interventions are intentionally aligned as closely as possible with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) (2022–2027), specifically under the outcome area on the Enabling Environment. This alignment is crucial for coordinated efforts, especially given limited resources. It helps reduce the overall burden of reporting for UN agencies, communities, and the government, while avoiding duplication of interventions.

UN Women plays a leading role in several UN coordination platforms, ensuring WLER experiences inform the wider system. These include:

- UN Women co-chairs the Enabling Environment Outcome Group.
- UN Women co-chairs the Gender Equality Human Rights Working Group (the UN coordination mechanism on gender equality).
- UN Women sits in the Development Partners Group on governance.

UN Women also actively collaborated with national agencies in systems where other UN agencies were also involved, adding significant value in terms of sustainability. The work on PDMIS for example where UN Women is working with UNFPA to update the Persons with Disabilities Management Information System (PD-MIS). This update aims to incorporate specific indicators that measure the socioeconomic aspects of women with disabilities. This collaboration ensures the tool developed by UN Women to capture socioeconomic data on Women with Disabilities (WWDs) is used nationally, incorporated into the government's permanent registration system, which also involves UNFPA. This is viewed as highly effective because accountability and ownership reside with the government.

UN Women successfully utilized about \$47,000.00 of funds mobilized by the UN Women Headquarters (a basket fund including Norway and Ireland) for a program on transformational leadership for women aspirants in Kigoma, capitalizing on lessons from WLER to strengthen work with sister UN agencies. In Singida region where WLER project operates, UN Women is currently implementing a complementary initiative in partnership with FAO, WFP, and IFAD to advance the increased productivity and income for women farmers. Through these synergies, UN Women and its partners promoted women's economic empowerment and leadership within agricultural cooperatives.

What added value does the WLER project have to initiatives by other UN agencies, and local governments?

Finding 8: The WLER project provides significant added value to the initiatives of other UN agencies and local governments (LGAs) primarily through its targeted approach on data systems, integrated programming, policy influence, capacity building, and strengthening local coordination mechanisms.

In general, the project contributed to the UNSDCF (2022–2027) on promoting gender equality in political and economic spheres a key priority of the UN in Tanzania. UN Women in collaboration with the PO-RALG strengthened the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (iMES) by adding 48 gender indicators. Later, these indicators were shared with the stakeholders for their final review and after the feedback, the list was updated with 68 gender-responsive indicators. This initiative responded to PO-RALG's request, as the iMES initially had only three gender indicators. This pioneering system-generated data, particularly from villages and remote areas, is expected to inform the national plan of action for violence against women policies led by the MoCDWGSP and beyond.

By implementing through LGAs, the project provided essential logistical and financial support (e.g., fuel for vehicles) to Community Development Officers (CDOs) and Social Welfare Officers (SWOs) in the districts, enabling them to reach communities directly, listen to challenges, and promote gender equality in a way that was previously rare due to limited local government budgets. This significantly expands the reach of LGA services as CDOs complained for the limited availability of resources for transport from the council budget to engage communities.

“The project complemented existing work by the Community Development Department, which deals with women's challenges and rights protection. WLER helped reach communities directly and solve challenges instead of waiting for them to come to us.” – KII with CDO, Tandahimba district

The project also strengthened the capacities of LGAs to implement the government's policy for gender responsive budgeting in local councils. It provided LGA officers with knowledge and skills on gender mainstreaming and gender responsive budgeting, providing them with skills and tools to craft more gender-responsive budgets and plans. The efforts have increased gender responsive planning and budgeting in the councils (See Sections 1.13.1.2 and **Error! Reference source not found.**).

By utilizing a bottom-up approach (Participatory Action Research- PAR) and co-creation mechanisms, WLER ensured that the developed action plans and micro-plans are highly relevant to the actual issues faced by women and girls, fostering local ownership by the LGAs and right holders. WLER provided LGAs with the

tools and knowledge to incorporate UCW interventions into their planning. This included supporting the establishment of community-based childcare centers and promoting clean cooking solutions to reduce women's time burden, which officials acknowledged was previously overlooked.

The project leverages existing government programmes in several ways. The project focused on forming and registering women's groups (such as VICOBA) and providing them with business training, making them eligible to access the 10% interest-free LGA loans (4% reserved for women). This direct link between WLER's capacity building and the government's financial mandate ensures that LGAs are reaching their targets and that women are receiving funds. The project supported the documentation and printing of the VICOBA model, which the government is showing commitment to adopting even beyond the WLER regions, demonstrating the creation of a sustainable knowledge product. The work on the iMES and PDMIS are other examples.

What partnerships were established with other interventions/ work of CSOs, training institutions and academia to advance the project objectives?

Finding 9: The project established mechanisms for coordination and partnerships with CSOs that have enhanced coordination and complementarities.

The project established Regional Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Working Groups co-chaired by Regional Administrative Secretaries (RAS) and CSOs. These groups serve as crucial platforms for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and advocacy, bringing together LGAs, CSOs, and women's rights organizations (WROs). The establishment of these coordination forums enhanced exchange of good practices, ensuring the effective use of resources, and avoiding duplication of efforts among various actors.

Through its work on engendering the iMES that brought together various actors (PMO, Gender Ministry, NBS, PO-RALG), increased the officials' understanding about various GEWE issues helping to better coordinate implementation of gender mainstreaming in government.

The project coordinated a group of around 20 CSOs through a CSO coordination group, where UN Women shared tools and led joint initiatives to strengthen coordination and advocacy the gender machinery. At the time of the evaluation, UN Women was undertaking a joint analysis of the 2025 election code of conduct with Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF) which was presented to about 30 CSOs for validation. It had also mobilized the network of women on clean cooking to address normative barriers.

Finding 10: The WLER project established strategic partnerships with several training institutions and academic bodies to advance its objectives, particularly concerning capacity building, mainstreaming gender-responsive practices (especially budgeting), and providing neutral ground for sensitive political training.

The project established a partnership with the LGTI. LGTI was a critical partner, leveraging its official mandate to train government actors to institutionalize gender equality and women's economic rights (GEWE) principles within the government planning cycle. LGTI was instrumental in strengthening the capacity of LGA officials on gender mainstreaming and gender responsive budgeting. It collaborated closely with the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) to deliver these trainings to community facilitators across the project regions. The Institute incorporated gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive aspects into its curriculum and specifically reviewed and integrated gender considerations into the Opportunities and Obstacles for Development (O&OD) framework and guidelines. This integration ensures that gender-responsive planning will continue beyond the project lifespan, as LGTI is mandated to provide refresher training to all local government authorities. The collaboration between LGTI and TGNP facilitated mutual learning, where Hombolo learned how to effectively mainstream GRB principles, drawing from TGNP's participatory approaches and tools.

The University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) was engaged for its expertise in research, capacity building, and providing a politically neutral platform for sensitive training. UDSM collaborated with the project to train critical actors on Violence Against Women in Politics (VAWP), equipping them with the necessary skills and awareness. Trainings were provided to various groups, including:

- **Police officers:** At least 585 police officers received training on VAWP.
- **Journalists:** 84 journalists from Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar were trained on reporting VAWP responsibly.
- **Election Management Bodies (EMBs):** 26 officers from EMBs received the same training.

The choice of UDSM for training political actors, particularly on topics such as Transformational Leadership and VAWP, was strategic. Training institutions, rather than CSOs, were often preferred for political training because of their perceived neutrality, ensuring that all political parties felt free to engage. The LGAs leveraged resources, including hiring experts from the Ardhi University of Tanzania specializing in land matters to support mapping and polygon preparation for the issuance of Certificates of Customary Rights of Occupancy (CCROs) in Tandahimba, ensuring cost-effective implementation. The Institute of Social Work and Tengeru Institute of Community Development were slated to be part of the Training of Trainers (ToT) process to cascade gender mainstreaming and gender responsive budgeting knowledge to community facilitators across the six project regions.

1.13 Effectiveness

Summary of findings

The evaluation highlights significant successes of the project in strengthening gender-responsive systems, shifting norms, and expanding women's voice in leadership and economic spaces. The project's integrated approach – combining participatory action research, capacity-building of LGAs on gender-responsive budgeting, male-engagement, and practical care-support solutions – led to tangible gains such as budget allocations for women's priorities in several councils, increased women contesting and being elected in local government elections (notably in WLER councils such as Singida), new by-laws on harmful practices, the introduction of community childcare services and clean-cooking initiatives that eased time burdens, and greater male support at household and community levels for women's participation. These advances demonstrate that pairing evidence with responsive laws, micro-plans, and inclusive local services can generate both institutional and behavioural change. However, future programming should prioritise scaling up coverage beyond pilot wards; institutionalising technical coordination platforms to strengthen cross-department delivery; systematically addressing remaining household-level gender power imbalances and barriers for women with disabilities; making male-champion engagement more consistent with clear roles and resources; simplifying women's access to loans and land titles; and investing in operational research to inform scale-up of promising models. These steps will help sustain and deepen the programme's transformative gains.

Achievement of results

1.13.1.1 To what extent did the project meet its targets?

1.13.1.2 What results were achieved in each of the four outcomes?

The evaluation explored achievements across the four outcomes of the project. The findings under each outcome are detailed below.

Outcome 1: Data and evidence-based gender and disability responsive strategies, practices and participatory research action is built

Finding 11: The project strengthened the foundations for evidence-based, gender- and disability-responsive planning at local level and converted those gains into budgeted actions in several councils, although completeness and routine use of the new data remain uneven across regions¹³.

The project's principal contribution under this outcome was at the systems level. A national workshop involving 26 officials from WLER regions and PO-RALG strengthened local government capacity to collect and use data disaggregated by sex, age and disability. The project also supported the integration of 68

¹³ WLER Project Annual Status Report of Project Progress_2024.pdf

gender-related indicators into PO-RALG's Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System, enabling more gender-responsive routine data collection and local government performance reporting. These indicators provided councils with a common framework for monitoring women's leadership, economic empowerment, gender-based violence and implementation of gender-responsive by-laws.

The project's presence in participating districts and its delivery through district structures also increased awareness among technical officers, council management and councillors of the need to integrate gender considerations into planning and decision-making. In addition, the project contributed to addressing national disability-data gaps by supporting the development of a specialized data-collection tool focused on women with disabilities. The tool was incorporated into the Persons with Disabilities Management Information System managed by PMO-LYED, with the first round of data collection planned for the final quarter of 2025.

Translation of capacity and evidence into budgeted action

Capacity development in gender-responsive planning¹⁴, combined with increased awareness across councils, supported the operationalization of the Government of Tanzania's commitment to gender-responsive planning and budgeting. Several councils allocated resources to address constraints identified through project-supported evidence and planning processes.

In Ruangwa District Council, stakeholders reported that council budgets could not be approved without specific budget lines addressing gender priorities. Chalinze District Council allocated TZS 80 million for a women's business centre incorporating childcare facilities to reduce women's time poverty. Nachingwea allocated TZS 302,962,400 to train women in economic empowerment and leadership across 36 wards, complemented by a loan fund for women entrepreneurs. Dar es Salaam City Council allocated TZS 450 million in the 2024/25 budget year to establish an entrepreneurs' centre in Pugu Station Ward, with dedicated consideration for women-owned enterprises and capacity to accommodate approximately 600 women entrepreneurs.

The pathways from evidence to institutional action varied across regions. In Arusha, participatory dialogue with Maasai leaders identified barriers to women's voice and contributed to changes in customary governance. These included the election of four women to the Marya Council Secretariat and postponement of a *boma* leadership vote until women's representation was secured.

In Singida, councils applied gender-responsive approaches within their core functions. Mkalama allocated TZS 3 million for internal training on gender-responsive service delivery, representing an initial step towards routine institutionalization. In Mtwara, an assessment of women's representation contributed to the reconstitution of 32 ward tribunals to meet the statutory minimum for women members, expanding women's formal participation in community justice structures. In Lindi, Participatory Action Research on *Jando* and *Unyago* supported a cross-stakeholder case for protecting girls and informed the development of a by-law that was progressing towards validation.

Community-led planning and action

Community-led Participatory Action Research through Grassroots Gender Transformative Networks supported action at village, ward and district levels. A total of 74 gender-responsive micro-plans were reported during the project period.¹⁵ These processes enabled duty-bearers, women's networks and communities to identify gender-related priorities and connect them with local planning, budgeting and service-delivery mechanisms. Care-related solutions also began entering local planning processes. A childcare facility incorporated into a business hub at Ilala Machinga was cited by councils as a practical model for reducing time-related barriers to women's economic participation.

With project support through Community Development Officers, the Mtoni Ward Day Care Centre accessed the government's 10 per cent loan facility. The group used the financing to purchase mattresses, chairs, a

¹⁴ Through training undertaken by the Hombolo Institute and support for evidence generation.

¹⁵ LGAs also developed and implemented micro-plans. TGNP supported duty-bearers to implement 36 micro-plans across 36 wards in 18 district councils. LGAs developed and implemented 38 micro-plans.

gas stove and children’s play equipment. These improvements increased the quality and attractiveness of the service and supported the introduction of Montessori teaching methods. The improved childcare service reduced care burdens for mothers, enabling greater participation in economic activities. Increased income also allowed the group to establish a poultry business and employ three additional workers. Group members subsequently encouraged other women in the community to form groups and apply for government loans.

In Mandawa Ward, Ruangwa District, Grassroots Gender Transformative Networks consulted pregnant women receiving maternity services about the quality of the local health facility. Women identified the condition of the female toilet as a significant concern. The Knowledge Centre subsequently mobilized local leaders and community members to construct a new toilet for women using the maternity service. Construction was ongoing at the time of the evaluation.

Participatory action research driving change in communities



GGTNs consulted pregnant women in maternity on the quality of service at the local health facility. One of the major issues raised was the poor state of the female toilet which women found difficult to use. KCs then mobilised communities through the local leaders to construct a new toilet for women in maternity. The toilet was under construction at the time of the evaluation.

Location: Mandawa, Ruangwa, Lindi

GGTN also influenced LGA-level decisions. In Miburani, the local network conducted Participatory Action Research with community members and other stakeholders, resulting in the prioritization of renovations to the ward government office and improvements to the ward health facility. Following this advocacy, the LGA renovated the ward government office and constructed a ward health centre.




On the left is the old local government office and on the right is the modern one




Left: New maternity ward. Right: Miburani GGTN representative engages with a health centre attendant during the visit

Source: TGNP and UN Women (2025), Women’s Leadership and Economic Rights Project: A Pictorial Storybook of Voice, Action and Transformation, “Voices that Lead, Stories that Transform.”

Remaining data and implementation gaps

Not all LGAs collected, reported or used sex- and disability-disaggregated data with the same frequency or consistency. The absence of official sex-disaggregated results from the 2024 local elections also limited the evaluation's ability to connect improvements in data systems and planning with women's representation outcomes across all regions. Available interim data indicated increases in the number of women contesting and being elected in some project locations, but the evidence remained incomplete for drawing conclusions at the national level, as discussed under Outcome 3.

Overall, Outcome 1 generated stronger results where Participatory Action Research, capacity development for planning and Community Development Officers, gender-responsive planning and budgeting, community dialogue, and social accountability mechanisms operated together. In these locations, locally generated evidence informed micro-plans, budget allocations, service improvements and regulatory action.

Continued progress depends on the routine entry and use of quality data through iMES and PD-MIS, the translation of that evidence into budget decisions, and sustained collaboration among women's groups, organizations of persons with disabilities, male champions, traditional and religious leaders, and relevant LGA officials, including community development, lands and finance personnel.

Outcome 2: Laws, procedures, and practices at LGA levels promote women's (with and without disabilities) voices, leadership and economic rights, and justice

Finding 12: The project advanced the enabling environment for women's leadership and economic rights at both national and sub-national levels and translated several of these gains into concrete LGA practices, although formal adoption and routine operationalization still vary across regions.

WLER informed electoral reforms through a UN Women gender analysis and advocacy that informed the discussion on the criminalizing VAWP and through targeted work with MPs and EMBs; these efforts contributed to a decisive shift at national level in 2024 which recognised violence against women in politics as an electoral offense and to new party obligations requiring political parties to institute gender and social inclusion policies, establish gender desks and set clearer institutional obligations that councils could operationalise. These provisions address persistent barriers to safe participation and create specific institutional obligations inside parties, aligning the legal framework with the project's intent to make local decision spaces more accessible for women, including women with disabilities. University-led trainings for police and electoral officials strengthened operational readiness around prevention, reporting and response, aligning practice with the new legal frame.¹⁶

At LGA level, capacity building with LGTI Hombolo exceeded targets and produced gender-mainstreaming and GRB action plans that officials began to apply in routine cycles. Dar es Salaam MC documented mainstreaming of gender issues into regular mtaka and ward meetings, using action plans to create recurring entry points for women's priorities and oversight.¹⁷ Procedural change is most visible where councils paired evidence with concrete instruments. In Mtwara MC, a composition audit led to the reconstitution of thirty-two ward tribunals to meet the legal minimum for women members, immediately expanding women's presence in community justice and aligning forums with statutory standards.¹⁸ In Lindi MC, and Ruangwa DC, authorities supported by the WLER project advanced a local by law package focused on initiation ceremonies, including provisions on age thresholds, practitioner criteria, and enforcement.

Phase 2 evidence from Lindi shows that traditional leaders were receptive to the drafted by law and agreed to a clause that sets a specific time for conducting initiation ceremonies so that they do not interfere with the school timetable. At the same time, the legal officer emphasised that sustainability hinges on completing the full by law process, including finalisation and signature by the responsible minister, and noted that the process is costly because it requires validation travel across wards. The same source also indicates that councillors in Lindi MC have ratified the by law, but that community participation was limited

¹⁶ WLER Project Annual Status Report and UDSM Narrative Progress Report

¹⁷ LGTI-Quarterly-Progress-Report

¹⁸ At the Local Level in Tanzania 2022 – 2024, Jando and Unyago Validation Meeting, and WLER Project Annual Status Report

because consultation did not return to village general assemblies for a second round and the draft had not yet been taken to the other wards for discussion, even though it will apply across the entire municipality.

In Nachingwea evidence points to a similar direction, but at an earlier stage. Legal officers reported that the draft by law on Jando and Unyago remained under process, that some community members viewed it as a threat to culture, and that councillors had not ratified it because they wanted the draft widely circulated to all wards for awareness, discussion, and validation before approval. Traditional leaders in Nachingwea reinforced this picture by noting that they had been consulted on the draft, that the by law was still not ratified, and that councillors were willing to sign once the full council convened and the draft was circulated to non-project wards.

As noted earlier and also discussed further under sustainability, across all districts consciousness for gender responsive budgeting was heightened with districts putting in place various provisions including conditions for council budget passage if gender budget lines are included. Phase 2 accounts from Pwani also show community structures engaging directly with local budgeting and budget monitoring, including advocacy on gender responsive budgeting and follow up on whether budget implementation reflects the needs of women, girls, and persons with disabilities.

“We are practicing gender-responsive budgeting more deliberately. For example, we have budget lines for maternity wards in two ward dispensaries because women were delivering in unfriendly environments. We also budget for women’s economic empowerment and have a focal person to follow up.” – KII CDO Ikungi district

The outcome is therefore on track in terms of policy openings and demonstrable practice change, but full attainment depends on closing the distance between draft and enactment for district by-laws, maintaining routine application of GRB in all district councils and mainstreaming commitments in council cycles, and consolidating reporting that captures how these measures affect women’s representation and safety across all regions. These aspects represent great opportunities for scaling up in the successor joint programme that will follow the WLER project.

Outcome 3: Gender norms and discriminatory behaviours and practices at LGA levels are transformed to promote women and girls’ voices, meaningful participation and leadership.

Finding 13: Evidence indicates positive movement in gender norms and women’s and girls’ participation across project regions, although changes were uneven and continuing household, institutional and accessibility barriers limited their depth.

Positive changes were evident at several levels. Women reported greater confidence, knowledge of their rights and willingness to pursue leadership roles. Support from spouses and families increased in some households, although control over resources and concerns about safety persisted. Women and girls also became more visible in public forums and leadership positions, while institutional procedures increasingly enabled some women to obtain services, documents and positions. However, discriminatory peer norms, political-party practices, complex financial and property procedures, and uneven disability access continued to limit consistent participation.

Quantitative data support the finding of changing attitudes. A University of Dar es Salaam study found that attitudes towards women’s leadership changed more positively in WLER project areas than in non-project areas.¹⁹ The statement “men are better leaders” recorded an average score of 2.557 in WLER districts compared with 2.954 in non-project districts ($t = 4.281$, $p < 0.001$). Statements that “women are not required to be leaders,” “disabled women must stay home,” “disabled women cannot lead” and “women cannot speak publicly” also recorded significantly lower scores in WLER areas ($p < 0.001$). These results indicate weaker endorsement of discriminatory gender and disability stereotypes in project locations.²⁰

¹⁹ University of Dar es Salaam (2025), Assessing Women’s Participation in Leadership, Decision-Making and Community Perceptions on Changing Socio-Cultural Norms in Women’s Leadership and Economic Rights (WLER) Project Regions.

