

Terms of Reference

Evaluation of the Contribution of Italian Funded Projects in
ECOWAS Member States towards Ending Violence against Women
and Promoting Gender Equality.

Draft
April 2011

1. Background, purpose and use of the evaluation

UN Women's West Africa Sub Regional Office (WARO) in its role as a key driver of gender equality in the region is committed to supporting catalytic strategies to eliminate all forms of violence against women (VAW), and ensure that countries respect their international and regional engagements on gender equality. In collaboration with the Italian Cooperation, three projects were developed and supported to enhance the capacity of ECOWAS Member States to fight against VAW; integrate gender in security sector reforms in Liberia; and implement the recommendations by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) on gender in Sierra Leone.

To contribute to UN Women's efforts to strengthen its evaluation function and to ensure the utility, credibility, independence and alignment of actions undertaken with the results framework agreed upon with local and partners, WARO has decided to carry out a self-evaluation of selected programmes implemented by project partners in selected countries. The evaluation is in line with United Nations Evaluation Group's (UNEG) Norms and Standards and UN Women Evaluation Strategy 2008-2011.

With funding from the Italian Cooperation, UN Women is supporting ministries of women's affairs and civil society organizations in Burkina Faso, Cape Vert, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone. These countries have been selected for evaluation by WARO given high potential for lesson-drawing to improve UN Women's leadership role in promoting gender equality and fighting against VAW. With this evaluation, WARO seeks to contribute to UN Women's learning and knowledge on programmes and strategies to end VAW and promote gender equality.

This evaluation will be guided by the six guiding principles set by the UN Women Evaluation Policy, these include: women's empowerment and gender equality, human rights, people-centered development, UN system coordination on gender equality, national ownership and managing for results on women's empowerment and gender equality. It also abides by the key evaluation standards of participation and inclusiveness; utilization-focused and intentionality; transparency, independence and impartiality; quality and credibility; and ethical values. Like all UN Women evaluations, the current evaluation is defined by the UNEG Norms for Evaluation and must be gender equality and human rights responsive.

The key audience of the evaluation would include, but not be limited to: WARO and country office teams, the Italian Cooperation, civil society organizations implementing the relevant programmes and other finance and technical partners working to improve strategies to address VAW and promote gender.

2. Context/Description of the Intervention

The Italian Cooperation is currently supporting three UN Women projects with the aim of ending VAW in 16 countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Since 2009, activities have been undertaken to promote gender justice and women's human rights in security sector reform, peace and reconciliation processes and economic reconstruction in **Liberia**. The objectives for this project include: supporting Gender Responsive Security Sector Reform for enhanced protection of women and girls against sexual and gender based violence; advancing the institutionalization of gender mainstreaming and women's rights into the institutions, policies and processes of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC); promoting women's leadership in the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325; and enhancing women's economic security and rights through harnessing their potential to fully contribute to and benefit from economic reconstruction.

The second project is aimed at advancing the implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on gender equality in **Sierra Leone**. More specifically, this project was intended to increase the number of peace building and post-conflict reconstruction strategies that incorporate gender equality in line with national commitments to women's empowerment and human rights; increase the number of formal and informal justice systems promoting the implementation of UN Resolution 1325 and the National Action Plan on UN SCR 1325, the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Domestic Violence Act 2007, the Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act, and the Intestate Succession Act; and ensure that women survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, young women and other women's groups have increased resources, capacities and voice to ensure that their priorities are included in relevant policies, programmes and budgets.

The third project seeks to contribute to the creation of an institutional environment within the **ECOWAS** sub-region conducive to ending VAW. The programme will result in the elaboration of a regional strategy to fight against VAW and action plans on the Gender Policy of the ECOWAS Commission, CEDAW and its Additional Protocol, and the Maputo Protocol, at sub-regional and national levels. It also seeks to promote the development and adoption of effective mechanisms to address VAW in the ECOWAS region by member States. Finally, it aims to empower women and men's organizations at grassroots level to influence relevant policies on VAW through engagement with decentralized government structures and in decision making processes.

The key stakeholders of this evaluation are WARO and country office teams and UN Women's M&E teams. Other stakeholders of this evaluation are the country programmes donor(s), local partners and the target group. The projects have received funding from the Italian Cooperation.

In **Liberia**, the project's beneficiaries, target groups and other stakeholders are the Liberian Ministry of Gender and Development, the Ministry of Justice, the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Governance Commission, , the Women's Legislative Caucus of Liberia and other parliamentarians, the Association of Female Lawyers in Liberia, the Liberian Women NGO secretariat and its member organizations, several national NGOs, and media organizations.

In **Sierra Leone**, the project's beneficiaries, target groups and other stakeholders are the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, the Ministry of Local Government, the Ministry of Justice, the Human Rights Commission, Action Plus, the Decentralization Secretariat, International Rescue Committee, Search for Common Ground, Society for Women and AIDS in Africa – Sierra Leone Chapter, Voice of Women, women activists, and women and girls at the grassroots level.

