**DRAFT FINAL report**

**FINAL EVALUATION OF FSM GENDER MACHINERYProject**

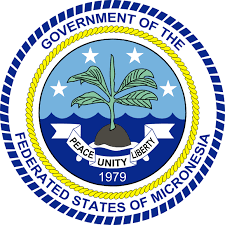
United Nations Development Programme



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December 2023

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| **PROJECT/OUTCOME INFORMATION** | | |
| **Project/outcome title** | **Strengthening the FSM’s national gender machinery** | |
| **Atlas ID** | **00121966** | |
| **Corporate outcome and output** | **UNPS Outcome 3: Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Empowerment** | |
| **Country** | **Federated States of Micronesia** | |
| **Region** | **Asia and the Pacific** | |
| **Date project document signed** | **16th November 2020** | |
| **Project dates** | **Start** | **Planned end** |
| **01/01/2021** | **31/12/2023** |
| **Project budget** | **USD 1000,000.00** | |
| **Project expenditure at the time of evaluation** | **USD 504,231** | |
| **Funding source** | **India-UN Development Partnership Fund** | |
| **Implementing party2** | **FSM National Government – Department of Health & Social Affairs (DOHSA)** | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation information** | | |
| **Evaluation type (project/ outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.)** | Project | |
| **Final/midterm review/ other** | Final evaluation | |
| **Period under evaluation** | **Start** | **End** |
| Year 2020 | Year 2023 |
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| **Evaluation dates** | **Start** | **Completion** |
|  | 6th December 2023 | 31st January 2024 |

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# **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.**

CO Country Office

COP Community of practice

CWC Chuuk Women’s Council office

CSO Civil Society Organization

DOHSA Department of Health and Social Affairs

HRBA Human rights-based approach

IP Implementing Partner

KM Knowledge management

KII Key Informant Interview

GEWE Gender equality and women’s empowerment

HR Human rights

NAP National Action Plan

ProDoc Project Document

PWD Persons with disabilities

SDG Sustainable Development Goal

TA Technical Assistance

TBD To be determined

TOR Terms of Reference

ToT Training of Trainers

UN United Nations

UNDAF United Nations Development Assistance Framework

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Background and Purpose**

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) pledged to bring gender parity to its population through

ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 2004, the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration in 2012 and by endorsing the FSM National Gender Policy in February 2018. Despite Government’s commitments to addressing gender equality issues, the progress has been slow.

In this context, the national gender machinery project was designed and commenced on implementation from 01 January 2021 and the project ended on 31st December 2023. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched the 3 year “Strengthening FSM’s Gender Machinery” project in 2020. The project has been implemented by the UNDP Pacific Office in collaboration with the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) Department of Health & Social Affairs, the ministries and departments at the national and state levels, ministries and departments CSOs and countries.

The project aimed to enhance women and girls’ leadership roles by engaging them and key partners in gender related policy advocacy [Output 1], working alongside traditional community leaders in sectors of importance to the communities in FSM’s 4 states (Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae, Yap). Concurrently, the project also worked towards building women’s leadership through community-based income generation, safe water and sanitation projects which improves their agency, access and control over clean water and sanitation services [Output 2], which should result in Women’s Economic Empowerment, poverty reduction and sustainable development.

The purpose of the evaluation was to learn lessons from the design and implementation of this USD 1 million initiative at the end of implementation in 2023. The Final Evaluation was tasked with assessing the overall progress and results of the Project’s interventions against their intended goals and objectives towards whether the project’s methodologies and engagement strategies should be sustained in a longer-term. The evaluation has focused on the years 2020-2023.

Due to travel challenges, this evaluation was conducted as a home-based desk review with remote consultations and interviews. This evaluation report synthesises the analysis from the desk review, qualitative data and stakeholder interviews.

**Description of the Project**

The project was designed to support the gender mainstreaming in sectoral plans and by strengthening the oversight mechanisms to ensure implementation gender equality strategies and policy for improved gender equality outcomes. Concurrently, the project will build women’s leadership through community-based income generation, safe water and sanitation projects. The main outcome envisaged is improved gender equality outcomes through gender mainstreaming in national and sectoral plans and improved access by the women and girls to income generation, clean water and sanitation projects resulting in Women’s Economic Empowerment, poverty reduction and sustainable development.

The project has funded projects with India UN development fund. Project team has provided technical support to the States. Project activities are organized and reported on through nine outputs:

Output 1: Adequately **resourced national gender machinery** to deliver on national, regional and international gender commitments, policies.

Output 2: Enhanced access to **technology for implementation and management of community- based income generation and sanitation initiatives**

**Data Analysis by Outcome**

Areas Overall, the design of the programme is sound. However, it is overly ambitious, especially given the shift towards a nationally implemented modality. The financial resources allocated for the project were adequate, but the technical assistance provided was insufficient, especially considering the new approaches and tools that were planned, such as coaching, on the job training and production of knowledge products.

The project achieved excellent results in a very short time – especially in terms of consultation and collaboration. The results achieved under output 1 have the potential to be far-reaching and to set the agenda for gender equality work in FSM well into the future. There is more work to do in monitoring and evaluation (M&E), budgeting, strengthened accountability and harmonisation.

Output 2 has managed to achieve sustainable results with the income generation and improvement of access to water and has demonstrated the project’s actors ‘ability to implement innovative programmes on gender equality. Under this output, UNDP has established diverse partnerships with governmental institutions, CSOs, women associations, youth and the media. Although activities under this output were initially slow, the activities will have a definite impact on the life of everyday women of Micronesia according to interviewers.

**Evaluation Methods**

The Final Project Evaluation was conducted by an international evaluator in October, November and December 2023, with analysis and writing extending into January 2024. The evaluators developed the methods to be used in an inception report, which was reviewed and approved by UNDP. The evaluator proposed in the inception report to interview UNDP staff and stakeholders. The Evaluator then reviewed documents from the project as well as conducted remote interviews with UNDP staff, Department of Health and Social Affairs ministry, Women council, stakeholders and civil society partners of the project. The evaluator’s review focused on answering evaluation questions under evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability plus cross-cutting issues of human rights, gender equality, and conflict sensitivity. These questions have been used to organize the evaluation, including the report. The evaluator submitted a draft evaluation report for review in at the end of December 2023 and will brief the Project Board on evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations in January 2024. The Final Evaluation Report addresses written and oral questions and comments on the draft from UNDP and board members.

**Key Findings and Conclusions**

The project has been assessed against five indicator areas: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Findings are discussed against each of these indicators below along with a binary qualitative rating of satisfactory or unsatisfactory. While all indicator areas have been assessed as being satisfactory, work in some areas is ongoing and results in the areas of impact and sustainability were satisfactory yet only partially achieved.

*Relevance*

The Project was found to be highly relevant to the context of FSM at the time of development and through the period of implementation. The outputs and the flexibility to respond to changing *conditions* were seen as pluses in design and implementation – and needed to address the issues of women community- based income generation and sanitation initiatives and delivery on national, regional and international gender commitments, policies. The project fits well into the priorities of UNDP Pacific Island bureaus’ outcomes and the theoretical framework for the FSM Gender Machinery ProDoc was seen as having proposed a relevant approach that took advantage of UNDP’s comparative advantages in working with the governmental departments and communities, as well as civil society in FSM. Having the project work at the Federal level, with national partners at the States level, and community levels within States and with local-level partners, notably making the project more relevant, including links too between these three levels. Program data and interviews found strong justification for the relevance of the different initiatives of the project in all the 4 States.

*Effectiveness*

The project was seen as contributing to UNDP pacific region outcomes and having almost met its own output targets in its 2 outputs. Factors that impeded achievements were coordination, the delay of procurement process and the Covid -19 pandemic. Factors that contributed towards the project effectiveness successes were: commitment of governmental structures as the ministry of health and social affairs , and other stakeholders and analysis of the project and the effective work of the UNDP team management, and the efforts made to work with local organizations. Partnerships were also seen as effective – at the federal and States level, with Cos, governments, and with civil society, national, and community levels. The project was recognized to have been responsive to the needs of partners. UNDP staff provided links between the different levels and types of activities of the project, which nevertheless did not necessarily lead to cascading links between results (such as results at the Federal level having an impact on States and community results). Reaching marginalized groups has been a priority of the project and achieved through some interventions.

**Efficiency**

The management structure of the project was seen as efficient. Delivery rate challenges arose at times from a range of States and activity-specific reasons; COVID-19 exacerbated these challenges and made the federal coordination more difficult (although the project’s ability to do more remotely worked to mitigate many problems). UNDP staff had good relationships and practices to use to monitor project activities across States and partner use of resources and programming for both management and reporting.

**Sustainability**

Resources to sustain the project benefits and to extend or expand the FSM Gender Machinery project at national, or community level in the project’s achievements of gender equality, empowerment of women, and support for human rights - remains limited. Project achievements were seen as secure as embedded in communities where the project has worked through frameworks that support sustainability. Stakeholders retained interest in the project and ownership of activities that support the continued relevance of the project initiatives. The sustainability of community-based activities and stakeholders is more limited as dependent on project-based funding.

***Cross-cutting Issues***

A human rights-based approach **(**HRBA) has been a key part of the engagement to build federal, States community constituencies. Community-based efforts supported by the project have emphasized reaching disadvantaged, marginalized groups. The project was attentive to gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEWE) and made GEWE a large part of activities. Activities however responded to the specific needs of women. Project activities were generally seen as conflict sensitive in their design and implementation.

**Conclusions and Lessons Learnt**

The project has been a highly successful initiative that has built credible and productive partnerships and achieved initial outputs and outcomes. The project remains relevant to the FSM context where the project has worked with Federal government, CSOs, as well as communities.

Key lessons include:

* Livelihoods support can provide concrete gains in addressing gender inequality.
* Working with and through States institutions is effective; and
* Working with and through women groups support sustainability.
* Implementing three years project in two years is very challenging and is too short for a project with so many partners and of this complexity. More time for implementation was needed. For example, finding a legal specialist for the development the Gender Policy is ambitious and complex and needed more time.
* Working with youth is a positive entry point into working on challenging social and gender norms.
* Developing a gender policy is a complex task and require dedicated expertise
* Travel between Islands was challenging and impacted the coordination of the project.

**Recommendations**

**Conceptual Points**

*Develop a successor project*

UNDP should consider developing a successor initiative to further address gender inequality in FSM

*No cost extension of the project.*

Agree to a no-cost extension for 6 months to complete outstanding activities under the outputs of the project.

*Follow an integrated approach at multiple levels*

UNDP should continue to follow the integrated approach that connects regional, national, and local endeavours towards having approaches that complement each other and lead to more effective approaches and stronger results by combining complementary PVE approaches and levels of engagement.

*Support publication and implementation of gender policy*. UNDP should continue support the publication, diffusion and implementation of gender statistics in FSM..

*Continue gender equality Research as a key component of Gender programming, particularly local research connected to programming*

UNDP should work to amass evidence over the longer term that helps add plausibility to the programme model.

*Explore ways to broaden and scale up support to civil-society organizations and networks*

*Consider ways to build on programming approach to gender that considers masculinities, and digital communications.*

*Develop an exit strategy in partnership with UNDP to outline future ways of working.*

UNDP has established strong relationships with line ministries and other institutions working on gender equality, to ensure that this work continues in the future with less support from UNDP further thinking and strategizing needs to occur. An exit strategy developed in partnership between the Ministry of health and UNDP would provide a roadmap to guide the national authorities.

**Operational Programming Points**

*Expand support for knowledge management and the Community of Practice*

The project should support networking and development of community of practice in the region, and underwrite research, data collection and knowledge management to allow better targeted interventions informed by global good practice.

*Support systematic, multi-level resource mobilization*

The regional UNDP Pacific office should provide substantial attention to resource mobilization that COs can build on in mobilizing additional resources at the country level.

*Endeavor to expand pilots and Training of Trainers (ToT)*

The activities of the project have demonstrated impressive successes in institutions, countries, and communities. However, the challenge is to build on pilot successes to have a larger national impact on what remains a huge gender challenge.

# **INTRODUCTION**

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) has ratified most of international instruments promoting gender equality including the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 2004, the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration in 2012 and by endorsing the FSM National Gender Policy in February 2018. The country has made some progress towards the promotion of women political participation. On the 12 November 2021, Micronesia acknowledged the first ever FSM female member of congress ([FSM - Pacific Women in Politics (pacwip.org)](https://www.pacwip.org/country-profiles/fsm/).

Despite, the intrinsic important steps on women political leadership, and the Government’s commitments to addressing gender equality issues, women do not enjoy full and equal access to public and political life, nor does their mere entry guarantee that they will be able to exercise political agency and influence. The current project was designed to respond to the challenges inhibiting women’s political participation and leadership and wellbeing of the entire family e.g., income generation, health, clean water, and sanitation. There are no institutional or legal barriers discriminating female population at the States and National level. But discriminatory social norms and stereotypes constitute a major obstacle to achieving gender equality.

The strengthening the FSM’S national gender machinery project, was designed to strengthen and enhance women and girls’ leadership roles by engaging them and key partners in gender related policy advocacy, working alongside traditional community leaders in sectors of importance to the communities in FSM’s 4 states (Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae, Yap). Concurrently, the project also works towards building women’s leadership through community-based income generation, safe water and sanitation projects which improves their agency, access and control over clean water and sanitation services, which should result in Women’s Economic Empowerment, poverty reduction and sustainable development. The activities have been organized towards 2 outputs.