²⁰ Ibid

Women consistently described a clearer understanding of their rights and greater self-confidence following training and accompaniment. TGNP's ward-level capacity development on gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting produced measurable improvements in participants' understanding and led to practical actions, including reporting back to Ward Development Committees and adjusting registration forms to capture sex-disaggregated data. Women in Dar es Salaam, Pwani, Arusha, Mtwara, Lindi and Singida reported that these tools helped them use evidence and speak more confidently in routine forums.²¹ Women consulted during UN Women monitoring missions also linked training with greater confidence in meetings, increased use of services, and better awareness of referral pathways and the national child helpline. Some considered their decision to contest the 2024 local government elections an achievement, irrespective of whether they were elected.²²

"Women contested in 2024, and some were elected... more women now attend and speak with confidence."
— FGD, Traditional leaders, Muriyet Ward, Arusha City, Arusha

"[I] received skills from WLER... now I have my own business... education in economic empowerment has really helped me." — FGD, Women with disabilities entrepreneurs, Mukuza Ward, Kibaha DC, Pwani

"After leadership training I campaigned and won a local government seat in two thousand twenty-four." — IDI, Woman representative, Mkuza Ward, Kibaha TC, Pwani

"I moved from branch to ward level and won thirty of thirty-six votes." — FGD, Women in leadership and Jukwaa, Vingunguti Ward, Ilala MC, Dar es Salaam

"In party primaries I defeated nine men and now I am running for councillor." — IDI, Councillor candidate, Chuno Ward, Mtwara MC, Mtwara

"After attending training, I decided to run for leadership and some men now support women's bids." — IDI, Woman in politics, Sepeko Ward, Monduli DC, Arusha

Women with disabilities also reported increased knowledge and confidence, but these gains were more difficult and costly to sustain. Mission and management reports and discussions with women with disabilities consistently identified the need for sign-language interpretation, mobility support, personal assistants and accessible facilities. Several locations lacked adequate resources for these measures, constraining women's ability to apply their knowledge beyond training (see the **Efficiency section**). Participants in disability-focused sessions described a better understanding of their entitlements and relevant procedures but emphasized that physical and administrative barriers continued to make their confidence to act fragile.²³

"Training involved only blind women and we need to ensure participation of all types of disability." — KII, Male religious leader/influencer, Ilala Ward, Ilala MC, Dar es Salaam

At the household level, women's participation was more sustainable where spouses provided encouragement, shared decisions and household responsibilities, and contributed to campaign, transport or enterprise costs. In Tandahimba, Mtwara, 20 model families were identified and trained in joint decision-making and transparent financial management during the cashew marketing season. Following outreach by these households, approximately 100 additional households reportedly opened joint accounts for cashew proceeds.²⁴

Couples described greater transparency over earnings, agreed budgeting and fewer disputes about the use of income. One model couple in Chuno Ward, Mtwara Municipal Council, noted: *"We now make joint decisions on household finances and it brings peace and better outcomes."* A man from a model household in Luagala Ward similarly explained: *"In my family... we use one joint business account; when we want to withdraw... we consult each other before withdrawing... now we have peace in my family, and this is due to our inclusive way of doing things."*

²¹ TGNP Quarter 3 Report, 30 March.

²² FGD_WwD_Mkuza_Pwani and IDI_Women in Leadership_Ubena_Pwani.

²³ WLER Project Mission Report_Singida_Arusha_March 2025.

²⁴ Mtwara Regional Coordinator, KII.

Stakeholders also reported fewer divorces during the cashew-selling period and associated this change with joint accounts and couple dialogues introduced through the model-family approach, although statistical evidence was not available. In Arusha, interviews documented men fetching water, taking children to clinics, helping with cooking and financing women's VICOBA shares. A woman from Monduli District Council explained: *"My husband fetches water, takes the child to clinic and helps cook and he finances my VICOBA shares."*

Male allies in Singida Municipal Council similarly observed: *"Men now support women contesting leadership and attend meetings and vote for them and some partners provide financial support for campaign costs."* Such household support reduced interruptions to women's leadership and economic participation. Where it was absent, women had to negotiate repeatedly, manage care responsibilities at short notice and cover transport and campaign costs independently, increasing their exposure to fatigue, harassment, theft and inconsistent participation.

A woman from Tandahimba District Council explained: *"Not very important [my relationship with my husband], since my husband wonders how people elected me as a hamlet chair and gives me little support."* In a more severe case, an aspiring leader could not submit her nomination forms after her husband took the money:

"My husband did not support me and when I went to collect nomination forms, he left with the money." — **IDI, Unsuccessful aspirant, Sandali Ward, Temeke MC, Dar es Salaam**

Women with disabilities described additional household constraints, including control over their savings, abandonment after assets were taken, violence associated with daily sales shortfalls and limited support for attending meetings or sustaining businesses. These barriers compounded the mobility, safety and transaction risks experienced when women travelled or traded without accompaniment.

"During elections, community men helped us, but at home, some husbands held us back." — **FGD, WWD entrepreneurs, Mukuza Ward, Kibaha DC, Pwani**

"He asked for [my savings] to start a livestock business... he left and married another woman... I had to start again from zero." — **FGD, WWD entrepreneurs, Mukuza Ward, Kibaha DC, Pwani**

"One woman was beaten when she returned home without money from her business... These things make it hard to run a business and even to attend meetings." — **FGD, WWD entrepreneurs, Mukuza Ward, Kibaha DC, Pwani**

"As a blind woman I run a charcoal micro-business... I face cheating and mobility risks... no support reached me." — **IDI, PWD entrepreneur, Naliendele Ward, Mtwara MC, Mtwara**

These accounts indicate that changes in household norms were partial. Public endorsement of women's leadership could coexist with private control over earnings and decisions. Family-focused approaches were therefore most effective when practical task-sharing and joint budgeting were connected with community support and accessible local services. Women's public participation also increased across the project regions. Informants in Lindi Municipal Council described a village committee with 15 women members,²⁵ while traditional leaders in Arusha reported more women contesting and being elected in 2024 and speaking more frequently in village meetings. In Singida, community members reported mobilizing voters and contributing to women's campaign costs. Respondents associated visible support from men with fewer interruptions and greater attention to women speaking in public forums.

The project also contributed to increased acceptance of women's leadership in participating Maasai communities. Across the six regions, engagement with male leaders and influencers expanded from 272 participants in 2023 to 448 in 2024.²⁶ In Lindi—particularly Ruangwa and Nachingwea—regional records included 49 male leaders making public commitments. In Arusha City Council, including Muriet and Baraa, and in Singida, including Ikungi District Council and Singida Municipal Council, 78 traditional and religious leaders signed memoranda of understanding as champions. In the same Arusha–Singida corridor, 60 *bajaji*

²⁵ Mandawa Ward, Ruangwa DC, Lindi.

²⁶ Strengthening Women's and Girls' Meaningful Participation, Leadership, and Economic Rights at the Local Levels in Tanzania (2022–2025), Annual Narrative Report 2024, UN Women Donor Report.

drivers committed to sharing gender equality messages along their daily routes. In Pwani, including Chalinze and Kibaha, and Mtwara, including Mtwara Municipal Council and Tandahimba, male leaders committed to placing gender equality on the agendas of community, religious and village meetings and to supporting messages on redistributing unpaid care work.

“Before men could stop women and now women contest... in my village there are fifteen women in the village committee.” — FGD, Government/traditional/religious leaders, Mandawa Ward, Ruangwa DC, Lindi

“My view changed and when a woman is given space she leads effectively and we elected a woman chairperson without sarcasm.” — FGD, Traditional leaders, Ubena Ward, Chalinze DC, Pwani

“Women contested in 2024 and some were elected and more women now attend and speak with confidence.” — FGD, Traditional leaders, Muriet Ward, Arusha City, Arusha

“I see about half of men changing their attitudes.” — IDI, Male religious leader and influencer, Ilala Ward, Ilala MC, Dar es Salaam

A University of Dar es Salaam study also reported a larger overall increase in women elected to local positions in sampled WLER districts than in comparison areas.²⁷ Across the project regions included in Table 3, the total number of women elected increased from 1,355 in 2019 to 1,583 in 2024. However, results varied across regions and councils: totals increased substantially in Arusha, Dar es Salaam, Mtwara and Pwani, while Lindi and Singida recorded small overall declines and individual councils followed different trajectories. The data therefore indicate positive aggregate change but do not demonstrate uniform progress across all project locations.

Table 3: Women elected in the 2019 and 2024 local government elections

Region/council	2019: Village/street chairpersons	2019: Committee members	2019: Hamlet chairpersons	2019 total	2024: Village/street chairpersons	2024: Committee members	2024: Hamlet chairpersons	2024 total
Arusha	1	349	0	350	2	413	0	415
Arusha CC	1	57	0	58	1	63	0	64
Karatu DC	0	224	0	224	0	211	0	211
Longido DC	0	68	0	68	0	69	0	69
Monduli DC	0	0	0	0	1	70	0	71
Dar es Salaam	6	148	6	160	10	189	1	200
Kinondoni MC	3	41	6	50	5	54	0	59
Temeke MC	2	56	0	58	1	78	0	79
Ubungu MC	1	51	0	52	4	57	1	62
Lindi	48	84	12	144	2	122	18	142
Kilwa DC	46	0	1	47	0	49	2	51
Lindi MC	2	14	0	16	1	15	0	16
Nachingwea DC	0	0	6	6	0	0	12	12
Ruangwa DC	0	70	5	75	1	58	4	63
Mtwara	3	40	72	115	20	43	119	182
Masasi TC	0	0	0	0	14	0	36	50
Mtwara DC	2	0	62	64	5	10	74	89
Mtwara MC	0	13	0	13	1	16	0	17
Tandahimba	1	27	10	38	0	17	9	26
Pwani	2	391	67	460	2	438	82	522
Chalinze DC	1	162	25	188	1	162	26	189
Kibaha TC	0	168	34	202	1	177	39	217
Kisarawe DC	1	0	1	2	0	10	7	17
Rufiji TC	0	61	7	68	0	89	10	99
Singida	1	64	61	126	1	65	56	122
Ikungi DC	1	0	10	11	1	0	3	4
Mkalama DC	0	64	6	70	0	56	12	68
Singida MC	0	0	45	45	0	9	41	50
Grand total	61	1,076	218	1,355	37	1,270	276	1,583

Source: University of Dar es Salaam (2025). Ibid

²⁷ University of Dar es Salaam (2025), Assessing Women’s Participation in Leadership and Decision-Making in WLER Project Regions. A report prepared for the WLER project.

For women with disabilities, formal access to meetings and community events did not always translate into effective participation. Missing sign-language interpretation, inaccessible information formats, limited public transport and the absence of ramps, wide doors or accessible toilets reduced participation in public venues and markets.²⁸

“Information is not timely, especially for deaf women when there’s no sign language interpreter; we hire translators to follow discussions at meetings... Public places and markets are often not accessible... we did an accessibility audit and pushed for a new market; we’re waiting to see if it’s truly inclusive.” — **FGD, WWD entrepreneurs, Mukuza Ward, Kibaha DC, Pwani**

School clubs provided girls with opportunities to practise leadership, speak publicly and contest positions in relatively safe settings. Approximately 35 clubs were established, and programme reporting indicated that 144 girls from 16 clubs in Arusha, Singida and Pwani assumed positions as head girls, secretaries and prefects. Girls in Vigwaza associated the clubs with stronger confidence and an understanding of leadership as service and influence:

“I learned that a leader speaks up, guides others, and helps at school and at home... it’s about influence and service... Confidence, I can stand up and say what I think in class and in assemblies... I’m head girl now and I also ran against boys for the academic post... I kept going and explained why I was standing, and they voted for me.” — **FGD, Girls in school club, Vigwaza Ward, Chalinze DC, Pwani**

Nevertheless, girls continued to experience unequal peer responses in competitive and public-speaking spaces:

“The trainings given in schools... taught us to be confident and aware of our rights as girls... In debates, if a girl speaks, others boo her, but when a boy speaks... he gets applause.” — **FGD, Young women 18–24, Tandahimba Ward, Tandahimba DC, Mtwara**

“People still say boys lead better so naturally girls shy away... sometimes we’re not listened to just because we’re girls.” — **FGD, Girls in school club, Vigwaza Ward, Chalinze DC, Pwani**

Phase 2 discussions provided additional evidence of change in everyday peer relations. In Dar es Salaam, students described more supportive behaviour by boys during menstruation, which they linked to plays, drama, songs and dialogue used by the clubs. Similar accounts emerged in Nachingwea, where students reported that boys were less likely to ridicule girls during menstruation and sometimes reported concerns to teachers or informed other students. In Kisarawe, learners described greater acceptance of girls’ football and more equal sharing of school tasks and leadership roles.

Results were not uniform across schools. In Kibaha, a previously established gender club had become inactive because of limited follow-up, and its original members had graduated. Active clubs also faced shortages of materials, timetable conflicts, limited digital devices and insufficient funding for outreach. In Kisarawe, inadequate water and changing facilities continued to affect menstrual hygiene management, attendance and participation.

At the institutional level, land offices, Knowledge Centres and ward committees helped translate greater acceptance of women’s voices into positions, property documents and service responses. Land offices clarified CCRO and joint-titling requirements; Knowledge Centres mentored candidates, convened dialogues with initiation instructors and religious leaders, and supported LGAs on gender-responsive budgeting; and ward committees incorporated trained women into routine processes. The Monduli land office reported approximately 700 titles, many issued to women, and progress towards digital CCRO applications. One land officer separately stated that more than 300 title deeds had been issued, many to women:

“More than three hundred title deeds were issued and many went to women and the office is moving toward digital CCRO applications.” — **KII, Land Officer, Monduli DC, Arusha**

Knowledge Centres in Dar es Salaam operated across districts and supported councils on budgeting: *“Knowledge centres in Dar provide mentorship, dialogues with initiation instructors and religious leaders and*

²⁸ Mission Report_Singida OPD Training 2022.

gender budgeting backstopping.” — KII, TGNP, Dar es Salaam

In Lindi, Knowledge Centres reported stopping a child marriage, supporting the removal of illegal clinic fees and mobilizing school feeding, which contributed to their increased participation in local decision-making:

“Knowledge centre members stopped a child marriage, removed illegal clinic fees and mobilized school feeding.” — FGD, KC members, Mandawa Ward, Ruangwa DC, Lindi

Institutional results were stronger where training was linked to tools already used by local authorities. In Pwani and Singida, ward facilitators applied Opportunities and Obstacles to Development templates, gender-responsive budget lines, gender-statistics sheets, one-page action lists, budget prompts and checklists for land and loan services. They introduced these tools through Ward Development Committees, which recorded priorities in their minutes and referred them to relevant council departments.

Some councils also posted clear document lists and registration steps at ward offices, reducing repeated visits by applicants. In Arusha, women and land officers described step-by-step procedures for land registration and joint titling, covering eligibility, required documents, application forms, fees, inspection dates and certificate-collection timelines. Loan procedures similarly clarified required documents, assistance with forms and online submission, and expected review and approval timelines.

However, application processes remained difficult in some locations. In Dar es Salaam, a Community Development Officer reported that online loan applications required numerous documents and that limited transport prevented adequate follow-up after orientation. In Lindi Municipal Council, women entrepreneurs estimated that documents, digital-application assistance and transport could cost approximately TZS 80,000 when seeking a TZS 300,000 loan.²⁹ These experiences were context-specific and not reported uniformly across districts.

“Loan access is online and document heavy and women need time and money and skills.” — KII, CDO loans/small business, Dar es Salaam

“To get three hundred thousand shillings a woman may spend about eighty thousand on documents and transport.” — FGD, Women entrepreneurs, Lindi MC, Lindi

Local support structures reduced these barriers where they were active. In Chalinze, GGTN members helped women and persons with disabilities form groups, complete applications and follow up with local authorities when applicants could not physically reach government offices. Women with disabilities in Kibaha similarly received support from ward officials with forms, document submission and follow-up, enabling access to individual council loans. Council stakeholders also reported improved access to the 10 per cent loan facility and the 2 per cent allocation for disability groups.

“We help form economic groups, connect women and persons with disabilities, assist them in applying, and follow up on loan applications until they receive concessional loans.” — FGD, GGTNs, Chalinze, Pwani

“Since some beneficiaries cannot physically access government offices, we take responsibility for following up with local authorities to ensure they receive the benefits.” — FGD, Chalinze, Pwani

“Women are now actively engaging. They have begun to access funding from the 10% allocated by the council ... Within that group, there are women with disabilities who also have their own specific loans from the 2% allocated to disability groups.” — KII, CDO Facilitator and Coordinator, Kibaha, Pwani

In Ikungi District, Singida, WLER supported the registration of women’s groups at ward level, reducing travel to district offices. Digital tools and tablets provided to ward offices facilitated registration, while financial support to LGAs enabled officers to reach women, young people and persons with disabilities directly. Community Development Officers also supported groups with constitutions, project descriptions, application letters and meeting minutes. These measures reduced costs and made procedures more locally accessible, although digital literacy and peer support within women’s groups remained areas for further

²⁹ The current national guidelines indicate a minimum loan amount of TZS 500,000 and a maximum of TZS 150,000,000. Any lower loan figures reported by respondents should therefore be understood as context-specific accounts rather than the standard threshold applied across councils.

strengthening. Knowledge of property procedures also improved, but costs and household opposition limited completion. A Lindi Municipal Council land officer reported that more men accepted joint ownership after receiving information about women's rights, although CCRO fees and concerns about backlash, including divorce, remained barriers:

"Many men now agree to joint ownership after we explain rights but CCRO costs remain a barrier." — KII, Land Officer, Lindi MC, Lindi

Women leaders in Singida and Pwani also reported sexual extortion and informal payments during political-party primaries, which discouraged some candidates from filing nomination papers. Women with disabilities faced additional barriers because council budgets did not consistently cover interpretation, personal assistance or accessible transport.

"Sexual corruption is being normalised by those with power to nominate candidates." — IDI, Woman leader, Majengo Ward, Singida MC, Singida

Overall, Outcome 3 contributed to greater confidence, public participation and acceptance of women's leadership, supported by changes in some household, community and institutional practices. These results were strongest where individual capacity-building was reinforced by household support, male allyship, accessible community platforms and responsive institutional procedures. However, unequal household power, discriminatory peer norms, disability-related barriers, complex administrative processes and political-party practices continued to limit the consistency and inclusiveness of change.

Outcome 4: National and LGAs develop/strengthen laws, policies and services that recognise and address the disproportionate share of UCW to promote women's leadership and participation in decision-making

Finding 14: Outcome 4 interventions appear to have moved councils and communities from awareness to practical responses, most visibly through childcare and clean cooking, and there are good signs that women's time burdens eased where these services or technologies were in place; however, effects were uneven across regions and households, with affordability and still-developing time-use monitoring limiting how far we can attribute broader change.

Recognition of UCW and how it limits women's time for income and leadership, is high across the project areas. People can name who does which tasks and how that affects women. At household level, a few accounts describe men helping when tasks became easier (for example, with cleaner stoves) or when families plan together. Project reports document 12 local dialogues on the 3Rs/care burden (6 in Arusha, 6 in Singida) and about 434 LGA staff and traditional leaders reporting better understanding of how unpaid care affects women's participation. This intervention was relevant given the baselines findings that routine chores (cooking, washing, cleaning) were and are still largely done by women in many households, with the highest shares in Lindi, Mtwara and Singida.

"Women are still the one carrying the heavy burden of unpaid care work due to the deeply embedded patriarchal system that discourages many men to participate in care work." — FGD, Male allies and influencers, Majengo Ward, Singida MC.

In Arusha, positive shifts in care responsibilities were linked to practical enablers and planning where a woman in a household with improved decision-making in Sepeko Ward, Monduli DC said, *"We now fetch water together... my husband takes our child to the clinic and bathes the child when I am not around. He also helps me to cook when I am tired."* At the same time, many participants still framed daily chores as women's work, or shifted them to paid help or girls. For example; young women in Tandahimba, Mtwara pointed to the persistence of gendered expectations inside homes saying *"Boys do not do household chores such as cooking, washing clothes, or cleaning... the main thing boys do is hang out at village corners, while all the work is left to girls."*; and a male participant from a model family in Luagala Ward (Tandahimba) explained how families sometimes cope without real redistribution of the work: *"...at home we live with our four children, so household chores like cooking and washing are mostly done by them."* The same was echoed in Chalinze, Pwani where a woman mentioned *"The solution has been planning and paid help rather than splitting chores."* This shows awareness has grown, with early, context-specific signs of reduction and redistribution, but everyday sharing remains uneven.

The programme also translated awareness into tools and services that families could use. In Ikungi District (Singida), two community childcare centres, Puma and Ikungi, were established and caregivers completed a three-month training³⁰. In Dar es Salaam (Ilala), market authorities at the Machinga Complex set aside space for a day-care so traders can work while children are supervised³¹. Clean cooking was also introduced in Ikungi through cost-sharing: monitoring records 248 stoves distributed, with cooking time reduced by about 1–2 hours/day for improved biomass stoves and 2–3 hours/day for electric stoves, plus less time collecting fuel³². At the systems level, seven LGAs report access to care-responsive planning tools and guidance (Ilala MC, Monduli DC, Karatu DC, Arusha City Council, Ikungi DC, Singida MC, Mkalama DC), and women leaders were equipped to advocate, at least 34 in Ikungi, about 60 linked to Machinga/Ilala, and 40 through Arusha and Singida trainings.