In the **ECOWAS** sub-region, the project's beneficiaries, target groups and other stakeholders include Ministries in charge of gender equality and women's empowerment in the ECOWAS sub-region, the ECOWAS Centre for Gender and Development, the Regional Association of Religious Leaders, lawyers' associations and networks, and relevant organizations working on VAW, including specifically those of women at the grassroots level.

3. Objectives & Scope

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability and impact of UN Women projects funded by the Italian Cooperation from 2009 - 2011. The evaluation aims at achieving a fair, objective and accurate assessment of the performance of the projects and at ensuing recommendations for future UN Women's interventions in the region with a view to better positioning UN Women to lead activities centered around ending VAW based on current achievements and challenges.

The budget for the evaluation shall cover: consultants' fees; consultants' air travel and accommodation, a translator if necessary, and refreshments for interviews and meetings.

In terms of scope, the evaluation will cover the following key areas and respond to the following evaluation questions:

Evaluating relevance:

- Do the partners, target groups and beneficiaries consider that the programme contributed to an environment conducive to ending violence against women?
- Are the projects' objectives addressing identified rights and needs of the target group(s) in national and regional contexts? How much do the projects contribute to shaping women's rights priorities?
- Do the activities address the problems identified?
- Is the design of the projects articulated in a coherent structure? Is the definition of goal, outcomes and outputs clearly articulated?

Evaluating effectiveness:

- What was the progress made towards the achievement of the expected outcomes and expected results? What are the results achieved?
- What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement?
- To what extent have beneficiaries been satisfied with the results?
- To what extent have capacities of gender equality advocates been strengthened?
- To what extent do the intended and unintended benefits meet the needs of disadvantaged women?
- In the case of the ECOWAS sub-region project, to what extent has the programme's unique approach of bringing local and national interventions together is being understood and incorporated into the programme plans and how effective is the approach?

Evaluating efficiency:

- Have the outputs been delivered in a timely manner?
- Could the activities and outputs been delivered with fewer resources without reducing their quality and quantity?
- Have UN Women's organizational structure, managerial support and coordination mechanisms effectively supported the delivery of the projects?

Evaluating sustainability:

- What is the likelihood of the benefits from the projects being maintained after the projects finish?
- Are the projects supported by national/local institutions? Do these institutions demonstrate leadership commitment and technical capacity to continue the efforts and activities supported by the projects and/or replicate them?
- To what extent have grassroots and community actors taken charge of specific aspects of the projects?
- Are requirements of national ownership satisfied?
- What operational capacity of national partners, also known as capacity resources, such as technology, finance, and staffing, has been strengthened?
- To what extent are ongoing interventions by key stakeholders in project implementation consistent and aligned to government commitments and legal framework?
- How much do the projects build (as planned) on other initiatives to produce a multiplying effect at local level?

Evaluating impact:

- What are the intended and unintended, positive and negative, long term effects of the projects?
- To what extent can the changes that have occurred as a result of the projects be identified and measured?
- Is there evidence that the projects enabled the rights-holders to claim their rights more successfully and the duty-holders to perform their duties more efficiently?
- To which extent have efforts been successful in stopping harmful and discriminatory practices against women?

4. Stakeholders' participation

Complying with the key evaluation principles guiding UN Women's evaluation efforts, this evaluation shall involve all relevant stakeholders throughout the evaluation process. The key stakeholders of this evaluation shall actively take part in the evaluation from the inception of these terms of reference until the final dissemination of the evaluation results. They shall review these terms of reference to ensure the feasibility and scope of the same. They shall review the draft report and final reports, provide feedback and contribute to the recommendations. They shall provide continued support to the consultant in terms of facilitating information-gathering, data-collection, interview and meeting set-up with project partners, donors and target community.

5. Methodology, approach and key deliverables

The evaluation exercise will be wide-ranging, consultative and participatory, entailing a combination of comprehensive desk reviews, analyses, interviews and inception meetings. While interviews are a key instrument, all analysis must be based on observed facts to ensure that the evaluation is sound and objective. On the basis of the foregoing, the consultants will further elaborate on the method and approach in a manner commensurate with the assignment at hand and reflect this in the inception report, which will subsequently be shared with the Italian Cooperation Projects Reference Group as well as other key stakeholders.

The key inputs to the evaluation should be as follows:

Interviews with key stakeholders: UN Women staff at various Country Offices; the Italian Cooperation; government partners; civil society organizations; women at the grassroots level who are affected by the work of these organizations; and others deemed necessary by the review team.

Substantive documentation: Original project documents; project planning documents, all substantive reports, censored minutes from project meetings; and others as deemed necessary by the evaluation team.

Operational documentation: Organizational structure of the projects; TORs and resumes for key staff; documentation on recruitment guidelines and processes (e.g. decision structure, recruitment, coordination); official correspondences and other records of exchanges between the project staff and stakeholders; and others as deemed necessary by the evaluation team.

The expected outputs of the evaluation will be a draft and a final evaluation report which should include but not be limited to:

- Qualitative and quantitative assessment of progress made towards the intended outcome
- Qualitative and quantitative assessment of relevant outputs
- Lessons learned concerning best and/or less than ideal practices in producing outputs and achieving the outcome
- Strategies and recommendations for continued UN Women's assistance towards the achievement of the outcome.