Output 1: Adequately resourced national gender machinery to deliver on national, regional and international gender commitments, policies. legislations and oversight.

Output 2: Enhanced access to technology for implementation and management of community-based income generation and sanitation initiatives

Since the launch of the project in 2020, funding and technical assistance (TA) has been provided to support direct interventions in the following areas:

The major achievements of the project include:

1) The participation of women in sporting events such as the Pohnpei State's March Madness Basketball Tournament in 2022 & 2023, which involved women’s and men’s teams (gender equality scholastic basketball game)

2) Successful implementations of national gender commission/focal points with line departments designations’ meetings, ongoing coordination with the states by local based project manager with UNDP on their proposed projects, coupled with successful periodic monitoring and evaluation in early December 2022, with 2 more planned oversight missions before the end of 2023.

3) access to technology for implementation and management of community-based income generation and sanitation initiatives, enabling several women-based groups to participate in the calls for proposals, including Pohnpei Public Utility Corporation (PUC) - enabled expansion of water supply in Pohnpei to the outer communities who were not initially connected to the main waterline, allowing better water sanitation access to the Pohnpei state communities in FSM.

**I. Evaluation scope and objectives.**

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**Evaluation scope.**

The final evaluation covered the full scope of the Gender project and full geographical coverage of the FSM. The evaluation focused on relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the intervention. In addition, the evaluation assessed how the intervention sought to mainstream gender and social inclusion issues and application of the human rights -based approaches while mainstreaming trade related strategies, structures, and capacity in the national development plan. Mainly, the evaluation should cover at least the following areas.

*Relevance of the project*: Assessed the appropriateness of gender in the project design particularly project’s objectives, Theory of Change, Results and Resource Frameworks as it related to the achievement of project objectives, its linkages with the government’s national strategic plans, and problems it intends to address.

*Effectiveness and efficiency in project implementation*: Assessed the project’s direct and indirect accomplishments (results) including specific gender results and its contributions towards the achievement of the anticipated outcomes, including any gender related constraints on its effectiveness, and any unintended outcomes on gender.

*Impact of the project*: Assessed the quality of direct and indirect results such as mainstreaming of trade related policies and strategies, structures in development strategies, capacity enhanced to the target group, partnership and engagement enhanced, the functional efficiency of the target institutions increased. Assessed the specific impact of the project on gender equality both direct and indirect results.

*Coherence of the project*: alignment with UNDP's core documents (e.g., UNDP CPD), national priorities (e.g FSM’s national development plan), and other related UNDP, UN, and Development Partner projects.

*Sustainability of the project interventions*: the evaluator assessed the specific gender equality/gender mainstreaming positive impacts for sustainability and replication to other countries. He Assessed the management and implementation arrangement of the project and distribution of responsibilities within the given structure and national implementation modality, including financial and human resource management, monitoring and oversight as well as the risks and risk management strategies in terms of their contribution to the delivery of project results in accordance with the project’s log frame and Results and Resources Framework (RRF);He Identified and examined key external factors beyond the project’s control that have contributed to the program’s successes and failures; Document specific lessons learnt on gender mainstreaming in the design, implementation, management and monitoring of the project that will add value to similar projects in the future; He recommended whether to extend the project, including the justification and duration of the extension; he recommended options to improve any future designing of similar projects by the India/UNOSSC and UNDP; The impact of the project on gender equality and include recommendations on gender equality and women’s empowerment cutting across effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and lessons learnt on gender equality and women’s empowerment were assessed.

**Evaluation objectives.**

The report spells out the types of decisions the evaluation feeds into, the issues to be considered in making those decisions and what the evaluation will need to achieve to contribute to those decisions. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) launched in 01/01/2021,the implementation of the Strengthening the FSM’s national gender machinery Project signed in November 2020.The project has been implemented by the Department of Health & Social Affairs (DOHSA) of FSM National Government.The Terms of RefereHe nce (TOR) for the evaluator note that the purpose of the Final Evaluation is to assess the overall progress and results of the Project’s interventions against their intended goals and objectives.

Further, “ *The overall purpose of this final evaluation is to assess the project results achieved and lessons learned from the gender project and provide specific recommendations for future course of actions, and will be conducted with great emphasis on: accounting for results (i.e., to what extent have the intended results been achieved); impact and sustainability; review progress towards the project’s objectives and outcomes; assess the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of how the project has moved towards its objectives and outcomes; identify strengths and weaknesses in project design and implementation; and provide recommendations on design modifications that could have increased the likelihood of success, and on specific actions that might be taken into consideration in designing future projects of a related nature*. (p. 3)

The consultant was tasked with evaluating the complete results framework of Project. The Progress in all result areas (‘outputs’) are assessed, the accountability framework, as well as the quality and logic of the result framework to embody the FSM’S national gender machinery.” The evaluation thus assessed all nine outputs of the FSM’S national gender machinery project. The evaluator gathered and analysed data to answer specific questions on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of FSM’S national gender machinery project outputs as well as questions on cross-cutting issues of human rights, gender equality, and conflict sensitivity. The TOR also noted that: ‘*’The evaluation will focus on relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the intervention. In addition, the evaluation will assess how the intervention sought to mainstream gender and social inclusion issues and application of the human rights -based approaches while mainstreaming trade related strategies, structures, and capacity in the national development plan’’*.

Finally, it was asked to the evaluator to evaluate the effect the project has had on the progress towards gender equality in FSM; The period to be evaluated is the entire project period (2020 -2023).

Benefits of an independent evaluation were providing UNDP, donors, partners, beneficiaries, and stakeholders with:

**Evaluation criteria.**

**T**he final evaluation adopted the six revised evaluation criteria by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) - Relevance, Effectiveness, Coherence, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. Moreover, additional cross-cutting criteria such as Human Rights, Gender Equality and leaving no one behind, and climate change action will also be included.

The evaluation addressed the following main evaluation questions:

i.To what extent has the FSM Gender Machinery project achieved (or is likely to achieve) its intended objectives? What factors contributed to or hindered the project’s performance and sustainability of the results?

ii. To what extent was the FSM Gender Machinery project relevant and effective in mainstreaming gender in sectoral plans, strategies, and related structures, strengthening oversight mechanisms and capacity to ensure implementation of gender equality strategies and policy?

iii. To what extent the community-based income generation, safe water and sanitation projects were effective in building the women’s leadership capacity?

iv. What are the gender specific key considerations to be considered while developing the new project interventions? The guiding questions outlined below should be further refined by the evaluation team and agreed with UNDP and stakeholders prior to commencing the evaluation.

**Evaluation questions.**

The report details the main evaluation questions addressed by the evaluation and explained how the answers to those questions address the information needs of users.

* Relevance/ Coherence ▪ to what extent was the project in line with national development priorities, country programme outputs and outcomes, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the SDGs? ▪ Are the project objectives and outputs clear, practical, and feasible within its frame? Do they clearly address issues of women, men, youth and vulnerable groups?
* ▪ To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents (men, women, youth, other groups) and changing partner priorities?
* ▪ To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant projects considered in the design, including gender equality? ▪ To what extent were perspectives of men, women and youth who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the attainment of stated results, considered during project design processes? Effectiveness ▪
* To what extent were the project outputs achieved or not achieved, considering men, women, youth and vulnerable groups? What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the project activities.
* ▪ What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project objectives? ▪ To what extent have the results at the project outcome and outputs levels generated results for gender equality and the empowerment of women?
* ▪ To what extent has the project improved the capacities of national gender machinery to advocate for resource mobilization, gender equality and women’s empowerment, women leadership, institutional and policy strengthening etc.
* ▪ To what extent has the project contributed to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the realization of human rights? Efficiency
* ▪ To what extent were resources used to address inequalities in general, and gender issues in particular?
* ▪ To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, male and female staff, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes? ▪ To what extent was the project management structure, M&E system as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results? Sustainability and Impact ▪ To what extent do mechanisms, procedures and policies exist to allow primary stakeholders to carry forward the results attained on gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights and human development? ▪ Are there any financial, social or political, and legal risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs affecting women, men and vulnerable groups.

**II. Evaluation approach and methods.**[[1]](#footnote-1)

The evaluation gathered and analysed data to answer the key guiding questions articulated in the ToR of project.

The evaluation was framed around the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. The Final Project Evaluation was conducted through transparent and participatory processes with UNDP and project partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries, and were conducted in accordance with United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluations in the UN System.

The evaluation has been undertaken by an International Consultant. He used mixed methods of document review (a list of initial documents for review is included as Annex 2) and interviews (an initial list of key institutions and key individuals is included as Annex 3). It also utilised general best practices of evaluation to gather qualitative and quantitative data that focus on the purpose and objectives of the evaluation.

The TOR enumerate evaluation questions under evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability plus cross-cutting issues of human rights, gender equality, and conflict sensitivity. The evaluation collected data and analysed these data to address all these questions. The evaluator endeavoured to ask the most relevant questions to different interviewees based on their experience with project – and used answers to early questions to adapt questioning to the most relevant areas of their engagement with the project.

The Final Evaluation Report is a synthesis of the evaluator’s analysis drawn from a variety of documents as well as interviews with numerous respondents. Any quotations that are included to highlight issues do not include names or any other detailed descriptive information that could plausibly be used to infer the source of the remarks.

The TOR included a number of evaluation questions that the final evaluation evaluator analysed, adapted, and proposed additional questions, using also sub-questions to ensure that all areas indicated under the TOR were considered and covered. The evaluator’s report answered these questions using specific, objectively verifiable indicators generated for each evaluation question to assess the current situation, delivery of outputs and progress towards the intended outcomes.

Due to travel challenges, this evaluation was conducted as a home-based desk review with remote consultations and interviews:

**Document review**

The evaluation started with an initial review of the documents provided by the project. These include many different levels and types of documents, such as:

A;Annual working plan

2021 Annual working report

2022 Annual working report

2023 Annual working report

B.Project organigramme and project staffing list

C.Project Board meetings minutes

February 2023 minutes

D. Project progress and annual report

Quarterly 3 report 2023

Quarterly 3 report 20222

E. Field visits request and back office reports

Field visit mission report 2022

Field visit mission report 2023

F. Terms of reference to the FSM states

## ***Interviews***

The evaluator conducted semi-structured remote key informant interviews with the project staff, CSOs, the department of health, partners that have worked with the project. The evaluator also conducted interviews with key project partners, beneficiaries (where feasible) and stakeholders, including development partners.

The Key informants’ interviews have prepared specific interview guides to ensure systemic and uniform collection of data, asking (open-ended) questions and offering also opportunities for a more in-depth discussion about specific points related to project’s implementation and results. The evaluator discussed forward-looking opportunities and recommendations for the future interventions related to gender machinery .

The evaluators used an interview protocol and semi-structured interview questions designed to gather qualitative information. Interviews were conducted in English.

Draft interview questions and an interview protocol are included in Annex 4. They were initially tested with some set of key informants and modified and finalized. The questions helped to gather valid and reliable data useful for addressing the purposes of the evaluation and answering all of the key evaluation questions. Initial interviews showed whether the questions were well-understood by informants (testing the validity of the questions). The evaluator probed further in the interviews to check to see if the questions were understood in the same ways by different informants (testing the reliability of the questions). The Introduction (Annex 4) were used to explicitly ensure informed consent from all interviewees.

Interviews were used to gather qualitative information from key individuals directly relevant to the purposes of the evaluation. The evaluator followed structured questions from the draft interview guide with respondents to learn more from particularly interesting responses and to dig deeper into their experience with and perspectives on the Project and progress towards its outputs. The evaluator added other tailored questions to query key informants to elicit additional information towards the purposes of the evaluation and specific key evaluation questions.

Knowledge and experience with project also varied among respondents. Different knowledge and experience shaped which questions were appropriate to ask to which informants. For example, UNDP staff were likely to know more about the design of Project that CSO stakeholders did. Interviews focused thus more on design questions with project and UNDP staff than with informants from CSOs. Beneficiaries were not asked about all project activities; questions were asked only about the activities that they specifically benefitted from.

Interviews were conducted with individuals and potentially with small groups of similar people from the categories of informants and individuals listed in Annex 3.

The evaluator prepared brief interview notes, systemize, and brought together all data from the

primary data collection in the evaluation matrix.

The key informants’ interviews served to as tools to collect evidence-based, reliable, solid, and comprehensive information about the project. The evaluator had online interviews with the stakeholders.

***Group interviews***

In addition, group interviews have been used as a tool for interview with, national institutions and organizations that were involved including women association from Chuuk.

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## **Evaluation matrix**

The purpose and objectives of the evaluation and objectives of the project have been used in conjunction with the evaluation questions above from the TOR to create an Evaluation Matrix (Annex 4) that develops the methodologies for gathering objective, valid, reliable, precise, and useful data with integrity.

The Evaluation Matrix will be used to generate questions that can be used in further document review and interviews to gather these data. The evaluators will triangulate data gathered through these different methodologies and from different categories of informants to validate findings, identify best practices and to make conclusions and recommendations.