Because households co-financed the price of a clean-cooking stove instead of receiving it for free and different groups paid different portions of the price (e.g., 50%, 60%, and a TASAF bracket at 78%), cost-sharing reached council leaders and better-off families more quickly, while TASAF households struggled to participate, so time-saving benefits did not spread evenly³³. Some women leaders also reported that support at home dropped when their public roles required travel or money—“My husband gives me a very little support, especially when my leadership roles start involving resources (money to cover travels).” — IDI, Woman in leadership and Jukwaa la Wanawake (local government), Minyughe Ward, Ikungi DC. In other cases, families coped with the load without changing any care responsibilities, as per output 4.1

Women-led structures managed to turn recognition of the care burden into services and delivery roles. In Singida, women’s groups were part of the management and outreach for the two community childcare centres in Ikungi, after caregivers completed a three-month training; project records³⁴ also note at least 255 women (including 27 women with disabilities) who accessed childcare/other care services in Arusha during the period. In Dar es Salaam, women market leaders at the Machinga Complex (Ilala) worked with local authorities to set aside space for a market day-care, an arrangement aimed at enabling traders to work while children are supervised. Furthermore, partners also reported a GGTTNs-supported day-care to ease traders’ care load. Women’s economic groups linked care reduction with enterprise, strengthening the capacity side of this output. In Singida, a cohort of women stove installers formed an association and were linked to the Tanzania Association of Clean Cooking Solutions (TACCS) Women’s Chapter, creating a local service for installation/maintenance and a channel to scale time-saving technologies through trusted peer networks³⁵. In parallel, VICOBA groups tested group gas sales and stove dissemination as income lines tied to care reduction³⁶, a sign that women-led organisations can both provide and finance care-supportive solutions when demand is clear and suppliers are accessible.

These examples are still modest in scale, and reports cited are clear on what shapes uptake: fees, distance and bureaucracy determine whether low-income women can use a centre regularly, and up-front costs slow adoption of clean energy unless women’s groups can arrange affordable payments or subsidies. Where women’s organisations had a concrete site (e.g., Ikungi centres; Machinga market space) and a defined role (management, outreach, small-enterprise linkages), service delivery was more efficient.

Monitoring system

1.13.1.3 Were the indicators in the results framework sufficient to measure change?

Finding 15: The indicator set was broadly sufficient to demonstrate change across the results areas. Qualitative measures that were difficult to assess on an annual cycle, and limited access to timely sex disaggregated administrative data.

The results framework contained about 32 indicators with on average 8 indicators per outcome. Project staff, including monitoring and reporting officers, considered these indicators relevant and adequate for the

³⁰ WLER Project Annual Status Report 2024

³¹ WLER Project Annual Status Report 2024

³² FINAL_TANGSEN Narrative Report 2024

³³ Ikungi clean-cooking mapping slides, 2023

³⁴ WLER Project Annual Status Report 2024

³⁵ FINAL_TANGSEN Narrative Report 2024

³⁶ WLER Project Annual Status Report 2024

project's scope. No essential gaps were identified, though, according to UNW M&E staff, some indicators duplicated each other and could have been merged. Within this framework, the project could track progress across all four outcomes. For women's leadership, the framework captured changes linked to local government elections. For male engagement (Outcome 3), it reflected shifts in perceptions and support for women's leadership. For policy and the enabling environment (Outcome 4), it recorded national-level progress. For data systems (Outcome 1), it tracked work to strengthen collection and use of data.

"I don't think there were any missing ones. I think the problem that we had, and it's just a conversation, is just some of them were duplicated. It was like more we could have merged, but in terms of adding more, I think they were very sufficient in terms of capturing the changes that have been done in the throughout the project." — KII, UN Women staff

Despite this, the amount of indicators, 32, were viewed as too much and requiring significant investment in monitoring. A process of prioritization would have been important to consider.

"Actually, at the end of the day, we felt we had so many indicators in the project... at the end of the day, I think we were quite ambitious in terms of indicators" — KII, UN Women staff

Several qualitative indicators, especially shifts in norms and behaviours, were hard to measure meaningfully on an annual basis. To bridge this, teams relied on narrative evidence from field visits, case studies, success stories, and interviews. This helped illustrate progress, but it was not always comparable across time or across locations. Additionally, a partner (UDSM) has been contracted to conduct a qualitative survey to fill in certain gaps in the qualitative indicator data. The results framework itself appropriately combined quantitative and qualitative indicators. In practice, however, routine monitoring leaned toward quantitative reporting, with deeper qualitative analysis largely deferred to the final evaluation. As a result, annual reporting likely under-captured changes in norms and behaviour.

1.13.1.4 What monitoring systems were in place to monitor achievement of project outcomes?

Finding 16: Monitoring was structured, multi-layered, and active. Government-led oversight, UN Women internal tracking, partner reporting, field verification, and targeted data initiatives worked together to follow delivery, finances, and results across all four outcome areas.

Oversight and coordination: A Joint Steering Committee, co-chaired by PO-RALG and MoCDWGSP, met annually with the Embassy of Finland, civil society organizations and Local Government Authorities.³⁷ It provided strategic direction, reviewed progress and implementation challenges, and supported government ownership and donor coordination. Steering Committee meetings also included field visits that enabled members to observe selected project interventions. While the Committee provided strategic oversight, the absence of a technical-level coordination platform limited the engagement of government technical personnel.³⁸ Technical staff reported that the Steering Committee's senior-level format allowed them to receive an overview of progress but provided insufficient space to examine performance or engage actively with implementation. Separate technical meetings and field visits could have strengthened their understanding and ability to advance the project's agenda within government.

"Of course there were good relationships working with the UN Women. In terms of communicating, in terms of linking. But were not fully engaged as technical staff in the ministry. We are not actually so much aware of the implementation at the ground, though during the steering committee we could visit one or two of the interventions with our leaders... So as you understand the level of the steering, it is just getting the overview of the project in brief. In a short time... So majorly, you stay as the listener, or as the other invitee to participate, but not as an active member. Because it was not our meetings. It was not intended for the technical rather for the steering committee with our bosses." — KII, Government staff

³⁷ UNW WEE Specialist

³⁸ Outcome Harvesting workshop for Dar es Salaam

At the subnational level, Regional Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Coordination Groups were established in five of the six project regions.³⁹ Dar es Salaam was the exception.⁴⁰ The groups brought together LGAs, civil society organizations and other stakeholders to exchange experiences, promote learning, coordinate interventions and avoid duplication.

At the district level, Community Development Officers led the implementation of project activities. Participation by other departments, including social welfare and planning, often depended on established working relationships. Where these relationships were weaker, other departments had less knowledge of the programme, making cross-departmental coordination and implementation more difficult.

Internal performance management and partner reporting: In December 2022, the UN Women Tanzania Country Office conducted a five-day training for key WLER partners on results-based monitoring and reporting, financial management and the prevention of sexual harassment. Refresher training on results-based management and continuous one-to-one support subsequently reinforced partners' monitoring and reporting capacity. A comparison of quarterly reports before and after the training showed improvements in results reporting. UN Women used its Results Management System for quarterly monitoring. A Monitoring and Reporting Analyst, Programme Specialist and Project Manager oversaw implementation, financial management and reporting. The permanent presence of UN Women personnel in the project regions also enabled closer monitoring and management of activities. Responsible Parties submitted quarterly narrative and financial reports in accordance with their partnership agreements. UN Women programme and finance personnel reviewed these reports using checklists to assess alignment with approved workplans, budgets and results-framework indicators.⁴¹ Partners also received standardized tools, including a Monitoring Plan, Performance Monitoring Framework, Project Risk Register, Lessons Learned Log and beneficiary-tracking tool. These supported consistent planning, risk and lesson documentation, and monitoring of people reached.

Field monitoring and spot checks: The project team conducted monitoring visits to observe activities, verify implementation, identify challenges and document results and success stories. These visits included discussions with local leaders, focus group discussions with participants and meetings with relevant actors. Spot checks used standardized checklists to verify the appropriate management and use of resources. During a monitoring visit to Pwani in August 2024, for example, the team reviewed implementation against the workplan, documented results and verified the purchase of four laptops specified in the partnership agreement. In March 2025, Outcome Harvesting exercises were conducted in Singida and Arusha, generating evidence that informed progress reporting to the donor.

Gender-responsive monitoring and targeted evidence generation: The project promoted gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation to examine how public expenditure affected different social groups and to inform future resource allocation. Guidance from the Gender-Responsive Budgeting training manual supported the integration of gender-responsive monitoring into Community Development Plans at Lower and Higher Local Government levels. This guidance emphasized participatory monitoring, routine use of sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis. Pre- and post-training assessments measured changes in participants' knowledge. During training on Violence Against Women in Politics, Elections Management Body officials recorded an average increase of 34 per cent between pre- and post-tests, while police officers recorded an increase of 15 per cent. A baseline study informed project strategies and target-setting, and a 2025 qualitative study covering all 18 project councils examined women's participation and representation in local structures and committees.

The project also strengthened national and sector-level data systems. Working with PO-RALG, it supported the expansion of the Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System from three to 68 gender indicators, increasing the availability of routine administrative data relevant to project results. With the Prime Minister's Office–Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disabilities, it strengthened the Persons with

³⁹ UNW PMER Specialist

⁴⁰ 'Because of the context, the CSOs are quite many diverse. So we had a lot of discussion with the regional administrative secretary, then we didn't see value for that at least'. - UNW PMER Specialist

⁴¹ UNW Programme Specialist- Gender and Local Government

Disabilities Management Information System and developed a specialized data-collection tool focused on women with disabilities. During the 2024 local elections, the University of Dar es Salaam monitored 15 media outlets. The exercise documented 192 cases of Violence Against Women in Politics and identified gender imbalances in media coverage, providing an independent evidence stream on the enabling environment for women's political participation.

Remaining monitoring and evidence gaps: Despite these monitoring mechanisms, the MEL system was not specifically designed to assess the effectiveness of the project's numerous pilot models, including community-led Participatory Action Research, model families, support for women to obtain CCROs and the VICOPA model. The absence of systematic operational research limited the evidence available to determine whether, how and under what conditions these innovations should be scaled in a subsequent phase or promoted for adoption by other actors. Two additional constraints affected the generation and use of monitoring evidence. First, verification of several indicators depended on official sex-disaggregated data that were not available during the evaluation period. For example, PO-RALG had not yet released sex-disaggregated results from the 2024 local elections, limiting confirmation of progress against relevant indicators. Second, some partners—particularly at LGA level—experienced difficulties collecting, monitoring and reporting data on changes in norms, practices and behaviours. UN Women responded by providing continued capacity-strengthening and standardized reporting tools. These measures contributed to improved reporting, although gaps remained in the consistency and comparability of data across partners and locations.

1.14 Were data from monitoring system used to inform decisions that improve project effectiveness?

Finding 17: Monitoring operated as a functional feedback loop. Evidence from the monitoring system was reviewed, translated into concrete management decisions, and followed through thus improving delivery, strengthening partner practice, closing inclusion gaps, refining interventions, and informing accountability and next-phase planning.

Building on the systems described in section 2.1.2.2, routine reviews and field verification surfaced delivery bottlenecks. Delays in moving funds from regional to council level were documented and resultantly, UN Women engaged counterparts and, in some cases, introduced direct disbursement to councils so activities could proceed on time. Additionally, monitoring flagged weaknesses in results-based reporting during a 2024 visit to Pwani which resulted in the deployment of the beneficiary-monitoring tool to standardize tracking and sharpen partner reporting⁴². Reviews of partner reports also pointed to broader capacity needs, which were addressed through hands-on support and a four-day training in 2023 on Results-Based Management and financial rules⁴³. Collectively, these actions show monitoring evidence being used to stabilize implementation and improve the quality of performance data.

Monitoring data and partner reports also showed that women with disabilities were not being reached consistently. The UN Women team responded on two fronts. First, delivery was adjusted by working more closely with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and by restating inclusion requirements to partners for all ongoing activities. Second, measurement was tightened by asking partners to record disability status using attendance sheets and the beneficiary monitoring tool. Despite these steps, monitoring data still indicates that disability reach remains behind and will need continued follow-up in upcoming reporting cycles. The same evidence-to-action logic shaped programme design. A rapid mapping and feasibility exercise on clean-cooking stakeholders and UCW in Ikungi documented the heavy burden on women. Findings were used to design a clean-cooking package, produce a policy brief, and convene dialogue sessions with officials and community leaders. Subsequent monitoring of distributed stoves recorded reduced time spent on cooking and fuel collection, which was then used to advocate for the solution, closing the loop from assessment to intervention to reinforcement.⁴⁴

⁴² Annex O- Programme Partner Monitoring Report_Pwani.pdf

⁴³ UNW, PMER Specialist

⁴⁴ FINAL_TANGSEN Narrative Final Report UN Women.pdf, Proceedings of District Dialogue on Clean Cooking and unpaid care work.pdf, FINAL_TANGSEN Narrative Final Report UN Women.pdf

Monitoring also shifted gender-responsive budgeting from after-the-fact reporting to a condition set before budgets were approved across all regions. This made gender allocations a requirement rather than an optional add-on and strengthened accountability, since planners and finance staff had to include and track gender lines from planning through execution. It also improved forward planning, as teams could design activities with greater predictability instead of renegotiating funding each year. It is therefore evident that this feedback loop from monitoring to budget rules to steadier resources, even if depth and consistency may vary across districts. From a broader perspective, results, challenges, and lessons were consolidated in annual reports and presented and discussed at the Joint Steering Committee, and learning from implementation is being used to shape the next phase, reaffirming that women's economic empowerment is central to political participation and informing plans for a more specific joint programme with UNFPA on GBV.

"The gender budgeting is mandatory now and the budget will not pass without allocations for women or girls programmes." — KII, SWO, Ruangwa, Lindi

Male engagement

1.14.1.1 *Were the approaches used to engaged males result in increased male participation in WLER?*

Finding 18: Overall, the approach set for male engagement was appropriate to the norms it seeks to shift, working simultaneously through authority (traditional/religious), peers (influencers, KCs, WhatsApp groups), the household (model families) as well as boys through school clubs. Its effectiveness however depended on consistent training, reliable follow-up, and minimal resource inputs to sustain the volunteer-driven champion model.

Men were engaged through multiple entry points that reinforced each other. These included: identification and training of male allies/champions; male community influencer model families; and engagement of traditional leaders and religious leaders. Laigwanan⁴⁵ leaders were brought in to resolve community issues and to legitimise messages in public forums. Religious leaders in Christian and Muslim congregations were similarly engaged to carry messages into congregational spaces. The project also used TGNP Knowledge Centres which included young people. Male influencers already trained by TGNP leveraged that prior exposure to speak to peers and to anchor discussions in existing KC routines. Beyond institutions, the approach tapped everyday influence. Model families were profiled to normalise equitable roles at home. Boda-boda riders acted as high-visibility messengers in transit hubs. Older men and local male leaders, including street chairpersons, used their standing to convene and to speak in village and ward meetings. In schools, particularly in Mtwara and Lindi, 20 school clubs were established, gathering a total of 485 boys alongside 1,314 girls for awareness raising on gender equality. Radio and community dialogues extended reach. Simple peer-support mechanisms such as WhatsApp groups and regular community meetings helped male influencers coordinate messages, share prompts and sustain contact with the men they were targeting.

"After receiving training from WLER and the Community Development Office I decided to educate and raise women's awareness using my position as a religious leader." — IDI, Male influencer, Ilala Ward, Ilala MC, Dar es Salaam.

"UN Women and partners trained us and left simple booklets so at street meetings we speak the same message. We formed a WhatsApp group to share what is working and where there is pushback." — IDI, Male ally, Luagala Ward, Tandahimba DC, Mtwara.

"They selected some of us as model families to demonstrate sharing work at home and decision making. Other men see us then we invite them to the next village meeting." — FGD, Men from model families, Luagala Ward, Tandahimba DC, Mtwara.

"We agreed to meet with the Ward Executive Officer every month to plan how to reach other men... The messages reached men in village meetings, the mosque after prayers and on local radio. When the religious

⁴⁵ Laigwanan are Maasai traditional leaders/elders. They head age-sets or community sections, guide customs and ceremonies, mediate disputes, mobilize men for communal tasks, and advise on local matters. In places like Monduli and Arusha, Laigwanan are key voices in community decisions and influence norms around family roles, land, and leadership.

leader repeats the same message men listen differently.” — FGD, Male allies and influencers, Chuno Ward, Mtwara MC, Mtwara.

Training was the backbone of the approach, but its application varied by place. In Arusha City Council male champions were well trained and could build on initiatives led by TUSONGE which provided a clear runway for follow-through. In Dar es Salaam and Pwani region, selected religious leaders, local leaders, community influencers, traditional leaders, and elders) were engaged in the gender equality and women empowerment (GEWE) related training, workshops, and dialogues as ‘male champions’ for GEWE. Their engagement enabled them to set and implement commitments, including the identification of key tasks/actions to implement at the community level in advancing women’s leadership and economic rights. In Kigogo ward for example where due to sensitisation and male engagement, religious leaders supported Muslim women to take part in the local government elections and went further to encouraging women to join committees that in the past they would not be allowed to join.

In several wards men were reached only once through a male dialogue. This created initial awareness but without structured follow-up it had limited effectiveness in sustaining engagement. Champions relied on voluntary effort and had limited transport and IEC materials which constrained scale. Disrespect from some men and fears about women’s leadership reduced traction. For example, male influencers in Kibaha and Temeke reported that *‘Some call them (male influencers) NGO puppets and in some places old men question their sexuality’*.

“Lack of resources or working tools such as IEC materials to disseminate and inadequate or irregular training and disrespect from some men who believe nothing will change.” — FGD, Male allies and influencers, Majengo Ward, Singida MC, Singida.

The core design should be retained because it matches how decisions and norms are shaped in these councils. Several adjustments will need to be considered. First, define and train a named male-champion cohort in every council and refresh them on a fixed schedule through KCs or the CDO office so the message and role remain clear. Second, budget small but reliable enablers such as a basic IEC bundle, local transport stipends or airtime so peer outreach does not stall. Third, institutionalise repetition by using authority spaces that already convene men and by giving champions a simple planning loop with ward leadership and an active WhatsApp group. Fourth, joint inter-generational dialogues are important to address social norms between adults, young men and boys. These changes will strengthen the social behaviour change model.

1.14.1.2 Has male engagement resulted increased support for WLER in targeted communities? What results can be observed in targeted communities as a result of the engagement of males?

Finding 19: Male engagement functioned as a permission and support pathway that moved some men from gatekeeping to active sponsorship of women’s political participation and leadership. Gains concentrated where endorsement by traditional and religious leaders aligned with practical backing from households. Progress remained uneven due to location specific resistance and party gatekeeping, with higher barriers for WWD.

Male engagement began in a context characterized by restrictive gender norms. In several communities, women were perceived as unsuitable for leadership, while in some Maasai settings they were not permitted to speak in meetings. Some religious voices maintained that women should not lead men. In households in Mtwara, Singida and Lindi, men often influenced whether women could contest leadership positions, and some husbands prevented participation because of jealousy or fear of losing authority. Men who supported women leaders were sometimes mocked as being controlled by their wives.

Project messages, together with the example of President Samia Suluhu Hassan, helped normalize the idea that women can lead. Training and dialogue involving male champions and traditional and religious leaders expanded public support for women candidates. In Arusha and Singida, 78 male leaders signed a memorandum of understanding committing them to promote women’s leadership. Maasai Laigwanani resolved to include women more fully in meetings and leadership structures, and four women were elected to the Maasai Council Secretariat for the first time. A prominent Laigwanani in Oldonyokumar now

campaigns for women and uses his platform to promote acceptance of their leadership. Religious leaders also began using pulpits and community forums to support women's leadership and challenge restrictive interpretations.

During the 2024 electoral cycle, support extended to practical action. Husbands and other men contributed to campaign costs, accompanied candidates, provided protection and mobilized voters. In Tandahimba, men reported voting for women for village government positions, while a former woman councillor stated that most of her votes came from men. In Lindi, four male village chairpersons offered to step down in favour of women. In Maasai wards, more than 24 women contested street and village chairperson positions, and some were elected. In Monduli, a woman contested a parliamentary seat for the first time. Participants associated men's involvement with reduced harassment and violence against women in politics, thereby making participation safer.

Nevertheless, resistance and backlash persisted. Participants reported opposition to women's leadership among some members of Salafi Muslim communities in Lindi, Mtwara and Pwani. Some traditional leaders opposed by-laws intended to reform harmful practices because they feared the loss of tradition, while male champions experienced ridicule and accusations that they were undermining local culture. In Kibaha, some men described male influencers as "*NGO puppets*" who "*break tradition*." In Temeke, older leaders questioned the sexuality of Knowledge Centre members who engaged them on gender equality. Participants also reported stronger resistance among some military personnel and older men with more rigid views of tradition.

In Chalinze, one reported case involved divorce being used to reassert male authority. Participants in Lindi Municipal Council similarly described divorce or threats of divorce as a means of controlling or subordinating women. A frequently expressed sentiment—that "women are now so empowered that some men are scared"—illustrates the potential for backlash and the need for broader attention from Tanzania's gender equality institutions.