At the end of the assignment, a final evaluation report will be produced containing as a minimum:

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
- Overview of key findings, good practices, and challenges
- Analysis of finding and challenges
- Lessons learned and recommendations
- Annexes:
 - Bibliography
 - Mission schedule and list of people met
 - Terms of Reference, evaluation, tools, etc

The outcome final report shall be shared with the stakeholders, reference group and management as well as with UN Women's Evaluation HQ, Africa and WARO teams.

6. Timeline

The evaluation should be conducted in the course of one month (22 - 24 working days), including any required travels. The target date for commencement of the assignment is 4 July 2011 and is broken down as follows:

Day 1-5: Briefing, desk review and submission of inception report

Day 6-18: Interviews, consultations and inception meeting

Day 19-21: Drafting report of key conclusions and recommendations

Day 22: Presentation of draft conclusions and recommendations to stakeholders

Day 23-24: Finalization and submission of report

7. Evaluation Ethics and Code of Conduct

To ensure the credibility and integrity of the evaluation process and following United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) **Ethical Guidelines**, the Consultant will be required to commit to the **Code of Conduct** for Evaluation (see <http://www.unevaluation.org/papersandpubs/>), specifically to the following obligations:

- **Independence:** Evaluators shall ensure that independence of judgment is maintained and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
- **Impartiality:** Evaluators shall operate in an impartial and unbiased manner and give a balanced presentation of strengths and weaknesses of the policy, program, project or organizational unit being evaluated.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Evaluators are required to disclose in writing any past experience, which may give rise to a potential conflict of interest, and to deal honestly in resolving any conflict of interest which may arise.
- **Honesty and Integrity:** Evaluators shall show honesty and integrity in their own behavior, negotiating honestly the evaluation costs, tasks, limitations, scope of results likely to be obtained, while accurately presenting their procedures, data and findings and highlighting any limitations or uncertainties of interpretation within the evaluation.

- **Competence:** Evaluators shall accurately represent their level of skills and knowledge and work only within the limits of their professional training and abilities in evaluation, declining assignments for which they do not have the skills and experience to complete successfully.
- **Accountability:** Evaluators are accountable for the completion of the agreed evaluation deliverables within the timeframe and budget agreed, while operating in a cost effective manner.
- **Obligations to Participants:** Evaluators shall respect and protect the rights and welfare of human subjects and communities, in accordance with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights conventions. Evaluators shall respect differences in culture, local customs, religious beliefs and practices, personal interaction, gender roles, disability, age and ethnicity, while using evaluation instruments appropriate to the cultural setting. Evaluators shall ensure prospective participants are treated as autonomous agents, free to choose whether to participate in the evaluation, while ensuring that the relatively powerless are represented.
- **Confidentiality:** Evaluators shall respect people's right to provide information in confidence and make participants aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality, while ensuring that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source.
- **Avoidance of Harm:** Evaluators shall act to minimize risks and harms to, and burdens on, those participating in the evaluation, without compromising the integrity of the evaluation findings.
- **Accuracy, Completeness and Reliability:** Evaluators have an obligation to ensure that evaluation reports and presentations are accurate, complete and reliable. Evaluators shall explicitly justify judgments, findings and conclusions and show their underlying rationale, so that stakeholders are in a position to assess them.
- **Transparency:** Evaluators shall clearly communicate to stakeholders the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria applied and the intended use of findings. Evaluators shall ensure that stakeholders have a say in shaping the evaluation and shall ensure that all documentation is readily available to and understood by stakeholders.
- **Omissions and wrongdoing:** Where evaluators find evidence of wrong-doing or unethical conduct, they are obliged to report it to the proper oversight authority.

8. Competencies & skills required from the Evaluation Consultant

The review will be carried out by a team of two consultants who possess the following skills and experience:

- Master's degree related to a social science, preferably including gender studies, development studies, public policy, public administration, evaluation or social research.
- A minimum of 3 years of working experience in evaluation and/or social research, with at least 2 years working with developing countries and a demonstrated understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by post conflict countries.
- Strong analytical and research skills with sufficient understanding of survey design, quantitative/qualitative methods and data analysis.
- Experience reviewing projects/programmes of UN agencies (preferably UNDP).
- Familiarity with UN (preferably UNDP) evaluation guidelines and processes is a plus.
- Experience with working on gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Experience working with the UN and with multi-stakeholders: governments, NGOs, the UN/multilateral/bilateral institutions and donor entities.
- Excellent written and spoken English and proficiency in French.
- Writing skills that include an attention to detail as well as a grasp of conceptual frameworks.
- Outstanding interpersonal skills, teamwork, and competency to operate in a multi-cultural and diverse environment.
- Public sector management experience in a post-conflict setting is preferred.

- Familiarity with the region is strongly preferred.
- Must be available to work beginning of July.

9. Management arrangements

The mission will be facilitated by the UN Women Liberia, Sierra Leone, and selected country offices that are covered by the ECOWAS Programme. The UN Women West Africa Sub Regional Office will also provide logistical support as and when necessary.

10. Ethical Code of Conduct

Insert Ethical Code for Evaluation here.