Fieldwork will focus on gathering data from UNDP staff as well as key partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries that have worked with the project. Findings will be used to examine the contribution of activities to the results of the project, with a particular emphasis on output level results.

The evaluators will implement a policy of informed consent for all interviews; informed consent will be solicited and obtained from all informants prior to using these methods (see Annex 4 Introduction for the text to be read and affirmed by all informants). The evaluator will make clear that all interviews will be conducted on a voluntary basis. They will guarantee that all information provided in discussions and interviews will not be linked to any specific person or organization and that all information provided will be kept confidential. Only general identifying information about organizations will be used in the evaluation report – and only when they insure anonymity. Interviewees will be given the option to opt-out of particular questions or the whole interview if they are uncomfortable or unwilling to discuss these questions.

The Final Evaluation Report will be a synthesis of the evaluator’s analysis drawn from a variety of documents as well as interviews with numerous respondents. Any quotations that are included to highlight issues will not include names or any other detailed descriptive information that could plausibly be used to infer the source of the remarks.

## **Data analysis.**

The evaluator has conducted an initial document review of the materials provided by the UNDP Project team to contribute to the Project Review section of the inception report above. Documents reviewed include the Project Document, work plans, annual reports, quarterly reports, newsletters, and other materials produced by the project. This review has helped the evaluator to develop an initial, comprehensive understanding of the objectives of the project, its development, the implementation of activities around the nine outputs of Project as well as information about outcomes in the wake of activities

Systematic document analysis continued during the evaluation. The data from document analysis was used to tailor specific questions to different informants (when appropriate) in interviews. During analysis, this data was also compared with that collected from interviews. Other documents are analysed as additional documents are identified during fieldwork...

The scope, complexity, and the period covered by the evaluation required an analytical approach deriving

from UNDG evaluation guidelines and international practices. The evaluator analysed collected

information and the Results Matrix through a causality model as a part of the overall contribution analysis

complementing it with appropriate analytical approaches.

The evaluator used a mixed-method approach to gather qualitative and quantitative information to answer

specific evaluation questions. The final evaluation based desk research on collecting and analysing the secondary data, primarily project related documentation, annual progress reports and annexes. The evaluator collected primary data through in-person interviews following well-established data collection tools, and gained a more in-depth analysis of the overall project implementation.

The evaluator applied data triangulation (for checking the results obtained from the research (desk analysis and primary data from interviews). The rationale for using this approach was to increase the credibility and

validity of the findings, and enabled to collect a more detailed and balanced picture of the projzct and its

results. The research experience of the evaluator enabled the evaluator to map out an explain the details

and complexity of the Project.

Limitations

The final evaluation included a primary data collection phase (comprising of on-line interviews), designed

to collect in-depth information about the project status outcome and respective outputs and complement theinitial findings from the desk review. This phase also enabled to identify links between different issues

impacting on achievement of the project outcome, and broader, the progress towards greater social cohesion.

However, this evaluation included limited time for primary data collection. The final list of key stakeholders for interviews has been agreed in cooperation with the project team, while the involvement and importance of the stakeholders in the project design and implementation development and implementation has been the main determining criteria. Although the evaluator discussed the related issues with the representatives of different authorities, some of the local counterparts were not in the position to reflect on the cooperation and results appropriately.

The project's effectiveness needed to be considered assessing the extent to which the Project contributed to

or is likely to contribute to progress towards “ FSM gender machinery "specific extent of the contribution" that the project made to this outcome.

. The assessment of effectiveness and performance of project relied on the indicators provided in the project Results Framework and the UNDP contributions through the reported results. The indicators were in the majority of cases relevant, informing the analysis of contribution to the outcome.

The effectiveness was also assessed considering other requirements from the ToR.

The assessment of efficiency has been mainly focused on management processes and structures; the evaluator has been analysing meeting minutes from different coordination forums and using interviews with someof the members of these various bodies at different levels. However, the evaluator based conclusions on theprofessional experience and judgement, and basic provisions of development assistance.

Sustainability and impact are ex-post measures and ideally, measuring these dimensions require a time-

period between two to five years after the completion of the initiative.

## **Evaluation Ethics**

The evaluation conducted in line with the norms and standards laid out by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in its “Norms for Evaluation in the UN System” and “Standards for Evaluation in the UN System[[2]](#footnote-2)”. The Evaluator respected also UNEG’s ethical principles as per its “Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation[[3]](#footnote-3)”:

- **Independence**: the evaluator ensured that independence of judgment was maintained and that evaluation findings and recommendations independently presented.

**- Impartiality**: The Evaluator operated in an impartial and unbiased manner and gave a balanced presentation of strengths and weaknesses of the policy, program, project or organizational unit being evaluated.

- **Conflict of Interest**: the Evaluator was required to disclose in writing any past experience, which might give rise to a potential conflict of interest, and to deal honestly in resolving any conflict of interest which might arise.

- **Honesty and Integrity**: The Evaluator showed 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**: The Evaluator represented accurately 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**: The Evaluator was 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**:

The evaluator respected and protected the rights and welfare of human subjects and communities, in accordance with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights conventions. Evaluator respected 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. The Evaluator ensured prospective participants were treated as autonomous agents, free to choose whether to participate in the evaluation, while ensuring that the relatively powerless were represented.

- **Confidentiality:** The evaluator respected people’s right to provide information in confidence and

made participants aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality, while ensuring that sensitive information could not be traced to its source.

- **Avoidance of Harm**: The evaluator acted to minimize risks and harms to, and burdens on, those participating in the evaluation, without compromising the integrity of the evaluation findings.

# **III. FINDINGS**

## **1.RELEVANCE**

**Assessment rating: Satisfactory**

Relevance is the extent to which the project objectives and design respond to beneficiaries, regional, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.[[4]](#footnote-4) This general definition of relevance is applied in the evaluation based on the goals and objectives of the FSM gender machinery project. Evaluation findings and conclusions are organized by the evaluation questions under this sub-heading from the TOR.

**To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in FSM?**

This final evaluation found that the project is highly relevant and contributes to the national development priorities, Sustainable Development Goals and UNDP country program. The design was ambitious and covers a broad range of issues and approaches. At once it seeks to address policy gaps, as well as tackling key capacity issues related the feminization of poverty, water, and sanitation some innovative approaches for behaviour and attitude change. However, the approach articulated in the design is likely to have a lasting impact at the national level and may assist in defining future gender programming and sectoral policies, particularly in education, health, social protection. The increased evidence and policy priorities can also assist in defining key issues at the sub-national level and to groups of women and girls considered vulnerable or marginalised. The project targeted 4 villages of Kosrae; 33 recipients of the Pohnpei EPA flush toilets and their families in Pohnpei and all the rural communities without water for the Pohnpei PUC well drilling project; Chuuk Women Council and the communities on the Lagoon islands in Chuuk, the 5 communities’ males and females in the state of Yap; the 12 outer-islands members (both males and females ) who will receive the 12 water purifications systems; and the 9 high schools and its students who had participated in the March scholastic games and those who will participate in the upcoming December scholastic equity game in Pohnpei.

The project activities specially those related to women empowerment are in line of women and men distinct responsibilities in FSM traditional society. ” *While men are traditionally in charge of fishing, planting trees and woodcarving, women are engaged in such activities as taking care of the family and children at home, climbing of breadfruit and coconut trees to gather food and drink, and manufacturing of valued traditional goods (e.g. baskets). Typically, FSM gender roles assign women to agricultural food production, seafood collection, and artisan crafts (e.g. loom-woven waist clothes, oils, and medicine).*

*Earnings from selling these crafts are often used to procure canoes, which are an important means of*

*transport. Meanwhile, men are usually assigned to aquatic activities and coconut tree cultivation[[5]](#footnote-5)’’*. The project contributed highly to the economic empowerment of women.

Interviewees and documents also noted ways the project was developed with an encompassing design with 2 outputs and the flexibility to respond to changing conditions.

The project is in line with United Nations Pacific Strategy (UNPS) Outcome 3 which by 2022 strives to ensure that the people in the Pacific, in particular youth, women and vulnerable groups, benefit from inclusive and sustainable economic development that creates decent jobs, reduces multidimensional poverty and inequalities, and promotes economic empowerment. The project is also in line with UNDP’s Sub Regional Project Document (SRPD) and will contribute to Output 3.1 of the SRPD, where the focus is to strengthen the national and local institutions to put in place evidence-based, risk informed and gender-sensitive policies, guiding participatory planning and budgeting processes that are aligned with the SDGs.

In line with the project recently implemented FSM Elimination of all form of Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) support, the project came up with a draft policy.

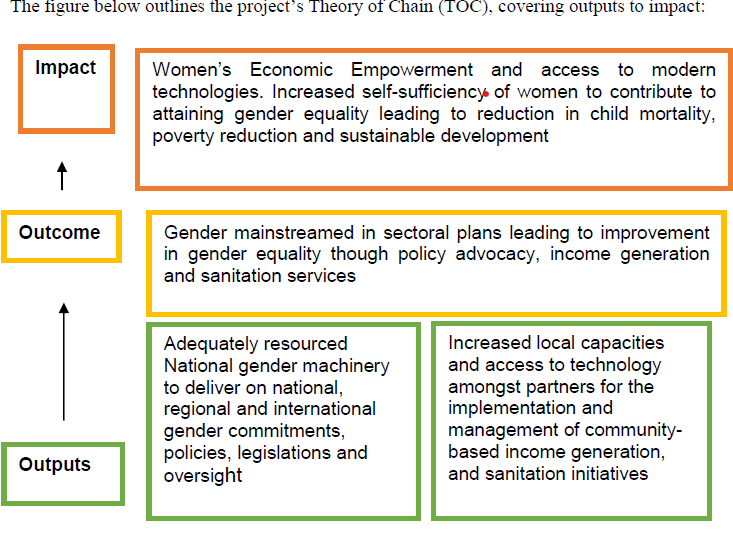
There is an ongoing review on the FSM Gender Policy through support from SPC. There was an assessment on the gender policy during the Women Conference in October 2023.

Finally, the Project’s relevance was also seen though its significant contributions to the global contribution to water and sanitation, policy development, women economic empowerment, cohesion between youth across the FSM through sports.

**To what extent does the project contribute to the theory of change for the programme outcome?**

The Theory of Change is that, If FSM’s gender machinery is strengthened to meet national, regional and international gender related policy and legislative commitments, implement, manage and monitor gender responsive policies, legislations, income generation, safe water and sanitation projects then it will lead to women’s economic empowerment, support the state level actors to increase access to safe water and modern technologies leading to reduced mortality rate amongst children below the age of five through reduction in cases of diarrhoea resulting in poverty reduction and sustainable development.

The project’s theory of change is to broad. It is difficult to perceive the outcome of the project. The figure presents as follow the the theory of change:



The TOC could be stated as **: If** FSM’s gender machinery is strengthened to meet national, regional and international gender related policy and legislative commitments, implement, manage and monitor gender responsive policies, legislations, income generation, safe water and sanitation projects then it will lead to gender equality .***Because*** women economic empowerment, gender sensitive legislation and adequate water provision and sanitation contribute to gender equality leading to reduction in child mortality, poverty reduction and sustainable development.

The **Assumptions are :**

* Government of FSM mainly Department of Health & Social Affairs remains committed to mobilizing resources for gender projects to meet all the national, regional and international gender related commitments
* FSM Government continues to coordinate across the ministries and departments at the national and state levels to implement, manage and monitor the project
* National and state level partners actively participate and contribute in gender related policy advocacy and legislative changes
* All the project related activities are aligned with FSM National Development Plans, sectoral strategies and gender policies
* Modern water purification, sanitation and waste recycling technologies are affordable and adaptable to FSM context with dependable supply of spare parts and after sales and maintenance services to ensure sustainability of services even upon completion of the project

For this assessment, the theory of change has provided a framework for understanding and evaluating how the various elements of the project fit into the wider change processes that it sought to achieve.

## **2.EFFECTIVENESS**

**Assessment rating: Satisfactory**

Effectiveness is the extent to which the project achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups. Evaluation findings and conclusions are organized by evaluation questions under this sub-heading.

**To what extent were the project outputs achieved?**

Progress has been made towards all outputs; however, some activities have not yet to be completed at the time of the evaluation. A key cause for delays was the need to formalise partnerships, through MOUs. The 2020-2021 period (Covid-19 pandemic), was a cause of the delay in Project activities implementation. . Another explanation for delay in project implementation was quarter 3-4 2023, when the contracted project manager was diagnosed with a medical condition.

All products reviewed as part of this evaluation were of a high standard. This evaluation was not able to assess the training and coaching materials.