The intensity of engagement varied by location. It was relatively strong in selected wards in Arusha and rural Singida but limited elsewhere, leaving some areas with little male-focused activity. As social norm change occurs gradually and at different speeds across heterogeneous communities, sustained and context-specific engagement remains important.

Women with disabilities encountered additional barriers. Political party selection structures remained significant obstacles, and one candidate with a disability was reportedly told that the community would not vote for a person with a disability. She also encountered financial barriers involving party selection committees known as *Wajumbe*. Campaigning was further constrained by mobility limitations and insufficient resources, while some accounts referred to sexual extortion by men in positions of power. These experiences indicate that increased public endorsement of women's leadership has not consistently removed the institutional, financial and attitudinal barriers affecting women with disabilities.

Finding 20: Evidence points to a shift from male control toward partnership on money, assets, and time. The shift is real but uneven across the different regions. Formal changes such as joint accounts and joint land registration have grown, yet everyday power inside the home often trails these gains. Women with disabilities benefit the least because prejudice and weak spousal support persist.

Evidence indicates a partial but uneven shift from unilateral male control towards greater cooperation over money, assets and time. Formal changes, including joint accounts and joint land registration, became more common, but everyday household power relations did not always change at the same pace. Women with disabilities reported fewer benefits because of continuing prejudice and limited spousal support.

Sensitization and the model-family approach in Mtwara encouraged some men to support women's enterprises and participate in joint financial planning. Participants associated these practices with greater joint decision-making and reduced household conflict and gender-based violence. Joint accounts and land titles also reduced the risks associated with control by a single household member.

In Singida, joint decision-making emerged as a practical entry point because it presented women's participation as a shared family undertaking rather than a direct challenge to men. Where couples attended

sessions together, participants found change easier to negotiate: husbands were more likely to support women's economic and leadership participation, while women were better able to sustain their confidence and apply what they had learned.

However, joint decision-making sometimes represented negotiated cooperation within existing power hierarchies rather than equal power-sharing. Religious leaders in Kisarawe and Chalinze described women's leadership and decision-making as increasingly acceptable but often framed this acceptance around spousal consent and the expectation that women should not challenge husbands' authority. As noted during Phase 1, some men required full visibility over women's profits and retained final authority over expenditure. In other cases, men prevented women from pursuing their plans or took their savings.

Changes in unpaid care work followed a similar pattern. In communities where men had not traditionally undertaken domestic responsibilities, including some Maasai communities, participants reported that men began washing, cooking, cleaning and caring for children so that women could attend meetings or operate businesses. Households in Pwani similarly reported greater sharing of tasks such as fetching water and cooking.

These changes were not always sustained. Men's participation in domestic work sometimes increased during training or campaign periods and declined once active project engagement ended, returning much of the care burden to women. In some households, men reduced their contribution to domestic responsibilities as women's economic independence increased, creating a new imbalance. This illustrates the need for male engagement to promote shared responsibility alongside women's economic empowerment.

Women with disabilities faced additional constraints. Lenders sometimes questioned their ability to repay loans, while harassment in markets and limited household support reduced their ability to benefit from economic opportunities. Some women made progress through disability groups and council loans, but this did not consistently result in reliable support from husbands or partners. Abandonment or limited spousal support could quickly undermine their participation, even where women's empowerment received public endorsement.

Overall, joint decision-making reduced open resistance and made women's public and economic participation more acceptable in some households, but it did not guarantee equal influence over resources or decisions. Its contribution was strongest when accompanied by continued engagement on authority, control and the distribution of household responsibilities.

Delivery relied substantially on volunteer champions and peer communication through WhatsApp groups and community meetings. Changes among champions, irregular mentoring and the absence of basic operational inputs such as airtime and transport affected continuity and limited household follow-up. Male engagement was also not consistently incorporated into council plans and budgets, causing activities to slow or stop when project-supported events ended.

Measurement was similarly limited. Indicators were not always sex-disaggregated or designed to capture behavioural change, such as men's attendance at meetings, consistent sharing of three core household responsibilities, or support for women's political campaigns. These gaps made it difficult to compare wards or determine whether public endorsement was accompanied by change within households. They also weakened disability-inclusive follow-up between project activities.

Male champions

Male champions extended the programme's reach by taking messages into everyday spaces where men already gathered and by acting as locally trusted messengers. Their contribution was strongest when they worked through existing community routines and framed gender equality as cooperation and shared household progress rather than as a loss of male authority.

In Singida Municipal Council and Ikungi District, champions described using routine community platforms to promote women's leadership and economic rights. Their accounts indicate that the model functioned as

an extension mechanism rather than a stand-alone intervention, allowing messages from training and dialogue sessions to be repeated and reinforced outside formal project activities.

In Singida, outreach included informal communication through public transport networks:

“Some of my colleagues who drive bajaj, provided education to their passengers.” IDI, Male champion, Singida

In Ikungi, a champion similarly emphasized working through existing community activities and connecting school and community platforms so that engagement involved repeated exposure rather than a one-off event.

Champions in both locations also described resistance connected to identity and social status, particularly among older men who interpreted women’s empowerment as women “dominating” men or as a threat to male authority. In Singida, one champion stated, “The biggest challenge was with the elders.” In Ikungi, a champion described the underlying concern as fear of losing status, observing that “Sometimes older men feel as if their social identity or status in the community is being taken away.”

Participation patterns further affected effectiveness. Champions reported that men attended less consistently than women and that certain groups required more deliberate mobilization. In Singida, traditional leaders were described as difficult to reach, while young people sometimes expected incentives to participate. In Ikungi, low turnout was similarly identified as a constraint. Champions suggested using activities valued by young men, including football and music events, as entry points for engagement.

Despite these constraints, champions reported early changes associated with their outreach and broader programme sensitization. In Singida, a champion observed that change was more likely when couples attended sessions together, although progress remained partial. In Ikungi, awareness-raising was associated with greater acceptance of women contesting leadership positions and improved representation in selected roles:

“Currently, we have three hamlet chairwomen and one female village chairperson.” IDI, Male champion, Ikungi

Overall, male champions contributed to norm change by widening outreach and reinforcing messages in everyday male spaces. Their effectiveness nevertheless depended on sustained support and tailored approaches for harder-to-reach groups, particularly elders, traditional leaders and young men.

1.15 Efficiency

Summary of findings

The evaluation found that the WLER project achieved notable efficiency by leveraging existing government structures, strengthening local capacity, and adopting financial strategies such as direct transfers to Regional Administrative Secretariat Commissioners Office and no-cost extensions—to ensure delivery of planned outputs despite initial delays in disbursement and bureaucratic bottlenecks. Investments in results-based management training, effective financial management including training on UN Women financial rules and regulations to ensure compliance, financial oversight, and establishment of Regional Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Working Groups improved coordination, reduced duplication, and promoted value for money. Stakeholders praised the quality of training, visible improvements in local by-laws, gender-responsive budgeting, and community behaviour change; however, compressed timelines to some extent limited depth of engagement, and funding gaps constrained inclusion of women with disabilities, broader geographic coverage, and sustained mentorship for women candidates. Future programming should prioritise timely disbursement mechanisms, realistic work-planning to avoid compressed delivery windows, stronger follow-up support for economic empowerment and political participation, adequate resources for disability inclusion and mobility support and expanded access to capital to translate training gains into tangible outcomes.

Implementation and cost effectiveness

1.15.1.1 What measures were put in place by UN Women to support cost effective delivery?

Finding 21: UN Women promoted cost-effective delivery by leveraging partnerships with LGAs, civil society, and community-based organisations. Existing government structures were used for planning and coordination, minimizing administrative duplication. The project also emphasized on targeted capacity training for partners, trainers-of-trainers models which increased ownership and reduced costs.

Cost-effective delivery was underpinned through partner selection and preparation, targeted capacity strengthening UN Women has continued to strengthen the capacities of WLER partners in reporting and providing tools for data collection⁴⁶, strict financial controls, and active programme oversight through monitoring visits that collectively kept delivery aligned to plans and value for money. UN Women is investing in the continuous capacity building of the technical staff on results-based management and financial rules and regulations to ensure smooth implementation of the project.⁴⁷ Partners were selected based on competence and delivery records. Pre-engagement capacity and risk assessments to ensure engagement of credible and relevant partners for effective delivery and strengthened financial accountability. Partners cited tailored finance/results training in 2023 and ongoing help with liquidation and documentation, which further strengthened financial and results accountability as well as reducing rework and delays.

Cost effectiveness was also achieved through established governance, coordination and monitoring mechanisms. For example, lack of effective coordination of GEWE actors within the project's regions limited the ability to harness synergies and the optimal use of available resources to address the remaining GEWE challenges. Hence, UN Women in collaboration with five Regional Secretariats established the "Regional Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Working Group, (GEWE Working Group) to improve experience sharing, enhance collaboration, and avoid duplication for the effective promotion of gender equality and address discrimination against women and girls.⁴⁸

Cost effectiveness was monitored through quarterly reviews, financial tracking systems, and close engagement between UN Women and responsible parties. Adaptive strategies such as transfers of funds to the Regional Commissioners Office and no-cost extensions (responsible parties) were employed to preserve value for money while safeguarding outputs. Specifically, cost effectiveness was monitored through independent and internal audits, quarterly narrative reports and financial reviews, field visits⁴⁹ and verification with checklists, and results-based performance reviews used to ensure resources are well spent and results achieved as per plans.

1.15.1.2 What human resources have been allocated to the project and are they adequate?

Finding 22: Dedicated project officers, program analysts, and gender specialists were engaged. UN Women allocated a robust team to oversee the implementation of the WLER project.

These were Programme Manager, Project Specialists (i.e.: Programme Specialist on local, government and Women's Economic Empowerment Specialist), Programme Officers, Monitoring and Reporting Analyst (M&E and Reporting), a Finance Officer, Communications and Media Specialist, three Programme Analysts providing continuous technical support to the 18 Councils and a multi-stakeholder Programme Steering Committee (PSC).⁵⁰ The regional and sub-office presence enabled close accompaniment of responsible parties, with programme, monitoring, finance, administration, and communications staff working across six regions. Sub-offices in Mtwara⁵¹ and Singida further strengthened the project's ability to assist partners on a day-to-day basis, ensuring local presence and timely support. Stakeholders broadly affirmed the adequacy

⁴⁶ Annual Narrative Report 2023 p. 36

⁴⁷ Annual Narrative Report 2022 p. 35

⁴⁸ Annual Narrative Report 2023 p.36

⁴⁹ Pwani field visit report dated 16 August 2024; 30 October 2024; Field monitoring mission to Lindi & Mtwara dated 23 February 2024; Data collection, monitoring, reporting and partner's capacity building mission Singida and Arusha 16th April 2025 to name a few.

⁵⁰ See WLER ProDoc pp. 25-26).

⁵¹ A new sub-office was established under WLER project to support implementation of the project in Mtwara and Lindi regions (WLER ProDoc p.24

of staffing, noting that the team was sufficient to deliver on the planned scope of work.⁵² While adequate, the complexity of fund flows (e.g. to LGAs) and the need for intensive follow-up with partners stretched staff capacities. Stakeholders, for example, acknowledged the challenges posed by the project's wide geographic coverage, with some partners reflecting that "resources can never be enough." This sentiment reflected the reality that, while the staffing levels met the project's core requirements, the team was often stretched to balance demands across multiple regions and councils.

1.15.1.3 Were the financial resources adequate to achieve the intended objectives?

Finding 23: The project was sufficiently resourced to deliver on most planned outcomes. Funds supported capacity building, awareness campaigns, gender-responsive budgeting, and school-based initiatives. However, delays in disbursements compressed implementation windows, creating risks of rushed delivery.

Financially, the budget of approximately 7.9 million euros was adequate to deliver the core project plan. It supported critical activities such as strengthening the capacities of LGAs including on gender-responsive planning, transform social norms and discriminatory behaviours and practices, strengthening capacities of women leaders, enhance collection and use of sex and disability responsive data and enhancing women's economic rights. However, it was not sufficient to expand geographic coverage, provide deeper and more intensive forms of support, or ensure fully inclusive engagement. These gaps were particularly pronounced in reaching women with disabilities, who required additional resources such as interpretation services, mobility support, and assistants. Several groups indicated that these needs were either unfunded or underfunded, leaving inclusion goals partially achieved. Key informants observed that "in-depth economic empowerment is a bit expensive." As a result, certain resource-intensive processes, such as land use planning and the issuance of Certificate of Customary Right of Occupancy (CCROs) could not be implemented across all areas. Instead, the project was forced to prioritize where to concentrate on these deeper interventions, leaving some communities with more limited benefits.

1.15.1.4 What are the views of stakeholders on the quality and adequacy of interventions?

Finding 24: Stakeholders consistently rated the quality of training, accompaniment and the integrated approach of the WLER project as strong, relevant, and impactful. They pointed to visible and practical shifts in local governance processes, community behaviour, and individual leadership confidence as evidence of the project's efficiency.

Across all regions⁵³, stakeholders expressed appreciation for the relevance and quality of interventions, particularly the training sessions, empowerment group formation, and awareness activities, which were viewed as highly valuable in strengthening women's leadership and economic rights. However, they consistently emphasized that the interventions were not always adequate to meet community needs due to limited budgets, short project duration, and insufficient time allocated for workshops and seminars as well as the need for follow up trainings on financial literacy for women in business. Specific gaps raised included inadequate focus on UCW in Mtwara MC, insufficient support for persons with disabilities in all six regions, and resource shortages for land rights formalization and training materials. Male allies in Dar es Salaam MC, for instance, requested smaller, more frequent sessions as well as working materials to reinforce learning and engagement. Community champions cited transport barriers across large wards and resistance from some men, both of which hindered outreach and consistent participation.

Local government officials⁵⁴ particularly praised the tangible changes introduced into council planning and by-laws. In Arusha, respondents highlighted that ramps for accessibility and child-appropriate toilets had been integrated into council plans, a direct result of gender-responsive planning and budgeting training. Similarly, officials in Mtwara reported visible social shifts, including reductions in early marriages and arbitrary divorces, attributing these changes to the influence of the project's interventions.

⁵² Interviews with UN Women staff especially and some LGA responsible partners who acknowledged the adequate support from UN Women staff.

⁵³ See Outcome Harvesting (OH) workshop reports in all the six project regions.

⁵⁴ Interviews with LGA officials during OH workshops and interviews in all regions.

Community influencers also testified witnessing ongoing impactful behaviour change in most project regions. Traditional initiation instructors in Mtwara described the adoption of a modernised *unyago* (initiation) syllabus, developed after engaging with UN Women's training, which transformed cultural practices further promoting girls' rights and safety. In Mandawa (Ruangwa), community champions linked their training to improved mobilisation and stronger local support for women's participation in decision-making.

The stakeholders' abilities to respond to violence against women were notably strengthened. In Lindi, training clarified how local actors should handle cases of gender-based violence (GBV), improving coordination and response. In Arusha, participants highlighted the toll-free 116 number and referral links with police and legal officers as critical tools they had learned to use in responding to GBV. These measures contributed to greater awareness, accountability, and access to justice at community level.

Women leaders themselves expressed that the transformational leadership training had enhanced their confidence, voice, and knowledge of rights. Many women reported a stronger understanding of both basic and political rights, election processes and their role in governance processes which translated into increased participation in leadership spaces. A striking example came from Dar es Salaam, where one woman proudly shared that, following WLER's leadership training conducted by the University of Dar es Salaam, she had successfully been nominated as a special seat councilor in Sandali Ward. However, many more women participated in local elections and were elected in various positions as provided in Table 3 above.

Stakeholders also identified bottlenecks in accessing financial facilities, which constrained women's ability to translate training into tangible economic empowerment. CDOs responsible for government loans in all the regions reported that the 4-4-2 loans were suspended limiting access to loans for women.⁵⁵ This contributed to WLER missing the opportunity to expand the VICOPA model as an alternative to savings and loans.

Project monitoring reports show that "limited/insufficient capital to sustain and expand income-generating activities that were initiated by beneficiaries of the WLER project through the women's economic empowerment platforms. The beneficiaries inquired if the project could allocate some funds to address this gap".⁵⁶

Across sites, women entrepreneurs reported that council loan procedures were cumbersome, amounts provided were too small, and in some cases, loans were never delivered with no feedback on the reasons why they were not successful. For women with disabilities in Mtwara and Vingunguti, these barriers were compounded by a lack of accessible infrastructure, limited access to capital, and insufficient work tools or mobility support.

Finally, gaps were evident in supporting women's political participation. While the project enhanced confidence and skills, women candidates in Mtwara underlined the need for sustained mentorship and financing support to enable them to effectively compete in elections. Without structured follow-up, financial backing, and ongoing guidance, gains in women's political participation risk being short-lived.

1.15.1.5 To what extent were activities implemented according to annual workplans, what undermined timely delivery and what mitigation measures were put in place??

Finding 25: Overall, activities were largely implemented in line with annual workplans, and stakeholders agreed that the project was generally delivered on time. Nevertheless, several delays affected the pace and sequencing of delivery.

Funding disbursement lags meant that while planned activities were carried out, they often had to be implemented in shorter and more compressed timeframes. Government bureaucratic processes and competing priorities also slowed down the progress. Competing priorities of the partners and complex accountability structures sometimes lead to delays in the delivery of project plans. UN Women has been

⁵⁵ See also April 13 2023 speech by Hon. Kassim Majaliwa, the Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania requiring LGAs to suspend loans for the government to introduce new 10 percent loan system; accessed at <https://www.pmo.go.tz/news/waziri-mkuu-serikali-kuweka-mfumo-mpya-mikopo-ya-asilimia-10>.

⁵⁶ Pwani Region Field Visit dated 30 October 2024.

engaging in continuous discussions with the leadership of relevant partners to ensure these challenges are addressed.⁵⁷

For example, the national launch and the first Steering Committee meeting were delayed, and the identification of priority interventions by LGAs extended the inception phase by three months, to December 2022. Similarly, the signing of agreements with LGAs was only finalized by April 2023, delaying some roll-out activities. In specific cases, such as the cookstove project in Singida, delivery was also affected by the complexity of the intervention and the time required to secure community buy-in.⁵⁸ Elections 2024 slowed delivery of interventions due to additional security measures in place during the time coupled by political sensitivities on the activities of CSOs in communities.

The bureaucratic system of the government and competing priorities caused delays on various issues including the national launch, first Steering Committee meeting and identification of priorities for implementation by the LGA's. The assignment of focal points to the project at different levels was very effective for coordination and engagement with the government at different levels.⁵⁹ However, in some districts the frequent transfers of staff meant loss of institutional memory causing delays as new staff had to acquaint themselves with the project.

"Frequent staff transfers disrupted momentum; new officers had to start over, slowing progress. Train at least two staff per ward to ensure continuity despite transfers." – KII SWO Tandahimba

"[There is need to] Develop a transition plan for project staff, including handovers, as staff frequently transfer, and new staff may not know project history." – KII CDO Tandahimba

The challenge of data collection on women's participation in the 2024 local government elections has further highlighted the critical need to support data collection systems at the local level to effectively feed data to the national level, ensuring that information is available in a timely manner and ultimately supporting evidence-based decision-making and policy development.⁶⁰

To mitigate these challenges, UN Women and partners employed flexible work planning and adjusted sequencing of activities to fit revised timelines. Sustained engagement with government stakeholders helped resolve bureaucratic bottlenecks, while the project timelines were formally extended to safeguard the achievement of outputs. In practice, this ensured that key deliverables were met despite early delays, though evidence from stakeholder transcripts indicates that compressed timelines reduced the depth of engagement with some communities and beneficiaries. A key lesson is the need for more realistic planning and early agreement-signing with implementing partners and LGAs in future phases, as well as building in sufficient flexibility to accommodate bureaucratic processes and contextual delays without compromising the quality of delivery.

To mitigate the above challenges, UN Women devised strategies such as proactive and continuous dialogue with partners at both the national and local levels. At the local level, project staff held regular discussions with LGAs to review contexts, share emerging challenges, and jointly agree on solutions. In Mtwara, for example, a focal point was formally requested from the regional treasury office to support closer follow-up on funding transfers. This targeted engagement helped reduce bottlenecks and strengthened accountability between the regional and council levels. In Lindi, where delays were particularly pronounced, a more direct approach was piloted. Funds were disbursed straight to councils rather than passing through intermediate layers. This allowed implementation to proceed in a timely manner, though it was not universally accepted as some regions preferred to maintain their established systems. Nevertheless, the experience demonstrated that flexibility in financial arrangements could be a viable strategy for safeguarding implementation timelines.

⁵⁷ Annual Narrative Report 2023 p. 36.

⁵⁸ The 2024 grassroots elections widely cited by stakeholders as one of the constraining factors for effective implementation of activities for instance in Lindi.

⁵⁹ Annual Narrative Report 2022 p.35

⁶⁰ Annual Narrative Report 2024 pp 41-42.

Resource allocation for integrating human rights, gender equality, and the needs of disabled and young women

1.15.1.6 What measures were put in place to support integrating human rights, gender equality, and the needs of disabled and young women?

Finding 26: The WLER project approached integration as an intentional and multi-pronged strategy, ensuring that human rights, gender equality, and the needs of marginalized groups were embedded across both design and delivery.

Rather than treating inclusion as an add-on, the project integrated it into its core methods through training on legal and civil rights, gender-responsive local planning and budgeting, accessibility measures, partnerships with organisations of persons with disabilities, and school-based initiatives for girls. This holistic approach strengthened both institutional systems and community-level practices.

In the area of human and civil rights, the project promoted legal and civic education to empower women with knowledge of their entitlements such as land rights, clearer pathways for women to report and seek redress in cases of violence. This was reinforced by the advancement of by-laws addressing harmful practices in districts such as Ruangwa and Lindi MC, helping local governments institutionalise protection for women and girls. Additionally, referral pathways were strengthened to create coordinated responses. In Arusha, for instance, the toll-free 116 helpline was linked with social welfare, police, and legal officers, enabling survivors of violence to access timely support and justice.

Integration also extended to gender equality in systems, where councils applied gender-responsive planning and budgeting practices. This not only influenced annual plans but also ensured that local guidelines and by-laws increasingly reflected women's needs. Training in gender-responsive planning left a visible impact on institutional practices, with Arusha councils incorporating accessible infrastructure into their plans and the Opportunities and Obstacles to Development (O&OD) planning tools being revised to integrate gender inclusion.

For women with disabilities, several measures improved participation. Accessibility adaptations were introduced in meetings, with sessions deliberately designed to accommodate different needs, such as mobility and interpretation support. Inclusive outreach, alongside partnerships with organisations of persons with disabilities such as ADD International helped strengthen institutional capacity for advocacy and participation. In addition, local councils actively worked to connect women with disabilities to the national "4-4-2" loan facility, which reserves two percent of council development funds for persons with disabilities. Despite these efforts, the costs of achieving full inclusion remain high, with participants highlighting that additional per-participant investment is essential to cover mobility support, interpretation, and other accessibility needs that are often unfunded or underfunded.

For young women and girls, the project also delivered important gains. School-based leadership initiatives and measures to address harmful practices improved the conditions for girls' participation and retention in education. Following field visits in Mtwara Municipal Council, a critical gap in menstrual hygiene support was identified. This prompted the council to allocate a budget for sanitary pads to support vulnerable girls, marking an important institutional response. Similarly, councils incorporated requirements for gender-sensitive infrastructure into their planning, ensuring that school toilets now include private rooms to address menstrual needs. These positive changes have reduced absenteeism and contributed to creating a safer and more supportive environment for girls in education.

1.15.1.7 Was resource allocation equitably distributed for these aspects?

Finding 27: While allocation mechanisms were in place, reach was uneven.

Women with disabilities faced stigma, mobility barriers, and insufficient budget allocations to cover higher costs to implement fully inclusive interventions. Young women benefited from school-based initiatives, but sustainable support mechanisms would require greater investments.

Access to capital also remained cumbersome, with complex procedures and administrative hurdles discouraging or excluding women who most needed financial support. As a result, while the project

advanced equity in principle, the realities of cost, access, and reach constrained its ability to achieve fully inclusive outcomes. It is reported for instance that the geographical nature of district councils (Chalinze DC and Kibaha TC) has created extra travel costs to community volunteers/champions and women to engage in the WLER-related initiatives.⁶¹

1.16 Sustainability

Summary of findings

The WLER project has enhanced strong ownership among national stakeholders through participatory design, direct engagement with local government systems and strategic collaboration with ministries. It has also enhanced ownership through institutional capacity and practices such as gender-responsive planning, inclusive budgeting, and disability data systems. Significant legal, policy, and practice shifts including reforms in electoral laws, disability policy, land services and community outreach demonstrate ownership and increasing institutionalization of gender equality and LNOB principles. Opportunities for scaling are significant, particularly for interventions already integrated in government systems or community-owned models such as gender-responsive planning and village savings groups, while others like women's land rights and disability-inclusive services require sustained resources and structural support.

Ownership of the project among stakeholders

1.16.1.1 To what extent is the project owned by national stakeholders (LGAs, government ministries and agencies)?

Finding 28: During the entire project period, national stakeholders at both ministerial and LGA level adopted various approaches that reflected their ownership and commitment to the project. The approaches included financial commitment to allocate own budget to carry on with project interventions, integration of gender indicators in iMES and the support for the PMO-LEVD in the disability monitoring system and mandating gender responsive budgeting.

LGAs have committed to allocate budget and other resources as an indication of project ownership. Chalinze DC has made allocation of TZS 80 million⁶² and allocated a plot of land for building a women's business centre. The LGA has also established a committee from the local to council level as an effort to simplify and fast-track the processing of 10% loans for women, youth, and persons with disabilities.⁶³ Tandahimba reported to have "allocated a total of TZS 30 million⁶⁴ in the 2024/25 financial year to facilitate the development of Village Land Use Plans for two villages, including Mkonjoano, towards supporting more women".⁶⁵ While UN Women initially supported around 8681 titles, Tandahimba LGA was able to deliver more titles by allocating additional council resources. Through own resources, they also hired experts from the Ardhi University to support mapping and polygon preparation. "We treated the project as part of our daily responsibility to ensure efficiency and sustainability".⁶⁶ This means about 18 villages are awaiting support to enable women to get titles".⁶⁷ Pwani LGA reported that the government has a land survey, titling, and ownership programme that complements WLER interventions. For example, in Pwani B street, the government has surveyed women's land and further steps are being implemented.⁶⁸ In Singinda, the Ikungi District Council reported "they prepared to sustain the WLER project achievements by approving gender specific budget line into the district's annual budget".⁶⁹

National stakeholders have adopted and scaled up project concepts as an indication of ownership. The integration of gender indicators in iMES and the incorporation of disability monitoring tools within PMO-

⁶¹ Pwani Region Field Visit dated 30 October 2024.

⁶² About 30 thousand USD.

⁶³ See also Mission Report - Donor Visit Pwani 2024 and WLER Project Annual Status Project Progress_2024.

⁶⁴ About 12 thousand USD.

⁶⁵ WLER Project Annual Progress_report 2024 and Interview with Land officer Tandahimba

⁶⁶ Interview with Land officer.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Interview with Land Office, Land officer.

⁶⁹ Interview with Planning officer.

LEYD reflect strong national ownership. It was observed by the PMO-LEYD that *“we are finalising the National Disability Policy and its implementation strategy, which gives us a real opportunity to integrate lessons from this project. We would have the opportunity to also integrate project M&E tools into our systems, move beyond piloting and make these approaches part of our national practice.”*⁷⁰ The PO-RALG acknowledged ownership of the WLER-supported integration of gender data into iMES. The Ministry expressed commitment to initiate gender data collection in the near future, demonstrating national readiness to sustain and operationalise the intervention.

The ministry noted, “with iMES, we now have the tools to start collecting gender data, though collection has not yet begun. The training we received has built our capacity, and we are ready to begin this process soon to make the system fully operational.”⁷¹ UN Women highlighted that one of the WLER project’s major achievements was supporting government actors to strengthen data systems by addressing gaps and incorporating gender indicators into national systems. They noted, “for the first outcome on data, we worked closely with government actors to identify system gaps and successfully integrated 68 gender indicators into IMES. The government is now using these tools to collect targeted data demonstrating real ownership of the process.”⁷² It is specifically reported that a specialized data collection tool was also created and incorporated into the PD-MIS, enabling the collection of targeted data on women with disabilities and facilitating the implementation of tailored interventions to support their unique needs and rights.⁷³ It was reported from Arusha and most of the LGAs that CDOs often carried on activities using their internal capacity. “Yes, the council has 25 wards. 11 out of the 25 wards of Arusha City Council have two CDOs. The remaining 14 wards have one CDO. The CDOs understand the project and are more than capable of carrying out the activities in the absence of WLER”.⁷⁴

1.16.1.2 What approaches increased ownership and capacity?

Finding 29: A bold but strategic decision to work directly through local government and key ministries, an approach often avoided by partners due to the complexities of management, largely enhanced ownership.

This choice provided great value in building institutional ownership, strengthening results, and opening opportunities for scale and sustainability. Involving multiple departments within councils such as social welfare, community development, planning, land, O&OD, and legal officers anchored the project within existing government structures and enhanced ownership and implementation. Early and continuous consultations with responsible ministries⁷⁵ enabled national and local engagement. Participatory formative processes in the regions allowed the project to target wards and districts facing the greatest challenges. This created strong local relevance and buy-in. The experience underscores the importance of balancing collective formulation with a sharper focus on systemic drivers of change.

As indicate previously, the project achieved ownership by aligning and linking with the government’s existing programmes and priorities. This strategy allowed the project to leverage on existing networks, resources and systems. The iMES, PD-MIS and O&OD systems are good examples of this approach. In addition, working through PMO-LEYD, PO RALG, other ministries, LGAs was approach that enhanced national ownership of project results. The collaboration with the Hombolo institute on gender-responsive budgeting was a well-planned approach that increased national and stakeholder ownership. Through the collaboration with LGTI, the Opportunities and Obstacles (O&OD) was revised to align with national development frameworks and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 5 on gender equality.

The revision included translating the principle of inclusion into actionable strategies by ensuring that women and PWDs are not only present but actively engage in shaping local development priorities, through inclusive planning and budgeting practices. Furthermore, LGTI undertook a curriculum review for its Bachelor’s and Master’s programs in Community Development, integrating the UN Women Gender

⁷⁰ Interview with PMO-LEYD.

⁷¹ Interview with PO-RALG.

⁷² Interview with UN Women project officer.

⁷³ WLER Project Annual Narrative Report, 2024 p.5.

⁷⁴ Interview with District Community Development Officer (DCDO)

⁷⁵ Consultations were held with MoCDGWSP, PORALG, PMO-LEYD, LGAs and other responsible parties from the project design, inception to implementation. Refer to consultations and mission reports.

Mainstreaming and Gender-Responsive Budgeting manual as a core module. This institutional reform is a major step toward embedding gender-responsive practices in the training of future local government officials. The curriculum review represents a robust set of gender and disability-responsive strategies and practices implemented under the WLER project and laying the foundation for more inclusive and equitable local governance systems.

It was observed by partners that LGA led implementation strengthened ownership, “The project should continue involving Community Development Officers, as we understand community challenges well and work closely with local people.”⁷⁶ While these examples illustrate the ability of national stakeholders to carry on with project activities, they also shared genuine concerns on challenges they are facing and anticipate in the future. These are elaborated in the next sections.

1.16.1.3 Is there sufficient capacity among national stakeholders to carry on the activities?

Finding 30: As demonstrated previously, there is evidence that national stakeholders have built strong technical capacity and are already committed to allocate financial and other resources to carry on project interventions. However, financial and structural constraints still limit their ability to sustain and scale some activities independently.

National stakeholders demonstrated sufficient technical capacity to sustain the activities. Gender-responsive planning and budgeting practices are now routinely applied, disability-inclusive data systems are established at the national level, and cadres of trained community development, social welfare, and legal officers are in place.⁷⁷ This reflects an encouraging level of institutionalisation of skills and systems. Sustaining and scaling interventions without external support remains constrained by limited council budgets, transport challenges, and the higher costs of meaningful inclusion, such as sign language interpretation, mobility aids, and escorts. Furthermore, the recurring need to orient newly (s)electd councillors/leaders and community animators⁷⁸ creates gaps in continuity and requires ongoing investment in capacity building. National stakeholders generally affirmed that there is adequate but not sufficient capacity to carry on the activities.⁷⁹ LGAs depend on own resources that are insufficient. Lindi MC highlighted that “the council has many tasks to perform and 9-10 departments which depend on own source. We would need external supporters to effectively carry forward the interventions instead of depending on the council sources only.”⁸⁰ One officer stated that “WLER did not introduce something entirely new, it strengthened ongoing government efforts. Programmes on gender equality and women’s economic empowerment already exist, but government resources are limited. WLER covered only a small scope compared to the whole municipality, where needs remain high. However, sustainability is possible since the government is committed to continuing these efforts.”⁸¹

Changes in policies or practices for gender equality and LNOB among partners

1.16.1.4 What practices have changed among national partners for gender equality and LNOB?

Finding 31: Government and community practices increasingly reflect gender equality and inclusion through systematic improvements in planning, budgeting, service delivery, land rights, violence response, and community outreach.

All project LGAs have institutionalised gender budgeting, incorporated unpaid care and inclusive facility standards into local plans. On gender-responsive budgeting, Municipal Councils of Singida, Pwani and Tandahimba set aside a budget line for integrating gender in their budget, marking a positive shift from previous gender-blind budgets.⁸² In Singida, the “LGAs at district level are now capturing gender segregated

⁷⁶ Interview with DCDO.

⁷⁷ As reported in different project reports and field visits.

⁷⁸ TGNP Quarterly Progress Report, 2024 dated 30/06/2024. The report notes, ‘based on the supportive supervision visits many community animators (particularly in Dar es Salaam) have been transferred without a clear succession plan for the action plans agreed on hence deterring implementation progress in their areas.

⁷⁹ The need for continued capacity strengthening was widely noted during interviews, FDGs and OH workshops. Various partner reports also attest to this need (LGTI, TGNP, UDSM (need for mentorship).

⁸⁰ Interview with: Municipal CDO and CDO (coordinator of the WLER project).

⁸¹ Interview with DCDO.

⁸² Interviews with LGA officials in Singida, Pwani and Tandahimba.

data to know the status of men and women in the district”.⁸³ In Ruangwa, gender budgeting is mandatory now, ensuring that the budget will not pass without allocations for women or girls’ programmes. The respondent stated that “the council budget for loans for the women’s groups has increased. For example, one group was given 75 million which in the past it could not be possible. The women have managed to buy a tractor.”⁸⁴

The Community Development Department in Mtwara has shifted its working approach to be more engaged with communities locally rather than waiting for beneficiaries to come to the offices. The Mtwara MC council has extended WLER activities to other non-project wards using its own internal resources. “Our working approach has changed because of the WLER project, we are now more engaged with communities, especially women, by reaching them in their local areas instead of waiting for them to come to our offices.... The policies remain the same, but implementation practices have improved significantly to be more engaging and effective.”⁸⁵ Another officer opined, “from the training provided in project-supported wards, we as the council have also managed to extend activities to other wards not directly covered by the project using our own resources. Sometimes we mix women from project and non-project wards so that they can learn from each other. This shows how the project has opened our eyes.”⁸⁶

Overall, infrastructure and service delivery have become more inclusive in Arusha with accessible washrooms, wheelchair ramps and private school toilet rooms for girls and health facilities prioritising persons with disabilities. Women’s land rights advanced through joint registration in Mtwara, funding for customary certificates in Tandahimba and intensified community education by land officers. Violence response mechanisms also improved, with Arusha using the 116 hotline and referral systems, while Ruangwa and Lindi MC strengthened safety in initiation rites by revising timing, licensing instructors, and introducing sanctions.

1.16.1.5 What organisational policies have changed in support of gender equality and LNOB?

Finding 32: The project supported changes in policies (disability policy review), legal frameworks (election laws) and Data systems (iMES, PD-MIS) at national, local and service levels demonstrating stronger alignment with gender equality and social inclusion.

The WLER project facilitated transformative changes across policies, legal frameworks, and data systems, reinforcing alignment with gender equality and inclusion. At the national level, it supported the review and finalisation of the National Disability Policy, while at the legal level, it contributed to reforms in election laws, including provisions addressing violence against women in politics and requirements for Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) desks within political parties. Simultaneously, the project strengthened data systems such as iMES and PD-MIS, integrating gender indicators and tools to capture information on women with disabilities. By operating across national, local, and service delivery levels, these interventions demonstrate strong ownership by government actors and establish sustainable mechanisms for inclusive planning, monitoring, and accountability.

The WLER project played a pivotal role in supporting the review of Tanzania’s Opportunities and Obstacles to Development (O&OD) guidelines, ensuring stronger alignment with gender equality and social inclusion principles. In collaboration with the LGTI and PO-RALG, the project facilitated a comprehensive revision process aimed at addressing critical gaps identified in the UN Women Baseline Survey and Gender Audit. These enhancements ensure that local planning and budgeting processes are no longer gender blind but are equipped to foster equitable participation and outcomes. The revised O&OD guidelines now reflect a transformative shift toward inclusivity, aligning with national development frameworks and the SDGs, particularly SDG 5 on gender equality. Through WLER’s support, the principle of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) was translated into actionable strategies that ensure women and persons with disabilities (PWDs) are not only represented but actively engaged in shaping local development priorities.

⁸³ Interview with Ikungi DCDO, planning officer and CDO.

⁸⁴ Interview with Social Welfare Officer (SWO).

⁸⁵ Interview with CDO.

⁸⁶ Interview with SWO.

At the local level, by-laws were enacted/reviewed and validated in Lindi and Ruangwa to regulate traditional initiation practices of Jando and Unyago, strengthen safety during school holidays and support women's land ownership and access to council loans.

Opportunities for replicating or scaling up good practices

1.16.1.6 What opportunities exist for adoption of interventions promoted by the project?

Finding 33: The project has demonstrated strong potential for broader adoption of its interventions, strengthening both policy shifts and documented evidence of success at local and national levels. The following indicate opportunities for replicating or scaling up good practices:

Land services: Several councils have begun to implement gender-responsive land services, creating opportunities for replication. For example, Mtwara Municipal Council now prompts joint land registration for couples, while Tandahimba Council has recognised women's Customary Certificates of Rights of Occupancy as affordable and has begun allocating its own resources to support them. These local-level shifts demonstrate both the feasibility and appeal of simplified, gender-responsive land procedures, providing a clear entry point for adoption across other councils.

Village savings and lending groups: The documented model of village savings and lending groups has generated demand beyond the initial project sites. Communities in wards outside project areas have requested adoption, and implementing partners are already replicating the approach in additional regions. The strong evidence of sustainability and community ownership positions this intervention for uptake.

GGTNs activities: The GGTNs through participatory action research have empowered women and their communities to understand the underlying causes of inequalities and have taken actions to resolve them. These can be scaled up and replicated in other areas apart from Dar es Salaam and Pwani.

Disability-inclusive data: The institutionalisation of a comprehensive data tool and mobile application for women with disabilities through the Prime Minister's Office for Persons with Disabilities (PMO-LYED) provides a nationally endorsed mechanism to capture participation, needs, and service gaps. This adoption creates an enabling environment for councils and other stakeholders to integrate disability-inclusive planning, monitoring, and service delivery into existing government systems.

1.16.1.7 How have LGAs, CSOs, UN agencies considered adopting and scaling up project interventions

Finding 34: Local and national governments, CSOs, and the UN system are actively adopting and scaling project interventions through institutionalization, policy reforms, community engagement and coordination platforms to advance gender equality, women's empowerment and disability inclusion.

Local and national government actors have actively considered adopting and scaling up project interventions through strengthening training and planning. The Hombolo Local Government Institute now teaches gender-responsive planning and budgeting while national "Opportunities and Obstacles for Development" guidelines were revised to integrate gender and inclusion. A new course on Community Development and Social Innovation, covering gender equality, women's empowerment and disability issues has also been added to the Hombolo Institute's curriculum. The new courses for degree and masters programmes on community development will start to be implemented in February 2026, benefiting 250 students (200 degree programme and 50 master's programme).

CSOs have adopted the project's models and tools to scale up interventions and innovate new approaches. Village savings and lending groups are being extended to Mtwara, Lindi, and Pwani, strengthening women's enterprise and financial resilience. Integrated programming combining women's leadership, economic empowerment, violence response and land rights is being applied across organisations. The CSOs, especially Tanzania Gender Networking Program (TGNP) are also exploring new thematic areas such as the care economy based on project learning.⁸⁷ Lindi Women Paralegal Aid Centre (LWOPAC) provides legal support to survivors of violence, Lango and Lisawe expand women's income activities like seaweed harvesting and

⁸⁷ Reported by TGNP participant during OH workshop in Dar es Salaam.

group formation, and SOS implements “Arusha Renovation” to enhance access to services, business education, and health insurance for persons with disabilities.

The UN system has supported adoption and scaling by aligning project interventions with country frameworks and enhancing coordination and operational collaboration. Interventions were designed to fit within the United Nations Cooperation Framework particularly the enabling-environment, prosperity and planet outcome area. Experiences are shared through coordination platforms co-chaired by UN Women such as the Enabling-Environment and Gender Equality Human Rights Groups, which encourage cross-agency uptake. Operational collaboration is evident in Singida, where women’s economic empowerment initiatives complement programming by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP). Tools and lessons from the project have also been reused by the United Nations Development Programme, including leadership tools piloted in Kigoma region, and approaches are being explored for engagement with parliamentarians.

1.16.1.8 Which interventions are likely to be scaled up?

Finding 35: The interventions most likely to be scaled up are those that are either already incorporated in government systems or have strong community ownership.