**Table 1** below summarises the progress made towards the achievement of the project results, reviewing the output and activity indicators.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| GREEN | On track – 85%+ progress towards achievement of planned target for the year. |
| AMBER | At risk – 65-84% progress towards achievement of planned target for the year. Project team needs to identify particular measure(s) to overcome the low performance. |
| RED | Off track – progress below 65% towards achievement of planned target for the year. If two or more indicators are at risk, this scenario comes under serious concerns, and it should be escalated to the Management. This needs immediate attention with an action plan. |

Table 1

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Result statements** | **Indicators** | **Baseline** | **Overall Project Target** | **Target for Reporting Year** | **Progress on Reporting Quarter** | **RAG Rating** | **Comments on variations** |
| **Outcome 1 - Gender Mainstreamed in sectoral plans leading to improvement in gender equality through policy advocacy, income generation and sanitation services** | | | | | | | |
| ***Output 1:***    ***Adequately resourced national gender machinery to deliver on national, regional and international gender commitments, policies. Legislations and oversight*** | 1.1: # staff working at the national gender machinery | 1/Yr 2020 | 2/Yr 2021 | 2/Yr 2022 | Progressed in Qtr-4, 2021 with Project Manager on board. 2 members (*Stuard Penias, PM John Curley & Short-term Statiscian*) working at the national gender machinery |  | 2 members (*Stuard Penias* & Gender Project Manager (GPM)-*John Curley*) working at the national gender machinery |
| 1.2: # of gender equality legislations drafted and presented to the parliament | 0/Yr 2020 | 1/Yr 2021 | 2/Yr 2023 | No major progress for Quarter 3, 2023 |  | In process with states and GPM to further update progress more in Qtr 4 2023 |
| 1.3: % of increase in budget of national gender machinery | 0/Yr 2020 | 30%/Yr 2021 | 40%/Yr 2023 | No major progress for Quarter 3, 2023 |  | In process with states and GPM to further update progress more in Qtr 4 2023 |
| 1.4: # of gender policy review organized | 1/Yr 2020 | 2/Yr 2021 | 1/Yr 2023 | No major progress for Quarter 3, 2023 |  | In process with states and GPM to further update progress more in Qtr 4 2023 |
| ***Output 2:***  ***Enhanced access to technology for implementation and management of community-based income generation and sanitation initiatives*** | 2.1: # of gender policy briefs on women’s economic empowerment & income generation activities undertaken | 0/Yr 2020 | 1/Yr 2021 | 3/Yr 2023 | No major progress for Quarter 3, 2023Gender Project manager (GPM) to update before end of Quarter 4, 2023 |  | In discussions with states and GPM to further update progress more in Qtr 4 2023 |
| 2.2: # of people trained in income generation, water and sanitation improvement initiatives | 0/Yr 2020 | 15/Yr 2022 | 30/Yr 2023 | No major progress for Quarter 3, 2023.  Gender Project manager (GPM) to update before end of Quarter 4, 2023 |  | In discussions with states and GPM to further update progress more in Qtr 4 2023 |
| 2.3 # of people with increased income and access to clean water and sanitation services | 0/Yr 2020 | 30/Yr 2022 | 30/Yr 2023 | No major progress for Quarter 3, 2023.  Gender Project manager (GPM) to update before end of Quarter 4, 2023 |  | In discussions with states and GPM to further update progress more in Qtr 4 2023 |
| 2.4: # of water purification systems installed and in operation at the community level | 0/Yr 2020 | 1/Yr 2022 | 1/Yr 2023 | Gender Project manager (GPM) in the quarter procuring 15 units for Chuuk outer islands & in progress update before EOM November 2023 |  | In progress for Chuuk outer island state and GPM to further update progress more in Qtr 4 2023 |

**What** **factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended programme outputs and outcomes?**

Interviews with UNDP noted factors that impeded successes as the limited size of the project team. The leadership changes for a period made it difficult to keep or build momentum across the States programming. The limited resources relative to the national challenges made it difficult to expand the project.

The project staff underlined that COVID-19 pandemic have been impeded the project and the Country office adjusted to manage and work more remotely and through technology for networking, communication, dialogue, and management. This adaptation was seen as necessary, and not overly detrimental to project achievements.

The communications products produced by the projectwere also seen by UNDP staff, stakeholders as having contributed to spreading awareness of not only the project but also gender equality across FSM. The responsiveness of the project overall was seen as contributing to its successes, in that the project was able to provide flexible funding, TA, and leverage the experience from one State to another.

The government counterparts were also seen as effective promoters of the project through bilateral engagements with UNDP.

Interviews with CSO leaders/partners noted ways that the project supported activities had made great efforts to work with local organizations and supported local ownership, including by empowering local organizations and sharing best practices among them. Partners and stakeholders noted that the involvement of local authorities in the design and initial phase of national and community projects was a key factor in achieving project objectives. Their support was needed to promote ownership and capacitate stakeholders at community level, a key to successful outputs and outcomes.

For example, CSOs praised the ways the project had developed and supported the Chuuk women council’s initiatives that brought benefited to many women and their families and provided them necessary income towards their economic independence.

**To what extent has the UNDP partnership strategy been appropriate and effective? What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?**

UNDP staff of the project noted successful partnerships with the donor and CSOs.

UNDP already works with all the 4 States of the Federal States of Micronesia; the UNDP staff were able to use this established set of relationships that made UNDP a trusted partner, including for ministries, agencies, and offices, to help to implement the project initiatives.

The project support was seen as having advantages in bringing together CSOs and the government and broadening the dialogue between them. This was seen as especially important for marginalized communities and groups (for example in communities’ traditional practices and customs exclude women

In leadership position.

Work with community leaders was seen as a productive way to bridge between government and communities as well as to reach marginalized members of communities. Community leaders have the potential to be “above” politics or not involved – as well as the potential to be outside of clan and ethnic politics and division. Community leaders also have the moral authority, respect and trust and can be a way for communities to engage with governments on issues of inclusivity and gender equality.

The project was also seen as important in building ties and integration between women and girls across States. The collaboration and shared initiatives between women athletes were seen by interviewers as a very good example of how UNDP could work across the Federated States of Micronesia.

Partnerships with Sport organisations, women groups, either through the federal structures or through States were seen as valuable, appropriate, and effective in reinforcing the feeling of belonging and patriotism.

**In which areas does the project have the greatest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the project build on or expand these achievements?**

Interviews for the evaluation identified successes, but few interviewees chose to identify some areas as the greatest achievements. Stakeholders saw the inclusivity of the project as one of his greatest achievements.

For example the income generation outer island project managed by the Chuuk Women’s Council office (CWC), (Local Chips, Local VCO & Sewing projects), totalling 15 beneficiaries: composed by 94% women & 6% men.Even though there is no existing policy briefs, there are activities on women’s economic empowerment & income generation that are undertaken under this project which include the following:

1. Coconut oil bottling projects for the Chuuk Women Council (CWC).
2. Sewing project for CWC
3. Crochet project for CWC
4. Chips making project for CWC
5. Training Center for CWC

The training center is under renovation. That has delayed the starting of the training. Another greatest success of the project was the support to gender equality scholastic games for youth to foster national pride and gender equality. Two scholastics gender equality games were held in Pohnpei (one in March-April 2022 and one in December 2022), and the third one is ongoing since June 28th and will end on July 8th, 2023.

The interviewers underlined the expansion of water supply in Pohnpei to the outer communities who are not currently on the main waterline as one the greatest achievement of the project. In fact, the project supported Pohnpei to procure equipment and transportation for cleaning landfill & waste recycling services and related capacity building trainings/cash for work 33 flushed-toilet units are being implemented.

The project has worked with traditional community leaders in the four states of the federal, with a focus on improving women and girls’ access to and control over clean water and sanitation services[[6]](#footnote-6)

**In which areas does the project have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome?**

The procurement process was challenging for the timely delivery of some activities. For example, the State of Yap had received 3 Purchased Orders for two of its projects, but since the vendor were out of stock of their needed materials, POs are being withheld. New Purchase Order has been issued and pending supplier to deliver items. Ideal water purification system (15 units) has been identified with German company (FLADT), which ministry is following its procurement procedures to acquire before EOM October 2023.

Another example was the procurement of ecological water purification equipment and services. 5 WPS have been re-quoted & under DOHSA procurement process before international vendor was confirmed & shipping arrangement proceeds & ready before start of Quarter 4, 2023.

The training in some States like Chuuk, was delayed due to the ongoing renovation of the outdoors learning area. Some activities also not yet started: ‘’we have the material store in our office, but we do not have the number of crochets needle we want[[7]](#footnote-7) ‘’

The project coordination effectiveness and efficiency of project management was generally well received, and stakeholders appreciated the responsiveness of the management team. Apart from the limited coordination issues, management was extremely efficient in administrative and technical support issues. The project has few dedicated staff. In the absence of the project manager for health problem, the coordination was ensured by other UNDP staff who were overloaded with other tasks.

**What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project’s objectives?**

The project has been implemented through both direct implementation by UNDP pacific office with support from the UNDP Fiji.

This was recognized in interviews as not only essential for accountability reasons, but also beneficial to track and keep track of outputs and disseminate these results across the Pacific region. Partnerships with governments and international inter-government organizations by the project were successful under direct implementation (DIM) modalities and partnerships. Project staff were able to deliver on these partnerships through DIM that in turn partnered with national actors, including at time through national implementation modalities when appropriate.

Interviews did not identify alternative strategies that stakeholders felt would have been more effective in achieving the project’s objectives.

**Are the** **projects objectives and outputs clear, practical and feasible within its frame?**

The project’s objectives and outputs were seen in interviews with staff and stakeholders increasingly clear, practical and feasible within the time frame for the project. The project was ambitious from the outset with a federal focus and plans to focus on a set of epicentre at States level.

**To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents and changing partner priorities?**

The Project was designed with consultations with development partners, federal and states governments and UNDP CO. The project team has continued to report on and discuss project progress and evolving needs with federal and states governmental structures, regional organisations, researchers, and donors, including through annual board meetings.

The project worked to improve health needs and women economic empowerment. As stated, Honorable Tulensa talking about the attractiveness and opportunities offered by project:

*“The Health and Livelihoods for women require priority work in the upgrade of sporting facilities, which will encourage more participation of women, girls, and youth in improving FSM lifestyles*[[8]](#footnote-8)’’.

The project by supporting the sports activities of girls contributed to prevention against child obesity. The intervention relative to the improvement of the availability of clean water and sanitation services contributed to prevent the leading causes of diarrhoea and [child mortality among children under five, as identified by the World Health Organization (WHO)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/levels-and-trends-in-child-under-5-mortality-in-2020).

Through this comprehensive approach, the project boosted the engagement of women and girls to participate in decision making process in their communities and influence them. The project contributed facilitate income generation activities, enabling women and girls to become economically self-sufficient.

**To what extent have South-South cooperation (peer-to-peer learning) and knowledge management contributed to the results attained?**

The project, through the COP, towards peer to peer, South-South learning. The design of the project as an initiative for UNDP to connect Pacific countries, using its networks to share learning and experience as integral to the design. The ways that the project has managed knowledge sharing through the COP were seen as effective by participants.

Nevertheless, interviewees felt that knowledge management (KM) could be strengthened to better share information in a more comprehensive way within the community of practice as well as more broadly with partners and stakeholders around the world. KM is difficult for any organisation, as is determining how and how much to share. Searching for and identifying information through UNDP platforms in any field is challenging as the organization does not have a platform to make finding targeted UNDP-produced information widely available. For example, UNDP does not make all materials available on a access to water, poverty reduction a single searchable site through the internet .

The project is funded by the India-UN Development Partnership Fund Commonwealth Window that was established in 2018. This is a sub-window of the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, a facility within the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation (UNFSSC). It is supported and lead by the Government of the Republic of India and implemented in collaboration with the UN system. Allocation of resources from this dedicated facility for specific projects is decided by the Board of Directors of the India- UN Development Partnership Fund. Projects supported by this facility advance the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through concrete initiatives in response to cooperation requests made by other developing countries who are members of the Commonwealth. These include countries who are located on different continents and are currently categorized as least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), and small island developing states (SIDS).

**Which programme areas are the most relevant and strategic for UNDP to consider going forward?**

Interviewees asked suggested programme areas for UNDP to consider going forward. The evaluator has also analysed the effectiveness of programming above towards contributing to forward-looking recommendations. Most relevant, strategic programme areas for future programming consideration expanded on in the recommendations section below.

## **3.****EFFICIENCY**

Efficiency is the extent to which the project delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way. Evaluation findings and conclusions are organized by evaluation questions under this sub-heading.

**To what extent was the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?**

The ProDoc outlined a management structure based at the ministry of Health at Pohnpei. The ProDoc also provided for a project coordinator based at the ministry of health.

The ProDoc provided for a Project Board to meet at least annually, which has been done. Annual meetings have been held which has been necessary for accountability (to approve reports), planning (to approve work plans), and sharing of knowledge. Meetings have been used to solicit and discuss plans and output progress.

The revision of the Results Framework (RF), massive efforts to streamline States indicators. Responsibility for project implementation was divided between the UNDP Fiji team and project team based in Pohnpei working with government counterparts, civil society organizations, affected communities, and stakeholders, including other donor partners.

The project structure responded efficiently to the design of the project with a coordinator based at the ministry of health to customize the design of the project to local requirements, build relations of trust with Government counterparts and civil society partners, and to operate in the responsive and flexible manner already noted, constrained only by the need to respect budget envelopes provided by the regional team and to ensure a certain consistency of approach encouraged by regular dialogue between colleagues and project assurance activities conducted by the regional office.