These characteristics provide the structural and institutional support necessary for sustainability. Interventions that rely on external facilitation, specialised resources, or are highly context-specific face greater challenges and require additional investment, technical support, and adaptation to local conditions to achieve broader scale. **Error! Reference source not found.** provides justification for interventions that are likely to be scaled organised from those with high to lower feasibility:

Table 5: Likelihood of continuity of interventions of the WLER

Likelihood	Justification
High feasibility for scale-up	<i>Gender-responsive planning and budgeting:</i> These interventions are already institutionalised through local level planning and budgeting processes - “Opportunities and Obstacles for Development” guidelines and fully integrated into council-level processes nationwide including through refresher trainings on gender analysis and gender responsive budgeting to ensure sufficient allocation of resources on gender equality, tracking and measuring of impact to promote sustainability and accountability. Their alignment with existing policy frameworks and formal governance structures reduces reliance on external support, making them highly scalable. A robust accountability mechanism such as integrating the revised O&OD into the Open Performance Review and Appraisal System (OPRAS) would be needed to make implementation of O&OD a reality. <i>Village Community Banking (VICOBA):</i> These initiatives benefit from strong community ownership and demonstrated sustainability, functioning effectively with minimal external input. The social and economic value recognised by communities ensures continued participation and replication.
Medium feasibility for scale-up	<i>Women’s land rights package:</i> While national laws support the protection of women’s land rights and early results are promising, scaling requires continued legal and administrative resources, as well as capacity-building for local authorities to ensure consistency and enforcement. <i>Disability-inclusive data and services:</i> These interventions are aligned with national policy frameworks and systems such as PD-MIS, which provides a strong foundation for scale-up through supporting data collection, analysis and dissemination. However, sustainability depends on consistent funding for specialized services such as sign language interpretation, assistive devices, and community-based disability support, which are resource-intensive.
Lower feasibility for scale-up	<i>Male-ally and traditional-leader pathways:</i> Although effective in promoting social norm change and positive masculinities, these interventions are highly context-specific. Their scalability is constrained by cultural variation across regions, requiring ongoing facilitation, adaptation, and community engagement to ensure relevance and impact. A combination of individual, interpersonal, and community sensitization interventions should be employed to effectively transform harmful social norms, and this includes drawing lessons from model families that have demonstrated positive outcomes. In addition, selected religious and traditional leaders should

Likelihood	Justification
	be identified and trained, equipping them with tailored information kits and practical tools to enable them to facilitate community engagement and monitor progress at the grassroots level, thereby ensuring sustained impact and accountability.

1.17 Gender equality and LNOB

Summary of findings

The evaluation found that the WLER project successfully embedded gender-transformative and “leave no one behind” (LNOB) principles into its design and delivery by strengthening local government capacity in terms of gender and disability inclusive laws, gender-responsive budgeting, and institutionalising gender and disability indicators within national systems such as the iMES and PD-MIS. These efforts advanced progressive policy reforms expanded women’s leadership opportunities, and improved participation of duty-bearers and women leaders in decision-making. Collaboration with disability-focused partners, such as ADD International, Movement of Women with Disabilities (MOWADITA) and districts platforms for women with disabilities, and the disability directorate at PMO-LYED, enabled targeted inclusion measures. However, participation of women with disabilities, young women, rural women, and male allies remained limited due to high accessibility costs, stigma, mobility barriers, and insufficient geographic reach. Inconsistent reporting of LNOB indicators by some partners also reduced accountability for equitable outcomes. Future programming should prioritise dedicated budgeting for accessibility (transport, assistive devices, sign-language support), broader grassroots partnerships to reach remote women, stronger engagement of men and youth for sustained norm change, and standardised LNOB reporting across all partners

To what extent were gender equality and LNOB principles incorporated in design and implementation?

Finding 36: The WLER project is inherently gender-transformative and grounded in LNOB principles. Its design integrates comprehensive measures such as strengthening the capacity of duty-bearers at LGA levels to review, design, and implement gender-responsive and inclusive laws, strategies, tools, and practices. It has also strengthened the participation of women with disabilities in leadership and economic activities. There is a need, however, to reach and target more WWD.

It has contributed to progressive legislation and policies supporting gender equality, including the Presidential, Parliamentary, and Councillors Elections Bill (2024) and Political Parties Affairs Laws (2024). While the former recognises for the first time Violence against Women (VAW) in politics as an electoral offense, the latter requires political parties to establish Gender and Social Inclusion (GESI) desks. The project also builds the capacities of both duty-bearers and right holders enabling women to exercise their leadership, rights, and participation. Disability inclusion is also mainstreamed across outcomes with measures such as enhancing existing monitoring systems (iMES and PD-MIS) with gender and disability-specific indicators and ensuring the active participation of women with disabilities in public and political life.

The project also supported the participation of women with disabilities in the dialogues on the review of the National Disability Policy, 2004. Their participation contributed to the draft policy that addresses specific issues affecting women with disabilities, such as GBV, sexual and reproductive health care. The new draft disability policy also integrates WWD concerns and priorities across all 14 policy areas, including disability-inclusive digital transformation, the rights of persons with disabilities in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies, as well as access to sports, recreation, and entertainment.

There is demonstrable evidence that LNOB principles were implemented by partners. Activity Reports by LGTI, UDSM, TGNP, TUSONGE, ADD and LGAs show that groups of women with and without disability, young and rural women were targeted.⁸⁸ TGNP, engaged 417 members (328 women and 89 men, including 16 persons with disabilities), TUSONGE trained 637 women, including 40 women with disabilities in leadership,

⁸⁸ As reported in various partner quarterly reports, LGTI, UDSM, TGNP and LGAs.

communication, and advocacy. In Arusha, 255 women, including 27 women with disabilities accessed childcare and transformative care services.⁸⁹

UN Women provided continuous technical support ensuring that LNOB was incorporated in programming and monitoring. Importantly, the engagement of disability directorate from the PMO LYED and a specialised organisation of persons with disabilities (ADD International) enhanced partners' ability to address disability inclusion. Through these collaborative efforts and as reported in various activity reports, partners operationalised LNOB in practice reaching marginalised groups and ensuring that women with disabilities and other excluded populations were not left behind. In these reports, nonetheless, and as observed during field visits⁹⁰, the project reached few women with disability as shown in the data reported by TGNP, TUSONGE and Arusha above. Other examples of low covered of WWD is reported in Kindondoni MC⁹¹ and Chalinze⁹² DC that actually reached more men than women with disability as indicated in their activity reports presented next. The challenge highlighted by partners was the challenge in identifying women with disabilities in communities. The PMO LEYD planned survey of persons with disabilities will help develop a database of this group enabling better identification and involvement.

Table 6: Number of activity participants Kinondoni MC

Males	18 – 30:	31 – 45:	46 – 60:
Disaggregation	Disabled: 0	Disabled: 1	Disabled: 3
Category	LGA: 0 Other: 1	LGA: 6 Other: 13	LGA: 0 Other: 17
Females	18 – 30:	31 – 45:	46 – 60:
Disaggregation	Disabled: 1	Disabled: 0	Disabled: 0
Category	LGA: 0 Other: 0	LGA: 1 Other: 30	LGA: 3 Other: 26

Table 7: Number of activity participants Chalinze DC

Males	18 – 30:	31 – 45:	46 – 60:
Disaggregation	Disabled:	Disabled:	Disabled:
Category	LGA: 1	LGA: 4	LGA: 0
Disaggregation	Disabled: 1	Disabled: 0	Disabled: 0
Category	LGA: 1 Other: 16	LGA: 5 Other: 40	LGA: 0 Other: 44

What challenges were faced, and how were they addressed?

Finding 37: High cost of facilitating the participation of women with disabilities (WwD) coupled with societal stigma against PWDs posed challenges in ensuring effective implementation of LNOB Gender, gaps in equitable reach.

The project strengthened national systems such as the PD-MIS, designed to improve the identification and enrolment of persons with disabilities and reduce reliance on community-level identification alone. It also strengthened the iMES, which integrates 68 gender indicators supporting more evidence-based and gender-responsive planning at LGA and national levels. Despite progress, the higher costs of ensuring WwD participation were not fully budgeted within project resources. This continued to limit equitable access for

⁸⁹ Deaogratus to please help add the source.

⁹⁰ Reported from all regions and during outcome harvesting.

⁹¹ Activity Report – Development and implementation of strategies and reforms including the adoption of declarations on the promotion of women and girls (with and without disabilities) rights, Kinondoni Municipal Council, 18-23/06/2025.

⁹² Activity Report – Strengthened capacity of LGA duty bearers and other actors on participatory action research and co-creation mechanism to promote women's (with and without disabilities) voices and leadership in decision-making, priority setting and implementation of gender and disability-responsive micro socio-economic plans, Chalinze District Council, 25-30/04/2025.

the most marginalized and points to the need for greater financial planning and dedicated resource allocation in future interventions.

Which groups have the WLER project successfully reached, and which groups may require additional targeting in future phases?

Finding 38: The WLER project has successfully reached women leaders, aspirants, and duty-bearers, but women with disabilities, women in remote areas, youth, and men in communities remain under-targeted and require greater focus in future phases.

The WLER project has effectively reached women leaders and aspirants⁹³ and entrepreneurs through capacity building, mentorship, and policy advocacy strengthening their ability to engage in economic, political and decision-making processes. Duty-bearers at the LGA level have also been highly engaged with enhanced capacity to review and implement gender-responsive laws, strategies, and planning tools. Additionally, the project has created opportunities for wider women's participation in governance processes by supporting gender considerations in policy and electoral reforms.

Groups requiring additional targeting in future phases

Despite the above achievements, some groups remain underrepresented or insufficiently reached:

- **Women with disabilities (WwD):** High participation costs, stigma, and mobility barriers continue to limit their equitable involvement.
- **Women in remote areas:** Limited geographic coverage leaves some rural and hard-to-reach communities underserved. This was highlighted by stakeholders during outcome harvesting workshops in all the regions and KIIs with partners such as TGNP and LGTI.
- **Young women and men:** While the project had a deliberate focus on adolescent girls and boys through the school clubs which were active on issues of girl's empowerment and gender equality and successful in transforming the mindsets of these groups, there was a significant gap in targeting young women and men. This group was excluded from the design of the project but is an important to consider in the future.
- **Men in the communities:** Male allies, particularly community men and traditional leaders require more engagement to shift entrenched gender norms and support women's leadership and economic activities at the grassroots. Stakeholders⁹⁴ recommended more of this community group should be engaged for more impactful interventions on social behaviour change (SBC).

⁹³ See UDSM progress report dated 28 August 2025 on Indicator 1.1.1: # Women and girls demonstrating abilities to demand for their rights. Target: 630 women leaders (42 PWDs); Indicator 3.1.1: Target: 315 women leaders (21 PWDs) showing about 501 (86.52%) of women demonstrated increased leadership potential after mentorship training, 13 out of 14 women with disabilities, including those with physical impairments, blindness, and albinism, reported increased knowledge. Observed from the report is that while the number of women with disability decreased that of those without disability increased during project activity. Overall, women with disability were less targeted during interventions. Interviews with partners and FGDs with beneficiaries noted the participation of as low number as 2-3 WWD in a group of 20 VIVOPA members or 30- 40 per trained women leaders/entrepreneurs. This was also the case during FDGs where WWD were less mobilised.

⁹⁴ Stakeholders from LGAs and beneficiaries in all regions.

CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1.18 Conclusion

1. A relevant and locally grounded design addressed interrelated barriers, although some needs were insufficiently covered

WLER was relevant to the documented barriers affecting women's leadership and economic rights in the participating regions. Its combination of leadership development, economic support, gender-responsive planning and budgeting, social norm interventions, and UCW initiatives reflected the interconnected nature of these barriers. Participatory design with LGAs and women's networks increased responsiveness to local priorities. Nevertheless, the project did not fully address emerging and persistent needs related to accessible financing, advanced business support, young women's leadership pathways, and the participation of women with disabilities.

2. The project contributed to institutional and participation-related results, but their depth and coverage were uneven

WLER contributed to observable changes in gender-responsive planning and budgeting, local micro-plans, gender and disability data systems, women's confidence and participation, and selected laws, procedures and local services. Evidence also indicates changes in household decision-making and community acceptance in some locations. However, these changes were not uniform across councils or population groups. Evidence of sustained transformation in household power relations, economic outcomes and social norms was more localized, and continuing barriers limited women's ability to convert training and participation into durable leadership and economic gains.

3. Delivery through government systems strengthened ownership and coherence, while coordination remained variable

Working through LGAs, national institutions, CSOs and academic partners increased institutional ownership and connected project interventions with existing planning, budgeting and training systems. This approach supported coordination and created pathways for institutionalization. However, implementation depended partly on the strength of existing relationships among departments and officials. Staff transfers, variable cross-departmental engagement and limited technical-level coordination reduced consistency across locations.

4. Existing structures supported operational efficiency, but cost-effectiveness cannot be conclusively established

The use of existing government and community structures reduced the need for parallel implementation arrangements and facilitated local delivery. Direct transfers, logistical support to frontline officials and adaptive scheduling helped the project respond to administrative delays. Nevertheless, delayed disbursements compressed implementation periods and, in some cases, reduced the time available for follow-up and community engagement. In the absence of comparative cost, unit-cost or value-for-money analysis, the evaluation can conclude that the project employed efficiency measures, but not that it was definitively cost-effective.

5. Sustainability prospects differ substantially across intervention models

Prospects for sustainability are strongest where interventions have been incorporated into government systems, routine planning and budgeting processes, institutional curricula, or community-owned mechanisms. These include elements of gender-responsive planning and budgeting, gender and disability data systems, and locally managed savings groups. Sustainability is less certain for services requiring continuing external resources, including disability accommodations, mobility and interpretation support, land-rights services and some unpaid care interventions. The sustainability and scalability of several pilots also remain difficult to assess because their implementation models, costs and outcomes were not systematically documented.

6. Gender equality was central to the project, but LNOB commitments were not fully realized

Gender equality and disability inclusion were incorporated into the project's design, partnerships and institutional systems. WLER created opportunities for women with disabilities and other groups facing

intersecting barriers to participate in selected activities and policy processes. However, resource constraints, accessibility costs, geographic barriers and inconsistent disaggregated reporting resulted in uneven reach. Women with disabilities, women in remote areas and young women did not benefit equitably across all intervention areas. The project therefore advanced gender equality and elements of institutional inclusion, but did not fully achieve its LNOB ambition.

1.19 Lessons learned

1. **Co-design and delivery through mandated institutions can strengthen ownership.** Involving local authorities and community stakeholders in selecting locations, defining priorities and delivering interventions increases the likelihood that activities will be connected to existing responsibilities, plans and budgets. This approach requires clear coordination arrangements across departments to avoid dependence on individual relationships.
2. **Capacity development is more likely to influence practice when it is linked to routine institutional tools.** Training produces stronger institutional results when participants can apply it through existing planning templates, budget lines, monitoring systems, curricula and accountability processes.
3. **Integrated and sequenced interventions are more effective than isolated activities.** Combining policy and institutional change with community engagement, household-level work, economic support and accessible services is more likely to address the multiple barriers affecting women's leadership and economic rights.
4. **Meaningful inclusion requires dedicated resources and accountability.** Incorporating LNOB principles into project design is insufficient unless budgets cover accessibility, transport, interpretation, assistive support and differentiated outreach. Disaggregated targets and consistent reporting are also necessary to determine who participates and who benefits.
5. **Social norm change requires sustained, context-specific engagement and preparation for backlash.** Engagement with families, men and boys, traditional and religious leaders, and other community influencers can support women's participation. However, one-off awareness activities or reliance on informal champions are unlikely to produce consistent change. Programmes should assess behavioural drivers, support facilitators over time, and monitor and mitigate possible backlash.
6. **Training alone rarely produces durable economic or leadership outcomes.** Skills and confidence need to be accompanied by mentorship, access to finance and markets, institutional opportunities, protection mechanisms and follow-up support if women are to apply and sustain what they have learned.
7. **Pilot interventions require a learning and evidence strategy from the outset.** Models intended for replication should document their implementation requirements, costs, adaptations, outcomes and equity implications. Decisions to scale should be based on this evidence rather than on stakeholder satisfaction or isolated examples alone.

1.20 Recommendations

Drawing from the findings the table below presents proposed recommendations from the evaluation.

Table 8: Recommendations

No.	Recommendation	Priority and timing	Lead and supporting responsibility	Basis
R1	Scale the VICOPA model. Expand the model to increase women's access to microloans and strengthen their capacity and experience in credit management, thereby supporting sustained engagement with financial institutions and government loan facilities.	High — next-phase design and implementation	Lead: Participating LGAs. Support: UN Women TCO and PO-RALG.	Most women's groups had not received LGA loans because some facilities were suspended and access involved significant costs and administrative requirements. Findings 5–6, 23–24 and 35.
R2	Reduce procedural and financial barriers to LGA loans. Advocate for policy and procedural changes that reduce the administrative requirements and costs associated with women's access to LGA loan facilities.	High — next-phase design and implementation	Lead: UN Women TCO. Support: Participating LGAs and PO-RALG.	Most women's groups had not received LGA loans because some facilities were suspended and access involved significant costs and administrative requirements. Findings 5–6, 23–24 and 35.
R3	Strengthen financial literacy and post-training mentorship. Integrate practical financial literacy into business training for women's groups and provide appropriate post-training mentorship.	High — next-phase design and implementation	Lead: Participating LGAs. Support: UN Women TCO and PO-RALG.	Business training did not sufficiently cover financial literacy and market development, which women identified—after access to capital—as important requirements for expanding their businesses. Findings 5, 6, 24.
R4	Establish a project Technical Coordination Platform alongside the Joint Steering Committee. Create a Technical Working Group or equivalent mechanism comprising UN Women and relevant government counterparts. Conduct periodic technical reviews and joint field visits so that national counterparts can track progress and identify and resolve implementation bottlenecks.	High — next-phase design and implementation	Lead: UN Women TCO. Support: Government of Finland, PO-RALG, PMO-LYED and the ministry responsible for gender.	The Joint Steering Committee primarily functioned as a forum for senior decision-makers, while technical personnel had limited opportunities to examine performance or engage directly with project implementation. Findings 7, 9, 16–17, 25.
R5	Institutionalize district-level coordination. Establish monthly or quarterly coordination meetings chaired by the District Community Development Officer or another designated authority, with regular participation from planning, social welfare, community development, education, lands, agriculture and statistics personnel. Align meeting agendas with project workplans and gender-responsive budget lines and incorporate short joint-monitoring actions.	High — next-phase design and implementation	Lead: District councils through the planning function. Support: Council CDOs and SWOs, UN Women TCO and Responsible Parties.	Cross-departmental implementation varied according to the strength of existing working relationships, limiting interventions requiring coordinated support from multiple departments. Findings 9, 16–17, 25 and 29.
R6	Conduct operational research on the project's pilot models. Document the lessons and results of Participatory Action Research, model families, CCRO support and VICOPA; develop clear recommendations for scale-up; and use	High — remaining implementation period and next-	Lead: UN Women TCO. Support: Responsible Parties, research	The MEL system was not sufficiently tailored to assess the effectiveness of the different pilot models, limiting the evidence available

No.	Recommendation	Priority and timing	Lead and supporting responsibility	Basis
	the evidence to inform next-phase design and communications intended to influence the wider gender equality system.	phase design and implementation	partners and participating LGAs.	to inform scale-up and wider influence. Findings 15–17 and 33–35.
R7	Make family-level interventions a core and sequenced pathway. Deliver joint household planning and task-sharing modules alongside community engagement and access to relevant administrative services. Introduce simple household action plans and provide structured follow-up through Knowledge Centres, Community Development Offices and ward-level structures.	High — next-phase design and implementation	Lead: UN Women TCO. Support: LGAs through CDOs and SWOs, Responsible Parties, Knowledge Centres and ward structures.	Public endorsement of women’s leadership sometimes coexisted with household constraints on women’s control over earnings and decision-making. Family-focused approaches were relevant but required systematic sequencing and follow-up. Findings 13 and 18–20.
R8	Strengthen and systematize engagement with men, boys and community leaders. Use social and behavioral drivers analysis to identify appropriate approaches and communication channels; provide male allies and champions with training, communication materials, visibility, regular meetings and refresher training; establish WhatsApp groups and other physical or digital platforms for exchanging experiences; expand engagement with traditional, religious and community leaders to promote positive masculinities and support for women’s participation; and establish intergenerational dialogues involving adult men and boys.	High — next-phase design and implementation	Lead: UN Women TCO for technical design. Support: LGAs through DCDOs, Ward Executive Officers and Responsible Parties.	Male engagement showed promise but was not sufficiently structured, sustained or resourced to produce consistent results. Roles, refresher training and implementation support were unclear or unavailable in some locations. Findings 13 and 18–20.
R9	Strengthen women’s safe and equitable participation in political and leadership processes. Establish or reinforce confidential reporting channels, protection systems, independent oversight mechanisms and political-party accountability frameworks addressing sexual extortion; support the development of a framework for gender-transformative political-party reform; address intersectional discrimination and ensure appropriate protection and support for women with disabilities and other marginalized groups; implement norm-change campaigns addressing stigma and backlash while engaging male allies and traditional leaders; and support legal and institutional reforms that criminalize sexual extortion in political processes and strengthen enforcement mechanisms.	High — reporting, protection, accountability and intersectional inclusion measures. Medium — political-party, norm-change, legal and institutional reforms.	Lead: UN Women TCO for design and coordination. Support: The ministry responsible for gender, UNDP, participating LGAs and CSOs, according to their respective mandates.	Participants reported that women—particularly young women and women with disabilities—experienced sexual extortion and intersecting discrimination in political processes and political party structures. Findings 5, 13, 19–20 and 38.
R10	Specifically target young women’s participation. Develop programmes for young women’s leadership, civic participation and economic engagement that include structured mentorship components.	Medium — next-phase design and implementation	Lead: UN Women TCO. Support: Youth-focused CSOs and participating LGAs.	Young women and men were not systematically engaged, limiting the intergenerational reach and potential sustainability of results. Findings 5, 27, 38.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Terms of Reference <https://www.ungm.org/Public/notice/257932>

Annex 2. Components of the WLER Project

Project outcomes	Main Outputs
Data and evidence-based gender and disability responsive strategies, practices, and participatory research action is built on women's meaningful participation at local levels	• Output 1.1: Strengthened capacity of LGA duty bearers on participatory action research and co-creation mechanism to promote women's (with and without disabilities) voices and leadership in decision-making, priority setting and implementation of gender and disability responsive micro socio-economic plans. • Output 1.2: Duty-bearers at the LGA have increased knowledge and capacity to collect and use sex, age and disability disaggregated data for gender analysis across sectors to prioritize GEWE, incl. on SDG • Output 1.3: Information, knowledge, data and good practices produced enable adoption of gender and disability transformative actions at LGA levels
Laws, procedures and practices at LGA levels promote women's (with and without disabilities) voices, leadership and economic rights and justice	• Output 2.1: Duty-bearers have strengthened knowledge and capacity to review, design, and implement gender responsive and inclusive laws, strategies, procedures, tools and practices to promote women's leadership and economic rights at LGA levels • Output 2.2: Rights-holders (with and without disabilities) have increased capacity to advocate for adoption and implementation of gender-responsive strategies, procedures, and practices at LGA level
Gender norms and discriminatory behaviours and practices at LGA levels are transformed to promote women and girls' voices, meaningful participation and leadership	• Output 3.1: Community facilitators have increased capacities and skills to design and implement gender-transformative initiatives • Output 3.2: Male leaders and image makers/influencers recognize and effectively portray women's participation and leadership in public life • Output 3.3: Women and girls, with and without disabilities, have enhanced economic agency and ability to express their voice, and priorities without fear of violence.
National and LGAs develop/strengthen laws, policies and services that recognize and address the disproportionate share of UCW to promote women's leadership and participation in decision-making	• Output 4.1: National and local governments have greater understanding and knowledge of the 3Rs of UCW , and the disproportionate share of UCW , including for the disabled and those caring for disabled. and its impacts on women leaders at the local levels. • Output 4.2: National and local authorities and women leaders have increased tools and capacities to develop and implement laws, policies and services that address UCW and enhance women's engagement in leadership in various local government units. • Output 4.3: Women leaders in cooperatives and other organizations have increased capacity to provide care services.

Annex 3. ToC Pathways

The ToC further provides pathways to reach these stated outcomes as follows:

- (1) **If** duty bearers and other actors at the local levels become change-agents for women's (with and without disabilities) voices and leadership and if they have increased capacity to collect and use disaggregated data, and if knowledge on gender-transformation will be disseminated to wider audience, (2) **then** there will be more evidence-based gender- and disability responsiveness in decision-making (3) because data and evidence-based gender-responsive strategies, practices and participatory research action will be built.
- (1) **If** duty-bearers have strengthened capacity to implement gender-responsive laws, and if rights-holders including Leave No One Behind (LNOB) groups have increased capacity to advocate for

gender-responsiveness, (2) **then** laws, procedures, and practices on women's (with and without disabilities) voices, leadership and economic rights and justice will be strengthened, (3) because the right-holders are more able to hold the duty-bearers accountable.

- (1) **If** community and traditional leaders, including male leaders and influencers, and women led networks become more gender-responsive and promote women's public participation and leadership, and if women, including LNOB, have enhanced economic agency and if violence against women is mitigated, (2) **then** gender norms limiting women's voices, meaningful participation and leadership will change (3) because women's meaningful participation will be collectively viewed more positively.
- (1) **If** national and local governments have increased understanding about UCW, and if they have increased tools and capacities to develop and implement laws, policies and services that address UCW, and if women leaders in cooperatives and entrepreneurs have increased capacity to adapt interventions that address disproportionate care burden at local levels, (2) **then** the disproportionate share of UCW by women will be recognized and laws, policies and services developed to address the issue (3) because there will be political will, knowledge and structural changes to advance women's socio-economic rights.

The ToC identifies assumptions and risks. Key assumptions include that data will unveil bottlenecks and provide evidence-based solutions, that strengthened capacity of duty-bearers will create willingness for LGAs to implement gender-responsive laws, budgets, and other procedures and that community facilitators will be effective in changing norms. Identified risks include the lack of political will and weaknesses in institutional and governance structures at local levels to incorporate gender-disaggregated data for informed decision-making, and deeply entrenched gender norms that continue to hinder women's leadership and participation. Figure 1 illustrates the project's theory of change.

Annex 4. Detailed Methodological Strategy

The evaluation drew on secondary and primary data to capture WLER results, challenges, and lessons from diverse stakeholders in line with the ToR. Data collection proceeded in two phases aligned to implementation timing.

- i. **Phase 1 (all regions):** The team visited all six regions to capture variation in intervention mix, maturity, partner capacity, and context; generate preliminary findings; validate outcomes while memories were fresh; and build access and buy-in for Phase 2. This reduced selection bias and embedded LNOB from the outset.
 - a. District level: One outcome-harvesting workshop with Government, responsible parties, community actors, and right-holders; two strategic KIIs with district leadership/technical leads (e.g., DED/Planning; Community Development/Social Welfare or sector lead).
 - b. Community level (one council per region): One FGD with right-holders; two IDIs with beneficiaries illustrating key outcomes or challenges.
 - c. National level (targeted): Strategic KIIs with UN Women TCO and Government counterparts (MoCDWGSP, PO-RALG, PMO-LYED) to confirm policy alignment, access datasets, and agree coordination. Broader national KIIs were deferred to Phase 2.

Phase 1 also completed the secondary review and compiled the indicator catalogue. Analysis synthesised lessons and mapped gaps to feasible, evidence-based options with implications for the Joint Programme and Phase 2 focus. A short preliminary brief was validated with the EMG/ERG.

- ii. **Phase 2 (deep dives):** Deep dives were conducted in two purposively selected regions with maximum project convergence, considering diversity (urban/rural, disability inclusion, partner type), data gaps, and feasibility. The team applied KIIs, FGDs, and IDIs to test contribution pathways and explain "how change happened"; outcome harvesting was not repeated. National-level KIIs were expanded to verify contribution claims, discuss scale-up, and triangulate administrative data. The indicator catalogue was updated and short case studies were produced.

Both phases maintained consistent methods, sampling logic, ethical standards, and data-management SOPs. The forthcoming Joint Programme was expected to build on Phase 1 by refining topic guides and expanding respondent coverage where gaps were identified, while retaining core questions, constructs, and the coding frame for comparability over time.

Phase 1: Full Scope Evaluation

1.20.1.1 Secondary data review

The secondary review established the factual record for WLER and defined what required verification through primary data. It produced three inception products: (i) an **annotated evidence matrix** logging all documents, key findings, and gaps; (ii) an **Indicator Catalogue** with definitions, baselines, latest values, sources, and disaggregation; and (iii) a short **evidence-gap note** listing items for Phase 1 follow-up.

Desk review

The desk review compiled and analysed core sources: donor annual progress narrative reports, the Project Document (including the ToC and results framework), annual and quarterly workplans and reports, partner narrative reports and training materials, mission/monitoring visit reports, the Baseline Study and other thematic assessments (e.g., gender audit of LGA laws and processes; co-creation meeting reports), financial and administrative records, and relevant national policy/legislative frameworks and UNSDCF documents. Credible external literature contextualised findings.

All materials were entered into an annotated evidence matrix and reviewed using a structured template aligned to the evaluation questions and OECD-DAC criteria. For each source, the team recorded purpose, period, methods, key findings by output/outcome, available disaggregation, assumptions/risks, and explicit gaps or inconsistencies. Quality notes were captured, and discrepancies were reconciled or flagged for field verification. Short regional and thematic synthesis memos informed KII/FGD/IDI guides and outcome-harvesting prompts. The desk review was coordinated with the EMG to ensure document access and to validate the evidence matrix.

Desk review was also used to track performance of the Results Framework (RF) indicators using existing monitoring and administrative records; no new survey was conducted. The Indicator Catalogue preserved each indicator's exact RF definition, linked it to a like-for-like baseline, and recorded the verified data custodian/source (partner/LGA reports, registers, minutes, monitoring notes). Where definitions had changed or disaggregation was missing, the team documented the variance, applied the best comparable measure, and flagged items for Phase 2 follow-up. Where helpful, supplementary official datasets (e.g., PO-RALG registers, ministry portals, national statistics, other studies/surveys) corroborated counts.

Data preparation covered cleaning and harmonisation (standardised time periods and categories) and checks for completeness, internal consistency, and plausibility against the implementation timeline. Analysis produced descriptive statistics and simple trend views against baselines and targets, with region- and workstream-level snapshots. All feasible sex/age/disability/location disaggregation was applied, and results were triangulated with qualitative evidence from KIIs, FGDs, IDIs, and outcome harvesting.

1.20.1.2 Primary data

Site selection was purposive and multi-stage (region → district/council → ward), undertaken with UN Women and Regional WLER Coordinators. In each region, one urban/peri-urban and one rural district council were prioritised to ensure analytic contrast. Selected sites reflected:

- where WLER had been working;
- contextual dynamics (e.g., initiation practices/rites, coastal trading economies, corridor/border markets, pastoral or semi-nomadic settings); and

- the presence and reachability of priority and distinctive respondent groups and platforms.

Annex 7 lists the selected districts and wards. Primary data collection was conducted in all six regions.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

KIIs were a primary method of data collection. They generated in-depth, context-rich perspectives from individuals with strategic, operational, or technical knowledge of WLER and its context. KIIs validated and complemented secondary data, probed areas not fully documented, and explored intended and unintended changes over the life of the project. The process was closely linked to the stakeholder-mapping exercise conducted at the outset. Mapping identified and categorised stakeholders by role, level, and type of engagement, ensuring a sample that was both representative and strategically focused. Some key stakeholders were pre-identified in the ToR; additional respondents were added during mapping to ensure coverage of all relevant perspectives. Tailored interview guides were developed for stakeholder categories identified in Section 1, for example:

- **Government stakeholders:** policy alignment, institutional changes, coordination mechanisms.
- **UN Women TCO staff:** project management, technical delivery, lessons learned.
- **Donor representatives:** strategic alignment, funding priorities, recommendations for Phase II.
- **Implementing partners:** delivery models, operational challenges, community engagement.
- **Community-level actors:** local implementation, mobilisation, sustainability of changes.
- **UN system colleagues:** complementarity, synergies, joint-programming opportunities.

This differentiation ensured that KII data were purposeful and actionable for intended users. In line with the methodological strategy, **Annex 4** illustrates the sampling strategy across Phases 1 and 2. Interviews were semi-structured, conducted in English or Kiswahili per participant preference, and held in person, online, or by phone. Informed consent was obtained before each interview, and confidentiality was assured. Detailed notes were taken and, with permission, audio recordings were used to ensure transcription accuracy. Thematic analysis was applied to KII data, and anonymised quotations were included in the final report to illustrate key points.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

FGDs were used to generate in-depth, collective perspectives on outcomes, challenges, and enabling factors associated with WLER. They were well suited to exploring community norms, shared experiences, and group dynamics influencing women's leadership and economic rights. FGDs also validated emerging themes from KIIs, outcome-harvesting workshops, and the secondary review, ensuring community voices were represented. FGDs were designed as semi-structured discussions guided by an outline aligned to OECD-DAC criteria and adapted to each participant group. Topics covered how participants first became involved in WLER activities; the relevance of interventions to their needs; perceived changes in women's leadership and participation in decision-making; shifts in economic opportunities and access to resources; and changes in community attitudes toward gender equality and disability inclusion. Discussions also elicited views on sustainability, future priorities, and unintended outcomes—positive or negative. Given the project's multiple focus areas—promoting gender-responsive norms, behaviours and practices; strengthening capacities of women leaders; enhancing the collection and use of sex- and disability-responsive data; and advancing women's economic rights (including care services)- FGDs were organised by thematic area/activity to create distinct groups with shared experiences. This yielded rich, focused insights on complex social issues such as care services and women's leadership, where perspectives are shaped by cultural dynamics. Women with disabilities participated in separate FGDs where appropriate to ensure their voices were not diluted. Sign-language interpreters were provided, and, in integrated groups, facilitators proactively probed to ensure full participation. Reasonable accommodations and accessible venues were ensured. See **Annex 5** for the FGD coverage by group and region.

Each FGD comprised 6–10 participants to enable contribution from all members. Groups were formed to maximise comfort and trust (e.g., women-only sessions with female moderators for sensitive topics). Discussions were conducted primarily in Kiswahili, with plain-language explanations and translation into

accessible formats where required. Facilitators were trained on the guide, probing techniques, and ethics (including safeguarding and “do no harm”). An assistant recorded detailed notes, and—with consent—sessions were audio-recorded to support accurate transcription; where recording was declined, comprehensive note-taking was used. Two FGDs were conducted in each of the six selected councils (one per region), with each group targeted to capture diversity across disability status, age, and type of WLER engagement.

In-depth Interviews (IDIs)

IDIs were used to collect detailed, personal accounts from individuals with direct experience of WLER. Unlike KIIs, which captured institutional or strategic perspectives, IDIs documented lived realities at the individual level—how WLER influenced leadership opportunities, access to economic resources, shifts in social norms, and participation in decision-making. They complemented other qualitative methods by linking reported results to real-life experiences, illustrating challenges faced, lessons learnt, and intended and unintended outcomes. IDI beneficiaries were identified through discussions with community facilitators and from FGDs across beneficiary groups, ensuring coverage of WLER’s focus areas. Selection aimed for diversity in gender, age, disability status, and type of engagement. IDIs were semi-structured and guided by outlines tailored to each respondent’s role, experience, and area of involvement. **Two IDIs were conducted in each selected council (total 12).** Interviews explored participants’ journeys with WLER, specific changes experienced or observed, barriers, enabling factors, and reflections on sustainability. Each interview was conducted in Kiswahili or English per participant preference, in a private, comfortable setting. Informed consent was obtained, confidentiality was maintained, and—with permission—audio recordings supported detailed note-taking; where recording was declined, comprehensive notes were taken.

Results-workshops

Results workshops were conducted to identify, verify, and analyse significant changes during the WLER period and to assess WLER’s contribution. Using Outcome Harvesting, stakeholders surfaced intended and unintended outcomes and explored the pathways through which change occurred. Regional sessions also surfaced contextual priorities (e.g., GBV); these were captured as contextual notes to inform interpretation and programming implications without expanding scope. Workshops were held in Lindi, Mtwara, Arusha, Singida, Pwani, and Dar es Salaam, with participation from Government (Regional Secretariats and sector officers), Responsible Parties (LGAs, CSOs, academia), and community-level actors (Ward Development Officers and local facilitators). Each workshop followed a structured process: a brief introduction to Outcome Harvesting; mixed/thematic sub-groups to describe concrete changes, their significance, and contributing factors; facilitated linking of outcomes to WLER interventions; triangulation with other evidence; and notation of items needing further verification. Activities were designed for inclusive participation. For each outcome, participants discussed:

7. the change (what/when) and context
8. WLER’s contribution and other contributing factors
9. significance for women’s leadership and economic rights
10. any unintended results (e.g., economic empowerment coinciding with increased GBV)

Outputs were captured as outcome statements, reviewed for clarity before session close. Statements formed part of the qualitative evidence base, were cross-checked with secondary and other primary sources, coded, and analysed thematically, then integrated with KII, FGD, and IDI data to strengthen triangulation.

1.20.1.3 Selection of respondents

Sampling and recruitment were anchored to region, council and ward, and to the Results Framework. Multiple methods were used in the selection. First, using DCDOs, community members were invited for the FGDs. Once they turned up simple random selection as used to select those for the interview. Those not selected were also included in refreshment allowances and informed of the need to select a limited number of people. LNOB was applied throughout, seeking diversity by sex, age, disability status and location, and prioritising people with direct engagement in WLER or custodianship of relevant

processes/data. Recruitment was led by the evaluation team with UN Women, responsible parties and LGA focal points, using VICOBA – Village Community Banking registers and other records. Mobilisation communicated purpose, privacy, consent and required accommodation, particularly for persons with disabilities.

Key informants (KIIs): Eligibility centred on decision-makers; technical/administrative custodians (e.g., planning, budgeting, gender statistics, disability inclusion, service delivery); and others able to speak to contribution pathways and system-level constraints. Phase 1 prioritised district leadership and technical officers in each region, plus a small set of national-level respondents from UN Women and central government. Phase 2 broadened to full national/regional coverage and to follow up Phase 1 issues. Recruitment followed stakeholder mapping; interviews were virtual or in person.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Eligible participants had first-hand engagement with WLER in the selected council and matched the local intervention map (e.g., disability-inclusive economic groups, leadership pathways). Groups drew from the same ward and were formed to enable safe, open discussion. Basic details captured at confirmation ensured LNOB.

In-Depth Interviews (IDIs): Participants had direct engagement with WLER and could provide detailed personal accounts, including sensitive issues better discussed one-to-one. Candidates were identified from FGDs and community-facilitator referrals, ensuring coverage across WLER focus areas and diversity by age, disability status and location.

Results workshops: Participants were selected to credibly inform “what was implemented, what changed, and why,” prioritising:

- i. delivery actors able to bring records (workplans, minutes, attendance, photos);
- ii. LGA decision-makers on adoption and use;
- iii. frontline facilitators observing practice shifts;
- iv. technical custodians where change was recorded (e.g., land/legal services); and
- v. regional coordinators and UN Women regional officers confirming coordination, coverage and data availability.

This mix provided first-hand evidence on outputs, procedural change and results, balancing implementer perspectives with administrative verification and user experience.

1.20.1.4 Data collection

Recruitment and training of research team

Data collection was conducted by three core consultants, each leading one region. To cover all six regions within the one-week timeframe, additional senior researchers were engaged to lead data collection in the remaining three regions. All researchers were drawn from established networks of experienced qualitative specialists with demonstrated expertise in gender and disability inclusion and familiarity with local languages and contexts. Prior to deployment, the full team completed a one-day intensive training in Dar es Salaam covering:

- Overview of the WLER project and evaluation objectives
- Review and practice of KII, FGD, IDI and Outcome Harvesting tools
- Ethical considerations, safeguarding and accessibility measures
- Techniques for qualitative interviewing and facilitation

The training ensured a common understanding of methodology, tools and ethical protocols across all researchers. Given the compressed timeframe, a pilot exercise was not conducted.

Phase 1 data collection plan: Data collection took place over one week with simultaneous fieldwork in all six regions. Three consultants led one region each; three senior researchers covered the other three. Each team had a region-based translator/research assistant for real-time translation and facilitation of selected FGDs/IDIs. Consultants and senior researchers led KIIs at national, regional, and community

levels, oversaw FGD/IDI quality, and each region hosted one Outcome Harvesting workshop with stakeholders to identify, verify, and analyse outcomes. Field visits were scheduled in coordination with UN Women and the responsible government offices for logistics and access only. Data collection and analysis were conducted independently by the evaluation team, in line with government protocols and without influence on findings., LGAs, and partners; daily debriefs with the evaluation lead ensured consistency.

Phase 2: Follow-up data collection

Phase 2 data collection was conducted in the first quarter of 2026 using a combination of physical and virtual follow up engagements to address evidence gaps identified after Phase 1. Rather than limiting the exercise to two “deep dive” regions as planned during inception, the evaluation team carried out targeted follow up across multiple regions and stakeholder categories to strengthen the evidence base for the final evaluation. Physical fieldwork was undertaken in Dar es Salaam, Lindi, and Pwani, while online interviews extended coverage to Arusha, Mtwara, and Singida.

The Phase 2 methodology focused on targeted qualitative follow up with stakeholders and participant groups who could provide additional insight on areas that required further clarification, validation, or depth. The team used KIIs, FGDs, and IDIs to explore outstanding questions related to implementation experience, inclusion, local level change processes, institutional uptake, and options for a possible next phase. The follow up covered district and ward officials, legal and community development officers, school clubs, grassroot gender transformative networks, women with disabilities, religious leaders, male champions, implementing partners, and other specialised respondents linked to specific intervention areas.

In total, Phase 2 completed 24 qualitative engagements, comprising 13 KIIs, 9 FGDs, and 2 IDIs. These engagements provided additional evidence on school-based engagement, by law related processes involving Kungwi and Nyakanga groups, gender responsive planning and budgeting, inclusion of women with disabilities, community level norm change, leadership pathways, and partner level reflections on implementation experience. No additional outcome harvesting workshops were conducted during this phase. As in Phase 1, UN Women and local counterparts supported access and scheduling, while the evaluation team independently conducted the interviews, facilitated discussions, compiled notes, and analysed the findings.