Some stakeholders criticized the centralization of coordination of the project. The project activities covered all the 4 States but the coordinator was based in Pohnpei. He had to fly to visit project sites that situation impact the timely delivery of the project. The procurement procedures based on general requirement and standard operating procedure of UNDP for accountability purposes rather than specific to the project was seen as contributing to a general tendency of reluctance to rely on local structures for the implementation of activities, including in the acquisition of goods and services, etc. This was seen by interviewees as having a negative impact on the effectiveness of project in the field both in terms of time (slow delivery) and the quality of goods and services.

**To what extent have the UNDP project** **implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective?**

Project staff interviewed noted ways that implementation strategy and execution has been efficient and cost-effective in operations.

The project programming was viewed as having inherent efficiencies as able to share and scale up engagement across States. Federal programming was also seen as efficient as almost the only way to work with structures, communities and CSO coalitions that cross federal lines.

The staffing of the project was seen to be lean. In 2020, the project was supported formally one staff person dedicated to the project. He was supported by a finance officer and short-term consultant (statistician). The efficient work of staff was recognized in the extensive comments on technical assistance, and engagement that UNDP staff provided to stakeholders of the project. Partnerships play an important role in this project..

Table 1: Partners’list and responsibilities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Partners | Role and responsibilities in the project |
| The National Government of FSM -Department of Health & Social Affairs | Mobilized partnerships to implement the project |
| Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) | Ensure environmental issues are addressed |
| Pohnpei State Government – Dept. of Health & Social Services | Delivered on income generation, safe water and sanitation project |
| Chuuk NGO -Chuuk Women Association | Ensured gender policy advocacy and change |
| Yap State Government- Department of Youth & Civic Affairs | Delivered on the income generation and safe water and sanitation project |
| FSM Youth Council | Ensured policy advocacy |
| FSM National Women Council | Ensured policy advocacy |
| Contractor – | Trained on Ecological Purification System for the delivery and the implementation of the water purification project in the communities |

**To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?**

Project staff endeavoured to restructure the project in 2021 to be able to better articulate how the project was working towards and achieving outputs and outcomes. This was seen as a worthwhile investment that helped the project articulate, aggregate, and explain results, as well as aim for effects on outcomes.

The UNDP staff in Pohnpei and in Fiji worked to embed the project supported interventions in Micronesian national practices to sustain, expand, and extend these initiatives which would boost efficiency and effectiveness.

The project, in operating through States, national and community level, faced challenges at times with low delivery rates from some States. These challenges and issues existed pre-COVID-19 pandemic but were also worsened by restrictions on engagement and activities made by countries and UNDP to manage the pandemic and minimize community spread. Delivery rate challenges was featured in project board discussions and the project’s annual reports.

The project’s Output 2 activities were principally affected by the pandemic particularly those related to the policy briefs, income generation trainings and procurement of water purification system units were not fully and completed as impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, delaying the project activities. Those activities are highly important, and their objectives would be more effectively and timely achieved if there were sufficient in-person awareness workshops/consultations with concerned local gender stakeholders.

**To what extent did monitoring systems provide management with a stream of data that allowed it to learn and adjust implementation accordingly?**

Project staff developed good relationships and practices to use to monitor partner use of resources and programming. These monitoring systems were used by the project management for both management and reporting. The revision of the RF was done to support better understanding of project activities, results and data collection; this was the major revision made in implementation at the regional level.

Findings from interviews with UNDP staff, and the implementing partner and as well as review of M&E documentation suggests that progress reports including achievements, gaps and lessons learned in implementation have been submitted regularly by partners and staff implementing projects. Project staff use these materials for learning and raise detailed questions and issues for further development with implementing partners and other stakeholders.

Project staff conducted field visits to verify some activities and data and used these occasions for further dialogue and learning. During field visit, project staff engaged with implementing partners, community members, project beneficiaries and sites of vocational training and potential areas for project expansion.

UNDP staff organised field visits in all the four FSM states to ensure projects and periodic monitoring.

**How have project partnerships with development partners and civil society organizations enabled success? What challenges have affected partnerships and how might they be improved?**

The project developed partnerships with development partners at the outset for funding and worked to maintain these relationships through reporting through progress reports and quarterly bulletins, board meetings, sharing of research and dialogue in implementation. The project partnered with some civil society organizations for programming at the Federal level. The UNDP staff have also partnered with CSOs in developing and implementing a wide range of projects funded by the current donor and other funders.

Partnerships with CSOs have limitations shaped by the relatively short-term and targeted nature of project and its funds and CSOs’ needs for long-term relationships and flexible funding to strengthen the activities of CSOs and CSO networks. Work could be done to improve donor partnerships through even more dialogue and information sharing; however not all differences of opinion and emphasis are likely to be resolved in accordance with donor preferences.

## **4.COHERENCE**

**Some extent of coherence, coordination of activities and exchange of information between the project teams and other stakeholders has been generally established**.

The evaluator found that the degree of internal communication was quite good throughout the implementation period. The UNDP Office pacific office played an important role in promoting internal coherence. UNDP staff has generally established coordination of activities and exchange of information with other stakeholders. There was a good level of day-to-day information exchange, and interaction between UNDP team and the project’s partners. The focus was on a functional level of coherence and pragmatic exchange of information, although limited to national coordinators. The UN agencies highlighted the need for the improvement in the follow up phase, with the focus on more cross-country exchange of information.

The project is in line with United Nations Pacific Strategy (UNPS) Outcome 3 which by 2022 strives to ensure that the people in the Pacific, in particular youth, women and vulnerable groups, benefit from inclusive and sustainable economic development that creates decent jobs, reduces multidimensional poverty and inequalities, and promotes economic empowerment. The project is also in line with UNDP’s Sub Regional Project Document (SRPD) and will contribute to Output 3.1 of the SRPD, where the focus is to strengthen the national and local institutions to put in place evidence-based, risk informed and gender-sensitive policies, guiding participatory planning and budgeting processes that are aligned with the SDGs.

**The project has been flexible and responsive to stakeholders needs and participation during its implementation.**

Examples of flexibility and responsiveness during the project implementation were numerous; still, the partners highlighted the reaction of the UNDP staff over COVID19 pandemic. UNDP promptly mobilized capacities to design appropriate measures and ensure even though with a slight delay implementation of planned activities.

The Project has established and maintained an active dialogue with the main stakeholders under its outputs. Knowledgeable and experienced staff from the UNDP pacific office, according to partners, contributed to this process, ensuring well-targeted and flexible assistance. Decision making based on needs of beneficiaries has been some of the main tools contributing to responsiveness and flexibility during the implementation.

## **5.****SUSTAINABILITY**

Sustainability is defined as the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue. Evaluation findings and conclusions are organized by evaluation questions under this sub-heading.

**To what extent will financial and economic resources be available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?**

Resources to sustain the project benefits and to extend or expand projects at the States and community level remain limited. UNDP and partners and stakeholders are expected to identify and raise additional resources as well as develop follow-on strategies for the long-term tasks of and opportunities for intervention across communities to continue to build on this area of work and make the initiatives sustainable.

The ministry of Health and social affairs and other partners are expected mobilizing and additional resources to reinforce the access of people to water and reduce poverty. The Ministry of health was seen as supporting sustainability as the government institution will continue beyond the life of the project.

**Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project’s contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?**

Evidence is clear that project contributions 2021-2023, contributions of the project are clear in support for outputs and contributions to outcomes with UNDP CO, with their government partners in Micronesia, and with national CSO partners. National level sustainability however is always under potential threat from national level changes in countries, such as natural calamity.

Natural disasters and new break of COVID could jeopardize the sustainability of the project. The cyclone could destroy the project achievements like water and sanitation infrastructures. A new break of Covid could limit economic activities and increase the vulnerabilities of some categories of population including women.

Adapting to the COVID-19 Pandemic was generally seen as a hindrance to sustainability, as remote methods were harder for building sustainability (as well as effectiveness) by some CO staff interviewed. Since COVID made implementation more difficult, these interviewees felt that an extension of the project that could provide more time to support institutionalization and sustainability of national project activities and achievements was warranted.

**Do the** **legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes within which the project operates pose risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project benefits?**

The legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes within which the project operates in the Pacific region and through collaboration with Pohnpei UNDP office were not seen as posing risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project benefits in interviews with UNDP staff, community members and government counterpart. Other interviewees were not asked this question as this area was seen as outside their knowledge and experience. UNDP has appropriate country-based and regional agreements with regional organizations as needed to operate.

**What is the risk that the level of stakeholders’ ownership will be sufficient to allow for the project benefits to be sustained?**

Interviews with UNDP staff noted that stakeholders that had been engaged by the project largely retained interest in project initiatives and ownership of activities, which they expected would ensure that national frameworks and action plans supported by the project will continue to be relevant. The sustainability of community-based activities and stakeholders were largely seen as more questionable as these activities have relied on project-based funding that may not be continued after 2023 and the project’s end by donors or governments.

A successor project was seen as an important mechanism to build future sustainability by many interviewees. Poverty reduction and access to water was seen as needing a longer time to develop sustainability than the 3-year project have been able to operate.

**To what extent do mechanisms, procedures and policies exist to allow primary stakeholders to carry forward the results attained on** **gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights and human development?**

Results have been modest in gender equality and the empowerment of women. The emphasis on human rights has been important, but the approach of piloting a variety of efforts.

Sustainability is facilitated through various technical, institutional and financial measures: i) Gender policy ratification and legislative changes on issues such as domestic violence, sexual harassment etc. will greatly accelerate progress on SDG 5 i.e. gender equality ii) As highlighted earlier, FSM government with support from UNDP will continuously engage other UN Agencies and donor programming for scaling up gender equality, water and sanitation issues in FSM especially at a time when pandemics such as COVID 19 is shedding light on the importance and need for clean water and sanitation services in controlling the spread of the disease amongst the globally connected countries. Additionally, the lessons from this project potentially can be useful for other PICs.

## **6.CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

The evaluation, per the TOR, organizes findings and conclusions below under sub-headings of human rights, gender equality, and conflict sensitivity.

### **Human rights**

**How have the** **human rights-based approach ( HRBA) and considerations of equality, gender mainstreaming and rights of** **persons with disabilities (PWD) been incorporated into the design and execution of the project? How can these areas be improved going forward?**

The project staff argued that HR has been central to the design of the project, and that the project had been strong in using HRBA in implementation. The fact that the project to overcome cultural and other barriers that impede women participation in economic, cultural and political life of the FSM facilitated the focus on HRBA in the project, with partners and stakeholders, other partners. A HRBA has been a key part of the engagement to build the national constituency, including through trainings that emphasized the need for a HRBA in frameworks and practices to implement them with partners in relevant government agencies and ministries.

**To what extent have disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the work of UNDP’s Project?**

The project has focused community-based efforts on disadvantaged, marginalized. Interviewees underlined efforts of the project to reach diverse groups of vulnerable populations such as children and youth threaten by obesity with programming. Project activities at the community level have specifically targeted marginalized groups and provided them with benefits from interventions. For example, in Chuuk, the community-based activities targeted marginalized women and girls as men and boys seen as socio-economically vulnerable.

The sports initiatives gather young people from all background of the FSM. These efforts were seen as advancing the prospects of disadvantaged, vulnerable groups, including by members of these groups themselves. For example, participants in Kosrae vocational training believed that they had economic opportunities in the wake of training.

An interviewee underlined the necessity of crafting a comprehensive strategy to include people living with disabilities in the future UNDP intervention including activities specifically supported mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) that addressed populations with this disability.

### Gender equality

**To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?**

Project reporting and interviews with UNDP staff suggested that the project team has considered GEWE in a mainstreamed way as well as through a dedicated output focused on empowering women. The emphasis in the project has been on the 2 Outputs of the project.

As part of mainstreaming, the project required and worked to support the provision of gender-disaggregated data on beneficiaries. This was seen as weak by UNDP staff in the beginning, but concentrated efforts led to comprehensive reporting of beneficiaries as women and men, girls and boys. Project support for women was also seen as important to the inclusion of women into the development of national strategies and action plans for political participation and economic security.

Women interviewed noted they were invited and able to participate, and then shared the results of training and dialogues more broadly among community women. The main result identified was an end to not reporting rape and other sexual abuses as women were no longer ashamed to mention these crimes.

The project had an emphasis on including women and girls at the community level; An interviewer stated that in sports initiatives the project target mostly girls letting down boys. He found that approach very discriminatory for the advancement of gender agenda in FSM. Most of the direct beneficiaries of income generating activities, were women.

In the Chuuk , for example, support for soap making workshops reached out to vulnerable women in a context-appropriate way as it allowed women to gain skills and be economically empowered without interfering with their family and household duties.

**To what extent does the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach?**

Gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEWE) was seen as relevant to the project – and as goals that the project contributed to. The project contributed to GEWE through an approach that ensured that women were considered as the principal beneficiary and actress of the project implementation. Despite the difficult socio-cultural context for engaging women in many communities, the project has taken gender issues into account by initiating activities for the benefit of women and young people, by encouraging women and young people to participate in activities, by giving high priority to women and young people for support. The project adapts interventions to fit the gender context t in FSM.

The human rights-based approach was also seen as relevant to the project. A human rights-based approach (HRBA) was integrated into how the project worked. Specific activities funded by the project focused on HR. This included funding the income generation activities for women, the implementation of gender sensitive legislation and supporting women political participation.

**To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and empowered women, girls and youth as agents for development? Were there any unintended effects?**

GEWE has been a part of the project, but not a large part. Most of project targeted communities have multiple, widespread cultural barriers that impede the active and effective participation of women in political life, especially in economic live and sports. The project undertook efforts towards overcoming these obstacles through sensitization and capacity building. Interviewees noted that the project could potentially do more on gender equality by including both men and women;

The project-initiated activities that responded to the specific needs of women, youth and vulnerable children at risks of obesity and diarrhea. In Kosrae , for example, the project supported economic integration of women groups which benefitted vulnerable women through support for market gardening in targeted municipalities.

However, some of the Interviewed national partners expressed limited insight and knowledge of gender-

sensitive practices and were unaware of the links between gender equality and the project results; Although they stated that the project addressed gender equality, they could not justify or explain these

conclusions beyond evidence of equal participation in training programs or other events.

The project results framework included some gender sensitive qualitative indicators , but mainly related at output 1. The quantitative nature of most the project indicators did help to measure change. The Project did not include gender-sensitive qualitative indicators to measure gender transformation, lasting changes in the power and choices of women over their own lives. Further , according to project evaluation TOR[[9]](#footnote-9), national gender commitments were evident from the project’s funding of gender in sporting events such as the Pohnpei State's March Madness Basketball Tournament in 2022 & 2023, which involved women’s and men’s teams (gender equality scholastic basketball game) – encouraging the participation of female sporting teams in a pre-dominantly male dominated sport, which also provided a safe and controlled platform for young girls to participate in youth sporting activities. But according to partners, most of the project interventions targeted mainly women.

# **CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT**

Evaluation finding emphasize that the project has been a highly successful initiative to date that has built credible and productive partnerships and achieved initial outputs and outcomes. The project remains relevant to the FSM context. UNDP and development partners should consider developing a successor project to extend assistance to additional communities and consolidate the results achieved to date in countries where the project has already worked. The main findings are summarised below:

**A. Effectiveness**

The assessment rating: Satisfactory

**Finding 1:** Progress has been made towards all outputs; however, some activities have not yet to be completed at the time of the evaluation.

**Finding 2: There are some factors that have contributed to achieving programme outputs and outcomes.**

Interviews with UNDP noted factors that impeded successes as the limited size of the project team and the limited availability of project manager. The limited resources relative to the national challenges made it difficult to expand the project. The Covid-19 also negatively impacted the project.

Interviews with CSO leaders/partners noted ways that the project supported activities had made great efforts to work with local organizations and supported local ownership, including by empowering local organizations and sharing best practices among them. Partners and stakeholders noted that the involvement of local authorities in the design and initial phase of national and community projects was a key factor in achieving project objectives.

**Finding 3: UNDP partnership strategy has been appropriate and effective.** UNDP staff of the project noted successful partnerships with the donor and CSOs.

**Finding 4: The project has better achievements in some areas and some factors contributed toward the results.**

Stakeholders saw the inclusivity of the project as one of his greatest achievements

**Findings 5**: **projects objectives and outputs were clear, practical and feasible.**

The project’s objectives and outputs were seen in interviews with staff and stakeholders increasingly clear, practical and feasible within the time frame for the project.

**Finding 6: The project has been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents and changing partner priorities.**

The project worked for example to improve health needs, women economic empowerment, water and sanitation.

## **B.EFFICIENCY**

**Finding 7: The project management structure as outlined in the project document was efficient in generating the expected results.** The ProDoc outlined a management structure based at the ministry of Health at Pohnpei. The ProDoc also provided for a project coordinator based at the ministry of health.

**Finding 8: The project implementation strategy and execution was efficient and cost-effective.**

The project programming was viewed as having inherent efficiencies as able to share and scale up engagement across States.

**Finding 9. Adequate resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) were allocated strategically to achieve outcomes.**

**Finding 10 : Monitoring systems provide management with a stream of data that allowed it to learn and adjust implementation accordingly.** Project staff developed good relationships and practices to use to monitor partner use of resources and programming.

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**C. COHERENCE**

**Finding 11: Coherence, coordination of activities and exchange of information between the project teams and other stakeholders has been generally established**. The evaluator found that the degree of internal communication was quite good throughout the implementation period.

**Finding 12: The project has been flexible and responsive to stakeholders needs and participation during its implementation**.

## **D.SUSTAINABILITY**

Sustainability is defined as the extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue. Evaluation findings and conclusions are organized by evaluation questions under this sub-heading.

**Funding 13: Financial and economic resources were available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project.**

Resources to sustain the project benefits and to extend or expand projects at the States and community level remain limited. The ministry of Health and social affairs and other partners are expected mobilizing and additional resources to reinforce the access of people to water and reduce poverty. The Ministry of health was seen as supporting sustainability as the government institution will continue beyond the life of the project. But there were enough resources to cover the project expenditures.

**Funding 14: There were some social and political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project’s contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes.**

Natural disasters and new break of COVID could jeopardize the sustainability of the project. The cyclone could destroy the project achievements like water and sanitation infrastructures. A new break of Covid could limit economic activities and increase the vulnerabilities of some categories of population including women.

**Funding 15: The legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes within which the project operates do not pose risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project benefits.**

The legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes within which the project operates in the Pacific region and through collaboration with Pohnpei UNDP office were not seen as posing risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project benefits in interviews with UNDP staff, community members and government counterpart.

**Funding 16 : Stakeholders’ ownership were sufficient to allow for the project benefits to be sustained.**

Stakeholders engaged by the project largely retained interest in project initiatives and ownership of activities, which ensured that national frameworks and action plans supported by the project will continue to be relevant.

**Funding 17: Mechanisms, procedures and policies exist to allow primary stakeholders to carry forward the results attained on gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights and human development**

Results have been modest in gender equality and the empowerment of women. The emphasis on human rights has been important, but the approach of piloting a variety of efforts.

## **E.CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

The evaluation, per the TOR, organizes findings and conclusions below under sub-headings of human rights, gender equality, and conflict sensitivity.

### **Human rights**

**Funding 18: The human rights-based approach ( HRBA) and considerations of equality, gender mainstreaming and rights of persons with disabilities (PWD ) were incorporated into the design and execution of the project.**

**Finding 19: Disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the project.** The project has focused community-based efforts on disadvantaged, marginalized. Interviewees underlined efforts of the project to reach diverse groups of vulnerable populations such as children and youth threaten by obesity with programming.

### Gender equality

**Funding 20: gender equality and the empowerment of women were been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project.**

The project team has considered GEWE in a mainstreamed way as well as through a dedicated output focused on empowering women. The emphasis in the project has been on the 2 Outputs of the project.

But the document analysed and interviews conducted did not provide the evaluator with a gender-disaggregated data on beneficiaries.

**Finding 21: the project contributed to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach.**

The project contributed to GEWE through an approach that ensured that women were considered as the principal beneficiary and actress of the project implementation.

**Finding 22. the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and empowered women, girls and youth as agents for development.**

GEWE has been a part of the project, but not a large part. Most of project targeted communities have multiple, widespread cultural barriers that impede the active and effective participation of women in political life, especially in economic live and sports. The project undertook efforts towards overcoming these obstacles through sensitization and capacity building. Interviewees noted that the project could potentially do more on gender equality by including both men and women.

**Lessons learnt**

Some key lessons can be highlighted to inform future phase of project assistance include:

* Livelihoods can support beneficiaries effectively and lead to concrete gains in terms of addressing gender inequality. Support to vulnerable people help to build an healthy community and beneficiaries become more integrated into and contributing to the societies where they live.
* Respect for local cultural sensitivities has helped to build trust between the project and different communities. In several communities targeted by the project, cultural resources have reportedly helped to defuse conflicts between groups and helped with a consolidate social cohesion.
* Right communications is a must with the project team, donors, partners from government, women groups and state heads, so that no one is caught by surprise, and communications like press release or impact stories are important prior, during and after any project mission. In other words, the best way forward is to maintain project team & partners (UNDP, India, IP-DOHSS FSM National Government, State Project beneficiaries – on mainland & outer islands) communications online from August to December 2023, and ensure project funds are used according to PB agreed 2023 AWP, proper documentations in place for sound audit trail[[10]](#footnote-10).

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# **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on accumulation and analysis of key findings that led to the conclusions above, as well as through specific recommendations solicited by the evaluator from staff, partners, and stakeholders that are in accordance with this analysis, key recommendations of the evaluation include the following. Recommendations that follow from the findings and conclusions above are grouped into themes to support understanding.

**Conceptual Points**

*Develop a successor project*

UNDP should consider developing a successor initiative to further address gender inequality in FSM

*No cost extension of the project.*

Agree to a no-cost extension for 6 months to complete outstanding activities under the outputs of the project. Deliverables under them will be critical for the achievement of national and international gender equality commitments and in ensuring that gender equality remains a priority of the government.

*Follow an integrated approach at multiple levels*

UNDP should continue to follow the integrated approach that connects regional, national, and local endeavours towards having approaches that complement each other and lead to more effective approaches and stronger results by combining complementary PVE approaches and levels of engagement.

*Support publication and implementation of gender policy*. UNDP should continue support the publication, diffusion and implementation of gender statistics in FSM. UNDP’s long history working on gender equality with FSM government and the significance of a strong gender policy framework in achieving the SDGs makes UNDP a valuable partner in supporting the policy implementation.

*Continue gender equality Research as a key component of Gender programming, particularly local research connected to programming*

UNDP should work to amass evidence over the longer term that helps add plausibility to the programme model.

*Explore ways to broaden and scale up support to civil-society organizations and networks*

Project support to CSO networks was seen as an effective approach to build on; South-South collaboration and practice sharing was seen as effective ways to ensure ownership and support sustainability at local level that should be continued and potentially expanded in a subsequent project. Support to empower CSO networks was seen as particularly important towards increasing the transparency and accountability of state institutions in areas like gender equality. Developing ways to work with CSO networks may help UNDP continue to support the needs of communities particularly in the 3 States of the FSM where UNDP do not have a physical presence.

*Consider ways to build on programming approach to gender that considers masculinities, and digital communications*

Efforts to mobilize and capacitate civil society should be strengthened in the next phase of the project, to ensure that issues of gender and human rights observance are respected in preparation and implementation of national action plan.

*Develop an exit strategy in partnership with UNDP to outline future ways of working.*

UNDP has established strong relationships with line ministries and other institutions working on gender equality, to ensure that this work continues in the future with less support from UNDP further thinking and strategizing needs to occur. An exit strategy developed in partnership between the Ministry of health and UNDP would provide a roadmap to guide the national authorities.

**Operational Programming Points**

*Expand support for knowledge management and the Community of Practice*

The project should support networking and development of community of practice in the region, and underwrite research, data collection and knowledge management to allow better targeted interventions informed by global good practice. UNDP should develop open, clear accessible knowledge management platforms to organize and make available project-supported knowledge and products to a wider, broader audience – as well as regularly push out these materials to targeted audiences that can be consumers of these products and insights. UNDP should develop methods to follow-up on broad outreach with project staff doing additional work to promote and push the conclusions of research to other partners and stakeholders.

*Support systematic, multi-level resource mobilization*

The regional UNDP Pacific office should provide substantial attention to resource mobilization that COs can build on in mobilizing additional resources at the country level. Global and regional UNDP engagement with donors including private sector and foreign and development ministries could be linked to CO level engagement with Embassies and donors in their countries to systematically build ways to connect resource mobilization that delivers more funding at the country level across the Countries for gender machinery.

*Endeavor to expand pilots and Training of Trainers (ToT)*

The particular activities of the project have demonstrated impressive successes in institutions, countries, and communities. However, the challenge is to build on pilot successes to have a larger national impact on what remains a huge gender challenge. Activities under a subsequent project should emphasize strategies that support the replication of project successes and ways to amplify activity successes in gender machinery , particularly by expanding the number of individuals and groups reached through ToT methodologies, existing networks and partnerships.