Table 4 summarises the Phase 2 qualitative follow up engagements completed by method, respondent group, sample, region, and district.

Table 9: Phase 2 data collection coverage

Region	District/Council	Method	Interview or group	Sample
Arusha	Covers Arusha, Singida, Lindi, and Mtwara	KII	Project Coordinator and M&E officer (TADIO)	1
Dar es Salaam	Kinondoni	FGD	School club	1
		KII	DCDO	1
	Temeke	KII	DCDO	1
Lindi	Lindi Municipal	KII	WCDO	1
		FGD	Kungwi and Nyakanga on by law	1
	Nachingwea	FGD	School clubs	1
		FGD	Kungwi and Nyakanga on by law	1
		KII	DCDO	1
		KII	Legal officer	1
	Lindi Municipal	KII	DCDO	1
		KII	Legal officers	1
Mtwara	Mtwara Municipal Council	KII	Chairperson and representative of women with disabilities platforms	1

Region	District/Council	Method	Interview or group	Sample
	Equality for Growth	KII	Jane Magigita	1
Pwani	Kibaha	KII	Ward Facilitator and Coordinator	1
		FGD	GGTN	1
		FGD	Women with disabilities group	1
		FGD	School clubs	1
	Chalinze	FGD	GGTN contribution to Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting	1
		KII	Religious leader(s)	1
	Kisarawe District Council	FGD	School clubs	1
		KII	Religious leader(s)	1
Singida	Singida Municipal	IDI	Gender male champion	1
	Ikungi	IDI	Gender male champion	1

Phase 2: Evaluation deep dives: Deep dives ran for one week in two regions with maximum programme convergence, selected after Phase 1 validation (urban/rural mix, disability inclusion, partner type, data gaps, feasibility). The Phase 1 consultant returned as regional lead with a research assistant. Teams applied KIIs, FGDs, and IDIs to test contribution pathways; no Outcome Harvesting was conducted. In parallel, national-level KIIs were expanded, the Indicator Catalogue was updated, and short regional case studies were drafted. Coordination and daily debriefs continued as in Phase 1.

Data collation and analysis

Qualitative data analysis: All KII/FGD/IDI/outcome-harvesting data were transcribed (and translated from Kiswahili as needed). Materials were stored securely with daily uploads to a password-protected workspace. Thematic analysis used an OECD-DAC-aligned coding frame, refined iteratively. Patterns were examined across stakeholders, regions and themes, with disaggregation by sex, age, disability and WLER engagement; anonymised quotes illustrated findings. NVivo supported coding and analysis.

Quantitative data analysis: Data came from WLER monitoring systems, partner reports and administrative datasets. Data were cleaned/validated and analysed descriptively, compared with baselines and, where available, trended over time. Indicators were disaggregated by sex, age, disability and location to support LNOB.

Triangulation and validation

Findings from qualitative and quantitative sources were systematically triangulated to strengthen validity. Triangulation will occur at two levels:

- i. **During data collection**, by comparing emerging themes across methods and stakeholder perspectives.
- ii. **During analysis**, by cross-checking findings from different data sources to confirm consistency or explain divergences.

Preliminary findings were shared with the EMG and selected stakeholders in a validation workshop to confirm accuracy, clarify interpretation, and address any gaps before final reporting.

Annex 3: Evaluation framework

Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions	Sub-Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Collection Methods	Data Sources
Relevance	To what extent are the WLER project's approach and interventions relevant to the needs of women and girls (with and without disabilities) and strategically positioned to enhance women's leadership and economic rights at the local level?	Are the interventions addressing a priority need for women and girls – including those with disabilities? To what extent are the approaches of implementation (partners, modalities of SBC) appropriate to address the needs of women and girls? To what extent does the project address the causal problems facing women including integration/ complementarities of the different interventions to support women and girls in LGA?	Perceptions of women and girls (including with disabilities) on the appropriateness of the project Appropriateness of SBC approaches to address social norms and cultural practices and behavioural drivers of gender inequality Appropriateness of the partners to deliver on results Appropriateness of the support to LGA, women in political leadership to improve WLER Appropriateness of approaches for policy and legislative advocacy at national level Complementarities that exist between interventions to achieve the project goal	Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review Outcome harvesting workshop	Women and girls in communities, community influencers, traditional leaders, women in political leadership CDOs, SWOs, and other local government officials, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, government ministries Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports GEWE Coordination Groups

Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions	Sub-Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Collection Methods	Data Sources
	Have new, more relevant needs or priorities emerged during the project that should be addressed in future phases?	What new needs or priorities have emerged among different categories of women and girls? What can be done to address these new needs and priorities?	New needs and priorities Proposed interventions to address the new needs/priorities	Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review Outcome harvesting workshop	Women and girls in communities, community influencers, traditional leaders, women in political leadership CDOs, SWOs, and other local government officials, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, government ministries Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports GEWE Coordination Groups
Coherence	In what ways does the WLER project complement and add value to efforts by other UN agencies and local governments, fostering collaboration with CSOs, training institutions, and academia?	What collaborations are there with other UN agencies and their value addition? What added value does the WLER project have to initiatives by other UN agencies, and local governments? What partnerships were established with other interventions/ work of CSOs, training institutions and academia to advance the project objectives?	Value addition of the WLER to efforts by other UN agencies, local governments Activities conducted in collaboration with UN agencies Partnerships established with CSOs academia	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review	UN Women staff (potentially other UN agencies), Implementing Partners, academia partners, government ministries Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports
Efficiency	How efficiently have project resources (funds, personnel, administrative arrangements) been managed, and how has cost-effectiveness been monitored throughout the project?	What measures were put in place by UN Women to support cost effective delivery? How is cost effectiveness monitored? What human resources have allocated to the project and are they adequate?	Measures put in place to support cost effectiveness Monitoring mechanisms put in place Adequacy of human resources for the project	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review FGDs	CDOs, SWOs, and other local government officials, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports, financial reports

Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions	Sub-Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Collection Methods	Data Sources
		What the financial resources to achieve the intended objectives? What are the views of stakeholders on the quality and adequacy of interventions?	Adequacy of financial resources Views of stakeholders on the quality and adequacy of interventions		Women and girls in communities, community influencers, traditional leaders, women in political leadership
	Were activities delivered in a timely manner, and what bottlenecks, if any, were encountered?	To what extent were activities implemented according to annual workplans? What challenges were experienced that undermined timely delivery? What actions were put in place to address/mitigate effects of delays?	Alignment of activities to the annual workplan Challenges causing delays Actions taken to address delays or mitigate the effects of delays	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review	CDOs, SWOs, and other local government officials, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, government ministries Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports, financial reports
	How did these impact resource allocation for integrating human rights, gender equality, and the needs of disabled and young women?	What measures were put in place to support integrating human rights, gender equality, and the needs of disabled and young women? Was resource allocation equitably distributed for these aspects?	Measures put in place % resource allocated for human rights and disability Perceptions on equity in resource allocation	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review FGDs	CDOs, SWOs, and other local government officials, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports, financial reports Women and girls in communities, community influencers, traditional leaders, women in political leadership
Effectiveness	How effective was the project's results framework in measuring outcomes, and to what extent were expected outcomes achieved, qualitatively and quantitatively?	Were the indicators in the results framework sufficient to measure change? What monitoring systems were in place to monitor achievement of project outcomes?	Missing indicators Monitoring systems in place Evidence of use of data from monitoring system for project improvement	Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and IDIs Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)	Women and girls in communities, community influencers, traditional leaders, women in political leadership CDOs, SWOs, and other local government officials, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, government ministries

Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions	Sub-Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Collection Methods	Data Sources
		Were data from monitoring system used to inform decisions that improve project effectiveness To what extent did the project meet its targets? What results were achieved in each of the four outcomes?	% targets met Reasons for achieving and not achieving targets Results achieved in each of the four outcomes	Document review Outcome harvesting workshop	Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports, steering committee minutes, steering committee reports GEWE Coordination Groups
	How effectively has the project engaged males, and what impact did this have on reducing discrimination or shifting power dynamics?	Were the approaches used to engaged males result in increased male participation in WLER? Has male engagement resulted increased support for WLER in targeted communities? What results can be observed in targeted communities as a result of the engagement of males?	Perceptions on increased male participation in WLER Effective approaches for engagement of males Support for WLER by men Results achieved through male engagement	Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and IDIs Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review Outcome harvesting workshop	Women and girls in communities, community influencers, male champions/facilitators, traditional leaders, women in political leadership CDOs, SWOs, and other local government officials, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, government ministries Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports, steering committee minutes, steering committee reports GEWE Coordination Groups
Sustainability	What opportunities exist for replicating or scaling up good practices?	What opportunities exist for adoption of interventions promoted by the project? How have LGAs, CSOs, UN agencies considered adopting and scaling up project interventions Which interventions are likely to be scaled up?	Opportunities for scaling up interventions promoted by the project Interventions likely to be scaled up	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review	CDOs, SWOs, and other local government officials, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports

Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions	Sub-Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Collection Methods	Data Sources
	How has the project fostered ownership and built national capacity in WLER?	To what extent is the project by national stakeholders (LGAs, government ministries and agencies)? Is there sufficient capacity among national stakeholders to carry on the activities? What approaches increased ownership and capacity?	Evidence of ownership by national stakeholders (contribution, leadership etc.) Capacity of national stakeholders Approaches to build capacity Approaches to build ownership	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review	CDOs, SWOs, and other local government officials, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports
	To what degree have partners changed policies or practices for gender equality and LNOB?	What practices have changed among national partners for gender equality and LNOB? What organisational policies have changed in support of gender equality and LNOB?	Organisational practices that have changed Organisational policies that have changed	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review Outcome harvesting	LGAs, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania (ALAT) Association of Women Councillors (WASEMI) Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports GEWE Coordination Groups
Gender equality and LNOB	To what extent were gender equality and LNOB principles incorporated in design and implementation?	What measures are in the project design for gender equality and LNOB? To what extent are LNOB principles implemented by all partners during implementation?	Measures put in place LNOB principles not implemented by all partners	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review	LGAs, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania (ALAT) Association of Women Councillors (WASEMI), CDOs, SWOs Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports

Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions	Sub-Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Collection Methods	Data Sources
				Outcome harvesting	GEWE Coordination Groups
	What challenges were faced, and how were they addressed?	What are the barriers and facilitating factors for implementing gender equality and LNOB principles? How were challenges addressed?	Barriers for implementing gender equality and LNOB principles Facilitators for implementing gender equality and LNOB principles Actions taken and their success	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review Outcome harvesting	LGAs, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania (ALAT) Association of Women Councillors (WASEMI), CDOs, SWOs Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports GEWE Coordination Groups
	Which groups have the WLER project successfully reached, and which groups may require additional targeting in future phases?	Which groups have the WLER project successfully reached, and which groups may require additional targeting in future phases?	Groups reached by WLER Groups with limited reach	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review Outcome harvesting	LGAs, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania (ALAT) Association of Women Councillors (WASEMI), CDOs, SWOs Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports GEWE Coordination Groups
Questions for Phase 2 design	How can the project improve upon areas that were less effective in the current phase?	Which areas were less effective (interventions and geographies)? How could the project improve the less effective?	Areas less effective Solutions for improving less effective areas	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review	LGAs, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania (ALAT) Association of Women Councillors (WASEMI), CDOs, SWOs Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports

Evaluation Criteria	Key Questions	Sub-Evaluation Questions	Indicators	Collection Methods	Data Sources
				Outcome harvesting	GEWE Coordination Groups
	Should the project consider new approaches, tools, or partnerships to better meet evolving needs or respond to emerging priorities?	What new approaches are required for the project to meet emerging priorities and needs? What partnerships maybe required?	New approaches needed to address emerging priorities Partnerships required	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review Outcome harvesting	LGAs, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania (ALAT) Association of Women Councillors (WASEMI), CDOs, SWOs Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports GEWE Coordination Groups
	Are there strategic decisions, such as choosing between different approaches (option X or Y), that could shape the design of Phase 2?	What strategic decisions need to be made in the Phase 2 project? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the options?	Strategic decision for phase 2 Advantages of each option Disadvantages of each option	Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) Document review Outcome harvesting	LGAs, UN Women staff, Implementing Partners, academia partners, Association of Local Authorities in Tanzania (ALAT) Association of Women Councillors (WASEMI), CDOs, SWOs Annual progress reports, annual review report, project document, monitoring visit reports GEWE Coordination Groups

Annex 5: KII sampling strategy for phase 1 and phase 2

Level	Category	Phase 1 –respondents	Phase 2 respondents
National	UN Women TCO	WLER Project Focal Point M&E/Reporting Specialist Economic Empowerment/WLER Component Lead SMT representative (Project/Deputy Rep) (Total 4)	The remaining focal points Disability Inclusion Adviser Knowledge/Comms Operations/Finance (efficiency) (Total 8)
	Central Government	MoCDWGSP: Directorate of Women & Gender Mainstreaming (policy/implementation lead) PO-RALG: Directorate of Local Government (planning/coordination) PMO-LYED: Unit covering Youth/ Employment and Persons with Disabilities (Total 3)	MoCDWGSP: Policy & Planning plus Gender Responsive Budgeting focal point PO-RALG: Planning/Budget or RBM focal point (Total 2)
	UN agencies		Resident Coordinator’s Office (RCO) UNSDCF Enabling Environment Outcome Group Secretariat (Total 2)
	Donor		Embassy of Finland – Tanzania: Head of Cooperation Gender/GEWE Focal Point (Total 2)
Regional	Regional Secretariats (GEWE Coordination Groups)		Lindi, Mtwara, Arusha, Singida, Pwani and Dar es Salaam GEWE focal points (Total 6)
District / LGA & IPs	Implementing partners (LGAs/CSOs/academia)	Two per region (district level)- Lindi, Mtwara, Arusha, Singida, Pwani and Dar es Salaam • DED/Director of Planning • District Community Development/Social Welfare (Total 12)	
Community	Community facilitators (selective KIIs)		One per region – Community facilitators: Including CDOs, SWOs, and other local government officials and community actors who are capacitated to drive gender-transformative initiatives. (6)

Annex 6: FGD sampling strategy for phase 1 and phase 2

Region	Phase 1 and Phase 2
Arusha Singida Lindi Mtwara Pwani Dar es Salaam	• Women ○ In various leadership positions ○ Entrepreneurs, in cooperatives and those benefiting from economic empowerment initiatives. • Girls in school clubs • Women with Disabilities (WWDs) / Persons with Disabilities (PWDs): • Adolescent mothers and families. • Community members • Right-holders • Traditional leaders⁹⁵ • Male leaders and influencers (5 FGDs in each district.)

⁹⁵ **Kungwi and Nyakanga:** Traditional leaders involved in initiation rites, supported to incorporate life skills and engage in alternative income-generating activities.

Annex 7: Data collection tools

Tool for UN Women, IPs, CDOs, SWOs, Regional leadership, Local councils/District, Other project stakeholders, other UN agencies

Evaluation Criteria	Sub-Evaluation Questions	Probes	UN Women staff	Donor	CSO and academia IPs	Other project stakeholders	Other UN agencies
Relevance	1. Are the interventions addressing a priority need for women and girls – including those with disabilities?	Perceptions of women and girls (including with disabilities) on the appropriateness of the project Appropriateness of SBC approaches to address social norms and cultural practices and behavioural drivers of gender inequality	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	2. To what extent are the approaches of implementation (partners, modalities of SBC) appropriate to address the needs of women and girls?	Appropriateness of approaches for policy and legislative advocacy at national level Appropriateness of the partners to deliver on results Appropriateness of the support to LGA, and women in political leadership to improve WLER	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	3. To what extent does the project address the causal problems facing women including integration/ complementarities of the different interventions to support women and girls in LGA?	Complementarities exist between interventions to achieve the project goal	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	4. What new needs or priorities have emerged among different categories of women and girls?	New needs and priorities	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	5. What can be done to address these new needs and priorities?	Proposed interventions to address the new needs/priorities	✗	✗	✗	✗	
Coherence	6. What added value does the WLER project have to initiatives by other UN agencies, and local governments?	Value addition of the WLER to efforts by other UN agencies, local governments Activities conducted in collaboration with UN agencies	✗			✗	✗
	7. What partnerships were established with other interventions/ work of CSOs, training institutions and academia to advance the project objectives?	Partnerships established with CSOs academia	✗		✗	✗	✗
Efficiency	8. What measures were put in place by UN Women/partners to support cost effective delivery?	Measures put in place to support cost effectiveness	✗		✗		

Evaluation Criteria	Sub-Evaluation Questions	Probes	UN Women staff	Donor	CSO and academia IPs	Other project stakeholders	Other UN agencies
	9. How is cost effectiveness monitored?	Monitoring mechanisms put in place	✗		✗		
	10. What human resources have allocated to the project and are they adequate?	Adequacy of human resources for the project	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	11. What the financial resources to achieve the intended objectives?	Adequacy of financial resources	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	12. What are the views of stakeholders on the quality and adequacy of interventions?	Views of stakeholders on the quality and adequacy of interventions		✗		✗	
	13. To what extent were activities implemented according to annual workplans or agreed timelines?	Alignment of activities to the annual workplan	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	14. What challenges were experienced that undermined timely delivery?	Challenges causing delays	✗		✗	✗	
	15. What actions were put in place to address/ mitigate effects of delays?	Actions taken to address delays or mitigate the effects of delays	✗		✗		
	16. What measures were put in place to support integrating human rights, gender equality, and the needs of disabled and young women?	Measures put in place	✗		✗		
	17. Was resource allocation equitably distributed for these aspects?	% resource allocated for human rights and disability Perceptions on equity in resource allocation	✗		✗		
Effectiveness	18. Were the indicators in the results framework sufficient to measure change?	Missing indicators	✗	✗	✗		
	19. What monitoring systems were in place to monitor achievement of project outcomes?	Monitoring systems in place	✗	✗	✗		
	20. Were data from monitoring system used to inform decisions that improve project effectiveness?	Evidence of use of data from monitoring system for project improvement	✗	✗	✗		
	21. To what extent did the project meet its targets?	% targets met Reasons for achieving and not achieving targets	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	22. What results were achieved in each of the four outcomes?	Results achieved in each of the four outcomes	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	23. Were the approaches used to engaged males result in increased male participation in WLER?	Effective approaches for engagement of males	✗	✗	✗		

Evaluation Criteria	Sub-Evaluation Questions	Probes	UN Women staff	Donor	CSO and academia IPs	Other project stakeholders	Other UN agencies
	24. Has male engagement resulted increased support for WLER in targeted communities?	Perceptions on increased male participation in WLER Support for WLER by men	✗	✗	✗		
	25. What results can be observed in targeted communities as a result of the engagement of males?	Results achieved through male engagement	✗	✗	✗		
Sustainability	26. What opportunities exist for adoption of interventions promoted by the project?	Opportunities for scaling up interventions promoted by the project	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗
	27. How have LGAs, CSOs, UN agencies considered adopting and scaling up project interventions	Plans by LGAs, CSOs and UN agencies to scale up project interventions	✗		✗	✗	✗
	28. Which interventions are likely to be scaled up?	Interventions likely to be scaled up	✗		✗	✗	✗
	29. To what extent is the project owned by national stakeholders (LGAs, Parliament, government ministries and agencies)?	Evidence of ownership by national stakeholders (contribution, leadership etc.)	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	30. Is there sufficient capacity among national stakeholders to carry on the activities?	Capacity of national stakeholders Approaches to build capacity	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	31. What approaches increased ownership and capacity?	Approaches to build ownership	✗		✗	✗	
	32. What practices have changed among national partners for gender equality and LNOB?	Organisational practices that have changed	✗		✗	✗	
	33. What organisational policies have changed in support of gender equality and LNOB?	Organisational policies that have changed	✗		✗	✗	
Gender equality and LNOB	34. What measures are in the project design for gender equality and LNOB?	Measures put in place	✗		✗		
	35. To what extent are LNOB principles implemented by all partners during implementation?	LNOB principles not implemented by all partners Challenges experienced in implementing LNOB	✗		✗		
	36. What are the barriers and facilitating factors for implementing gender equality and LNOB principles?	Barriers for implementing gender equality and LNOB principles Facilitators for implementing gender equality and LNOB principles	✗		✗		
	37. How were challenges addressed?	Actions taken and their success	✗		✗		
	38. Which groups have the WLER project successfully reached, and which groups may require additional targeting in future phases?	Groups reached by WLER Groups with limited reach	✗		✗		
	39. Which areas were less effective (interventions and geographies)?	Areas less effective	✗		✗		

Evaluation Criteria	Sub-Evaluation Questions	Probes	UN Women staff	Donor	CSO and academia IPs	Other project stakeholders	Other UN agencies
Questions for Phase 2 design	40. How could the project improve the less effective?	Solutions for improving less effective areas	✗		✗		
	41. What new approaches are required for the project to meet emerging priorities and needs?	New approaches needed to address emerging priorities	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	42. What partnerships maybe required?	Partnerships required	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	43. What strategic decisions need to be made in the Phase 2 project?	Strategic decision for phase 2	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	44. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the options?	Advantages of each option Disadvantages of each option	✗	✗	✗	✗	