# **ANNEXE**

## **Annexe 1: list of persons met.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| S# | Organization | Interviewee/Beneficiaries Contact Info |
| 1 | UNDP-SFSMGM Project | Elijah Mario, Program Associate Email: [elijah.mario@undp.org](mailto:elijah.mario@undp.org) |
| 2 | UNDP-SFSMGM Project | Patrick Tuimalealiifano, Project Manager  Email: patrick.tuimalealiifano@undp.org |
| 3 | Environmental Protection Agency-Pohnpei | Francisco Celestine, Chief (691) 320-1780 Email: [franciscocelestine83@gmail.com](mailto:franciscocelestine83@gmail.com) |
| 4 | FSM Department of Health & Social Affairs | Stuard Penias Assistant Secretary-FSM DHSA  Email: [steewiepenias@gmail.com](mailto:steewiepenias@gmail.com) |
| 5 | FSM Department of Health & Social Affairs | Sebastian Tairuwepiy Sports Coordinator, FSM DHSA  Email: [stairuwepiy@fsmhealth.fm](mailto:stairuwepiy@fsmhealth.fm) |
| 6 | Pohnpei Utilities Corporation | Leerenson Airens Chief-Water Services Pohnpei Utilities Corp (691) 320-6250 Email: [lairens@mypuc.fm](mailto:lairens@mypuc.fm) |
| 7 | Yap Tamil Women Association | Paula Mitmow Focal Point-Yap Tamil Women Association  Email: [pmitmow@gmail.com](mailto:pmitmow@gmail.com) |
| 8 | Chuuk Women Council | Corky Stinnette President, Chuuk Women Council  Email: |
| 9 | Lidy Jane Serious | Support Staff, Chuuk Women Council  Email: [lidyjimmy21@gmail.com](mailto:lidyjimmy21@gmail.com) |
| 10 | Mary Rose Nakayama | Chuuk Women Council  Email: [nakayama.cwc@gmail.com](mailto:nakayama.cwc@gmail.com) |
| 11 | Grace Poll | Chuuk Women Council  Email: [gpserious@gmail.com](mailto:gpserious@gmail.com) |
| 12 | UNDP-SFSMGM Project | Takiko Ifamilik, Finance/Administrative Officer  Email: [takiko.ifamilik@undp.org](mailto:takiko.ifamilik@undp.org) |

## Annexe 2 Evaluation matrix

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Questions** | **Sub-questions** | **Indicators/Performance Measures** | **Data Sources (primary and secondary)** | **Data Collection Tools** | **Data Analysis Plans** |
| **Relevance** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1.to what extent was the project in line with national development priorities, country programme outputs and outcomes, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the SDGs?  2.Are the project objectives and outputs clear, practical, and feasible within its frame? Do they clearly address issues of women, men, youth and vulnerable groups?  3.To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents (men, women, youth, other groups) and changing partner priorities?  4. To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant projects considered in the design, including gender equality  5.To what extent were perspectives of men, women and youth who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the attainment of stated results, considered during project design processes?  6. To what extent does the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach?  7. Are there other approaches which stakeholders recommend/identify as more effective on country-level or community-level? In which of the domains has UNDP had the most added value?  8. Was the Project’s Result Framework and complementary Regional Result Monitoring Matrix and sub-outcomes adequate to capture the activity results, quality, and impact of the project interventions? | How and to what extent has the Project responded to the national development? SDG and UNDP strategic plan priorities?  Did project initiatives adequately address the most important women empowerment challenges at the National or State level? Why or why not?  Did project initiatives adequately address the most important challenges facing national constituents and changings partners ‘priorities and needs? Why or why not  Was the Results Framework adequate to capture the results of the project? Why or why not?  Were and how were lessons learned from other projects used in designing the project?  How relevant was the framework presented in the ProDoc to initiating and implementing initiatives?  Do you see interventions on the State, national, or community level as more relevant in promoting women participation in public and political life? Why? | Project staff, UNDP, donor, partner, beneficiary, and stakeholder perceptions of responsiveness  Project staff and UNDP, perceptions of contributions to regional programme  Project staff, UNDP, donor, and partner experience with project development  Project staff, UNDP, donor, partner, beneficiary, and stakeholder perceptions of the relevance of the framework  Evidence for greatest relevance from Project, UNDP, Donor, partner, beneficiary, and stakeholder staff  Perceptions from project, UNDP, Donor, partner, beneficiary, and stakeholder staff on priority challenges, targeting at different levels.  Perceptions and evidence of use of research  Perceptions of relevance  Explanation of relevance  Explanation for contribution of project  Perceptions and explanations for limited relevance  Explanation for most added value  Evidence for ‘whole-of-government’ approach  Evidence for ‘whole-of-society’ approach  Evidence for efforts and change from attention to HR  Evidence for project efforts on women  Evidence for GE efforts  Explanation for strategic initiatives  Evidence for comparative advantage  Perceptions of alternatives  Evidence for successes of alternatives | Project Documents (Project planning and implementation materials, project reporting, other project documentation)  Interviews with Project, UNDP, partner, and donor staff  Interviews with beneficiaries and stakeholders  Survey of Project, UNDP, and partner staff | Document review  Semi-structured interview guide and questions  Survey instrument | Content and thematic analysis and comparison  Trend analysis of change over time |
| **Effectiveness** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1.To what extent were the project outputs achieved or not achieved, considering men, women, youth and vulnerable groups? What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the project activities.  2.What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project objectives?  3.To what extent have the results at the project outcome and outputs levels generated results for gender equality and the empowerment of women?  4.To what extent has the project improved the capacities of national gender machinery to advocate for resource mobilization, gender equality and women’s empowerment, women leadership, institutional and policy strengthening etc.  5.To what extent has the project contributed to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the realization of human rights? | How has the project contributed to the UNDP strategic plan and the SDGs?  How has the project contributed to national development priorities?  To what extent would you say the project’s output 2 ” has been achieved? What factors contributed to this level of achievement and its limits?  What areas would you say the project has the greatest achievements?  How can the project best build or expand on these achievements?  What areas would you say the project has the fewest achievements?  How can or could these factors be overcome?  How has the project responded to the needs of national constituents and changing partner priorities? Have these responses been adequate?  How has project management and technical support impacted activities at country- and community-levels?  To what extent have marginalized groups benefited from interventions?  How effective would you say the Project has been in leading global, innovative approaches on women empowerment?  What programme areas in women participation in public and political life do you see as the most relevant and strategic for UNDP to consider going forward?  How and how much did women, men, people with disabilities, youth and marginalized groups directly benefit from the project‘s activities?  Was the M&E framework suitable for monitoring and supporting project implementation? | Specific knowledge of alignment and contributions of project-to national priorities  Specific knowledge of output goals and activities  Explanation of contributions  Evidence for engagement of marginalized groups  Evidence for support to CSOs  Perceptions of adequacy  Evidence and perceptions for South-South cooperation  Evidence for knowledge management  Perceptions of global leadership of project  Perceptions of superior strategy going forward  Evidence for direct benefits to marginalized groups  Evidence for use of M&E framework, perceptions of suitability  Evidence for regional change, contribution of national efforts  Evidence for national and community change, contribution of regional project  Evidence for contributions | Project Documents (Project planning and implementation materials, project reporting, other project documentation)  Interviews with Project, UNDP, partner, and donor staff  Interviews with beneficiaries and stakeholders  Survey of Project, UNDP, and partner staff | Document review  Semi-structured interview guide and questions  Survey instrument | Content and thematic analysis and comparison  Trend analysis of change over time |
| **Efficiency** |  | Perceptions of efficiency  Evidence of efficiency  Specific examples of attention to costs, attention to maximizing results  Perceptions of economical use  Evidence for use of M&E data to inform adjustments | Project Documents (Project planning and implementation materials, project reporting, other project documentation)  Interviews with Project, UNDP, partner, and donor staff  Interviews with beneficiaries and stakeholders  Survey of Project, UNDP, and partner staff | Document review  Semi-structured interview guide and questions  Survey instrument | Content and thematic analysis and comparison  Trend analysis of change over time |
| To what extent were resources used to address inequalities in general, and gender issues in particular? | Was the project management structure efficient in generating the expected results? Why or why not?  Would you say the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective? Why or why not? |  |  |  |  |
| To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, male and female staff, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes? | Has the project used resources economically? Why or why not? |  |  |  |  |
| To what extent was the project management structure, M&E system as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results? | Did monitoring systems provide management with data that allowed learning and adjustments om implementation?  Was the project management structure efficient in generating the expected results? Why or why not?  Would you say the project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective? Why or why not?    What have partnerships with development partners and civil society organizations done to support project successes?  Have challenges affected the project’s partnerships? If so, how might partnerships be improved? |  |  |  |  |
| **Sustainability and impact** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1.To what extent do mechanisms, procedures and policies exist to allow primary stakeholders to carry forward the results attained on gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights and human development? | Do you think these mechanisms will carry forward the results attained on gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights and human development?  What mechanisms, procedures and policies do you know of to enable stakeholders to carry forward the results of the project? |  |  |  |  |
| 2.Are there any financial, social or political, and legal risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs affecting women, men and vulnerable groups? | Does – and if so how does – the project’s operational framework support or limit the sustainability of project activities and outputs?  In your view, is stakeholder ownership sufficient to support the sustainability of project benefits after 2023? |  |  |  |  |
| **Cross-cutting issue** |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Human rights*  1.How have the human rights-based approach and considerations of equality, gender mainstreaming and rights of persons with disabilities been incorporated into the design and execution of the project? How can these areas be improved going forward?  2.To what extent have disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the work the Project?  3.How effective has the Project been in advocacy to address the violation of women’s rights? | How has the Project incorporated a human rights-based approach (HRBA) into its design and implementation?  How can the incorporation of a human-rights based approach in the project be improved going forward?  How and to what extent have disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the work of the Project? | Evidence for advocacy on HR violations  Evidence for advocacy leading to fewer HR violations | Survey of Project, UNDP, and partner staff  Project Documents (Project planning and implementation materials, project reporting, other project documentation)  Interviews with Project, UNDP, partner, and donor staff  Interviews with beneficiaries and stakeholders | Document review  Semi-structured interview guide and questions  Survey instrument | \* Content and thematic analysis and comparison  Trend analysis of change over time |
| *Gender equality*    4. To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project?  5.To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and empowered women, girls and youth as agents for gender equality? Were there any unintended effects? | How – and to what extent- has gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?  How and to what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and empowered women, girls and youth as agents for change?  Were there any unintended effects from these GEWE efforts? If so, what were these unintended effects? |  |  |  |  |
| *Conflict sensitivity*  6.To what extent has conflict sensitivity been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project? | How and to what extent has conflict sensitivity been incorporated into the design, implementation and monitoring of the project? | Perceptions and evidence for conflict mainstreaming in design, implementation, and monitoring. |  |  |  |

## Annexe 3. Evaluation Final evaluation of Strengthening the FSM’s national gender machinery Project Pohnpei, Federated State of Micronesia TOR.

**Duty station:** Home based with travel to FSM for field mission

**Type and duration:** International Consultant (30 working days)

Background and context

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) pledged to bring gender parity to its population through ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 2004, the Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration in 2012 and by endorsing the FSM National Gender Policy in February 2018. Despite Government’s commitments to addressing gender equality issues, the progress has been slow. The lack of resources and capacity at the national gender machinery is one of the causes inhibiting the Government’s ability to promote, protect and fulfil the rights of 50,000 women and girls in FSM. There is a huge gender gap in the society with very few women in leadership and decision-making positions at the national, state and community level. Back in 2020, no woman had ever held a seat in national congress. This was also evident in the sectors that are critical to women’s and girls’ basic rights and the wellbeing of the entire family e.g. income generation, health, clean water and sanitation. Although, the constitutions of the country both at national and state levels do not discriminate against the female population, the societal norms is such that the roles of women and girls are often confined inside the house with women and girls spending majority of the time caring and nurturing for the families i.e. in domestic and unpaid care work. Even in the formal work setting or in sports, there are very few women.

In this context, the national gender machinery project was designed and commenced on implementation from 01 January 2021 and the project will end on 31st December 2023. The project aims to enhance women and girls’ leadership roles by engaging them and key partners in gender related policy advocacy [Output 1], working alongside traditional community leaders in sectors of importance to the communities in FSM’s 4 states (Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae, Yap). Concurrently, the project also works towards building women’s leadership through community-based income generation, safe water1 and sanitation projects which improves their agency, access and control over clean water and sanitation services [Output 2], which should result in Women’s Economic Empowerment, poverty reduction and sustainable development. Hence, the project has two major outputs or components.

**Output 1:** Adequately resourced national gender machinery to deliver on national, regional and international gender commitments, policies. legislations and oversight.

**Output 2**: Enhanced access to technology for implementation and management of community-based income generation and sanitation initiatives

Key achievements of the project:

Since the project’s inception in 2021, the FSM National Government -Department of Health & Social Affairs who delivered national, regional and international gender commitments, policies, legislation and oversight. The machinery recruited an FSM Project Manager, Project Assistant (based in country), and also the contracting of an international short-term statistician who compiled and completed a 2023 FSM gender statistics report. Further national gender commitments were evident from the project’s funding of gender in sporting events such as the Pohnpei State's March Madness Basketball Tournament in 2022 & 2023, which involved women’s and men’s teams [(gender equality scholastic](https://www.undp.org/pacific/press-releases/gender-equality-driving-force-fsm%E2%80%99s-scholastic-games) [basketball game](https://www.undp.org/pacific/press-releases/gender-equality-driving-force-fsm%E2%80%99s-scholastic-games)) – encouraging the participation of female sporting teams in a pre-dominantly male dominated sport, which also provided a safe and controlled platform for young girls to participate in youth sporting activities. Further to the project aiming to deliver national gender commitments and oversight, it has maintained (since 2021) successful implementations of national gender commission/focal points with line departments designations’ meetings, ongoing coordination with the states by local based project manager with UNDP on their proposed projects, coupled with successful periodic monitoring and evaluation in early December 2022, with 2 more planned oversight missions before the end of 2023.

Through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, the project was also able to offer an enhanced access to technology for implementation and management of community-based income generation and sanitation initiatives, enabling several women-based groups to participate in the calls for proposals, including Pohnpei *Public Utility Corporation* (PUC) which enabled expansion of water supply in Pohnpei to the outer communities who were not initially connected to the main waterline, allowing better water sanitation access to the Pohnpei state communities in FSM.

Though, slow progress of the project indicators has been noted on Output 2 (Enhanced access to technology for implementation and management of community-based income generation and sanitation initiatives), this is expected to go over 80% before the end of Quarter 3 of 2023.

Impact of Covid-19 in project implementation:

The project’s Output 2 activities, particularly those related to the policy briefs, income generation trainings and procurement of water purification system units were not fully and completed as impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, delaying the project activities. Those activities are highly important, and their objectives would be more effectively and timely achieved if there were sufficient in-person awareness workshops/consultations with concerned local gender stakeholders.

This evaluation is planned and to be undertaken towards the third quarter of this year. Based on the evaluation results, possibilities for second phase gender-related project proposal will then be developed further.

2 This is the entity that has overall responsibility for implementation of the project (award), effective use of resources and delivery of outputs in the signed project document and work plan.

Evaluation purpose, scope, and objectives

The project will expire on 31st December 2023 and the evaluation will assess the relevance and effectiveness of the UNDP’s implementation obligation during the project’s life and provide specific recommendations for the future course of actions.

The final evaluation is scheduled in third quarter of 2023 as planned in the UNDP 2023 Evaluation Plan. Based on the evaluation results, possibilities for another Phase of the gender project and related project proposals will then be developed further.

The overall purpose of this final evaluation is to assess the project results achieved and lessons learned from the gender project and provide specific recommendations for future course of actions, and will be conducted with great emphasis on: accounting for results (i.e., to what extent have the intended results been achieved); impact and sustainability; review progress towards the project’s objectives and outcomes; assess the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of how the project has moved towards its objectives and outcomes; identify strengths and weaknesses in project design and implementation; and provide recommendations on design modifications that could have increased the likelihood of success, and on specific actions that might be taken into consideration in designing future projects of a related nature. The evaluation would also assess: the project’s sustainability and recommend, as appropriate, further project proposal(s) & project's internal and external coherence and project contribution to Gender equality and women’s empowerment).

Scope of the Evaluation:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Unit of analysis** (full project/programme/ parts  of the project/programme; etc.) | Strengthening the FSM’s national gender  machinery Project |
| **Time period of the project/programme**  **covered by the evaluation** | July 2020 to December 2023 |
| **Geographical coverage of the evaluation** | Federated States of Micronesia |

The final evaluation will cover the full scope of the Gender project and full geographical coverage of FSM.

The evaluation will focus on relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the intervention. In addition, the evaluation will assess how the intervention sought to mainstream gender and social inclusion issues and application of the human rights -based approaches while mainstreaming trade related strategies, structures, and capacity in the national development plan.

Mainly, the evaluation should cover at least the following areas.

* Relevance of the project: Assess the appropriateness of gender in the project *design* particularly project’s objectives, Theory of Change, Results and Resource Frameworks as it relates to the achievement of project objectives, its linkages with the government’s national strategic plans, and problems it intends to address.
* Effectiveness and efficiency in project implementation: Assess the project’s direct and indirect accomplishments (results) including specific gender results and its contributions towards the achievement of the anticipated outcomes, including any gender related constraints on its *effectiveness*, and any unintended outcomes on gender.
* Impact of the project: Assess the quality of direct and indirect results such as mainstreaming of trade related policies and strategies, structures in development strategies, capacity enhanced to the target group, partnership and engagement enhanced, the functional

efficiency of the target institutions increased. Assess the specific impact of the project on gender equality both direct and indirect results.

* Coherence of the project: alignment with UNDP's core documents (e.g., UNDP CPD), national priorities (e.g FSM’s national development plan), and other related UNDP, UN, and Development Partner projects.
* Sustainability of the project interventions: assess the specific gender equality/gender mainstreaming positive impacts for sustainability and replication to other countries.
* Assess the management and implementation arrangement of the project and distribution of responsibilities within the given structure and national implementation modality, including financial and human resource management, monitoring and oversight as well as the *risks* and risk management strategies in terms of their contribution to the delivery of project results in accordance with the project’s log frame and Results and Resources Framework (RRF);
* Identify and examine key external factors beyond the project’s control that have contributed

to the program’s successes and failures.

* Document specific lessons learnt on gender mainstreaming in the design, implementation, management and monitoring of the project that will add value to similar projects in the future.
* Recommend whether to extend the project, including the justification and duration of the extension.
* Recommend options to improve any future designing of similar projects by the India/UNOSSC and UNDP.

Assesses the impact of the project on gender equality and include recommendations on gender equality and women’s empowerment cutting across effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and lessons learnt on gender equality and women’s empowerment.

**Evaluation criteria and key guiding questions**

The final evaluation will adopt the six revised evaluation criteria by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) - Relevance, Effectiveness, Coherence, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. Moreover, additional cross-cutting criteria such as Human Rights, Gender Equality and leaving no one behind, and climate change action will also be included.

The evaluation will address the following main evaluation questions:

1. To what extent has the FSM Gender Machinery project achieved (or is likely to achieve) its intended objectives? What factors contributed to or hindered the project’s performance and sustainability of the results?
2. To what extent was the FSM Gender Machinery project relevant and effective in mainstreaming gender in sectoral plans, strategies and related structures, strengthening oversight mechanisms and capacity to ensure implementation of gender equality strategies and policy?
3. To what extent the community-based income generation, safe water and sanitation projects were effective in building the women’s leadership capacity?
4. What are the gender specific key considerations to be taken into account while developing the new project interventions?

The guiding questions outlined below should be further refined by the evaluation team and agreed with UNDP and stakeholders prior to commencing the evaluation.

***Project evaluation* sample questions:**

Relevance/ Coherence

* to what extent was the project in line with national development priorities, country programme outputs and outcomes, the UNDP Strategic Plan, and the SDGs?
* Are the project objectives and outputs clear, practical, and feasible within its frame? Do they clearly address issues of women, men, youth and vulnerable groups?
* To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents (men, women, youth, other groups) and changing partner priorities?
* To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant projects considered in the design, including gender equality?
* To what extent were perspectives of men, women and youth who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the attainment of stated results, considered during project design processes?

**Effectiveness**

* To what extent were the project outputs achieved or not achieved, considering men, women, youth and vulnerable groups? What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the project activities.
* What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project objectives?
* To what extent have the results at the project outcome and outputs levels generated results for gender equality and the empowerment of women?
* To what extent has the project improved the capacities of national gender machinery to advocate for resource mobilization, gender equality and women’s empowerment, women leadership, institutional and policy strengthening etc.
* To what extent has the project contributed to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the realization of human rights?

**Efficiency**

* To what extent were resources used to address inequalities in general, and gender issues in particular?
* To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, male and female staff, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
* To what extent was the project management structure, M&E system as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?

**Sustainability and Impact**

* To what extent do mechanisms, procedures and policies exist to allow primary stakeholders to carry forward the results attained on gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights and human development?
* Are there any financial, social or political, and legal risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs affecting women, men and vulnerable groups?

**Sample evaluation questions on *cross-cutting issues***

Human rights

* To what extent have poor, indigenous and physically challenged, women, men, youth and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the work of UNDP in the country?

Gender equality

All evaluation criteria and questions applied need to be checked to see if there are any further gender dimensions attached to them, in addition to the stated gender equality questions.

* To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project?
* To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Did any unintended effects emerge for women, men, youth or vulnerable groups?
* Are there any lessons learnt related to gender equality?

Disability

* Were persons with disabilities consulted and meaningfully involved in programme planning and implementation?
* What positive impact/transformative change the project has on persons with disabilities?

Climate Change Action

* To what extent did UNDP actions pose an environmental threat to the sustainability of project outputs, possibly affecting project beneficiaries (men and women) in a negative way
* Were there any environmental risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?

Approach and methodology

The suggested evaluation approach and methods are indicative only. The specific design, methods and tools for the evaluation should be finalized and proposed by the evaluation team in the inception report, following consultations with the programme unit and review of the project related documents and reports. The method and tools should be appropriate and feasible to meet the evaluation purpose and objectives and answer the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The method and tools should be context-sensitive and adequately address the issues of human rights, gender equality and climate change action. The final evaluation should build upon review of the available project documents, field visits, interviews and meetings, surveys and questionnaire if deemed appropriate which would provide an opportunity for more in-depth analysis and understanding of the project. The evaluation team is expected to frame the evaluation using relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability criteria.

The evaluation employs a combination of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and instruments, and the evaluator is expected to follow a *participatory and consultative* approach that ensures close engagement with the evaluation managers, implementing partners and male and female direct beneficiaries. The evaluation team must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable, and useful.

Thus, the evaluation team is expected to work closely with the UNDP Country Office during evaluation process. The following data collection methods could be used, or the evaluator may propose the other data collection method in the inception report.

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* + **Document review -** a review of all relevant documentation, inter alia
    - Project document (contribution agreement).
    - Theory of change and results framework.
    - Programme and project quality assurance reports.
    - Annual workplans.
    - Activity designs.
    - Consolidated quarterly and annual reports.
    - Results-oriented monitoring report.
    - Highlights of project board meetings.
    - Technical/financial monitoring reports.
  + **Interviews and meetings** with key stakeholders (men and women) such as key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, United Nations country team (UNCT) members and implementing partners:
    - **Semi-structured interviews,** based on questions designed for different stakeholders based on evaluation questions around relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.
    - Key informant and **focus group discussions** with men and women, beneficiaries and stakeholders.
    - All interviews with men and women should be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity. The final evaluation report should not assign specific comments to individuals.
  + **Surveys and questionnaires** including male and female participants in development programmes, UNCT members and/or surveys and questionnaires to other stakeholders at strategic and programmatic levels. Online questionnaires can be developed and used in order to help collect the views of additional stakeholders (e.g. trainees, counterparts, partners, etc.), if deemed appropriate.
  + **Field visits** and on-site validation of key tangible outputs and interventions.
  + **Other methods** such as outcome mapping, observational visits, group discussions, etc.
  + **Data review and analysis** of monitoring and other data sources and methods. To ensure maximum validity, reliability of data (quality) and promote use, the evaluation team will ensure triangulation of the various data sources.
  + **Gender and human rights lens**. All evaluation products need to address gender, disability, and human right issues.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the evaluation should be clearly outlined in the inception report and fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, key stakeholders, and the evaluators.

Evaluation products (deliverables)

The outputs expected from the evaluation team is in the following detailed timeline and schedule for completion of the evaluation products, with detail of the length of specific products (number of pages). These products could include:

**Evaluation inception report–** A brief narrative of the evaluation methods used and the limitations. Describe the different data collection methods used. A detailed evaluation/matrix or framework (Matrix representation of evaluation criteria, question types and sources of data, data collection technique, including data limitations). The evaluation matrix could be annexed or included under the methodology section. This will also be carried out following and based on preliminary discussions with UNDP after the desk review and should be produced before the evaluation starts (before any formal evaluation interviews, survey distribution or field visits) and prior to the country visit in the case of international evaluators.

* + **Evaluation debriefings.** Immediately following an evaluation, UNDP may ask for a preliminary debriefing and findings.
  + **Draft evaluation report (within an agreed length).** A length of 40 to 60 pages including executive summary & annexes is suggested.
  + **Evaluation report audit trail.** The programme unit and key stakeholders in the evaluation should review the draft evaluation report and provide an amalgamated set of comments to the evaluator within an agreed period, as outlined in these guidelines. Comments and changes by the evaluator in response to the draft report should be retained by the evaluator to show how they have addressed comments.

Final evaluation report.

* + **Presentations to stakeholders and/ or evaluation reference group** (if required).
  + **Evaluation brief and other knowledge products** or participation in knowledge-sharing events, if relevant to maximise use.

Final payment is dependent on the approval of the report by the UNDP. It is understood that if needed multiple drafts may be required until the final approval.

Evaluation team composition and required competencies

The evaluation should be conducted by an independent international evaluator with the logistical support from project team.

The evaluator is expected to possess the following qualifications, skills, and experiences:

* + **Required qualifications:** At least a master’s degree in Public Policy, International Development, Development Economics/Planning, Economic, Public Administration, and Management and in any other related university degree; at least 10 years of experience in conducting/ managing evaluations, with programme formulation, monitoring and evaluation and Pacific/regional experience (at least 5-7 project evaluations completed).
* **Technical competencies:** Proven experience in implementing project evaluations, particularly of trade-related interventions. [Over 10 evaluations that the evaluation team leader has undertaken]. Good communications, presentation, and conflict management skills. Good report writing skills. Adherence to good evaluation practices and ethical principles.
  + **Technical knowledge and experience:** Possess gender expertise/competencies in the evaluation including experience of disability inclusion. Also has technical knowledge and experience in other cross-cutting areas such equality, disability issues, rights-based approach, and capacity development.
  + Good knowledge of trade, particularly AfT, and development issues.
  + Knowledge of, and experience in, applying qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods. Data analysis and interpretation skills. Knowledge of the relevant national context, policies, and stakeholders.
  + **Language skills required:** Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English. Fluency in spoken FSM state dialects (Chuuk, Yap, Ponphei, Kosrae), will be and added advantage.

The Evaluator/individual consultant should provide clear methodology, updated resumes, work samples, references shared to support claims of knowledge, skills, and experience.

Evaluator’ independence is compulsory. Individual consultant involved in designing, executing, or advising any aspect of the intervention that is the subject of the evaluation will not be qualified.3

Evaluation ethics

“This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’. The consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partners. Consultants will be held to the highest ethical standards and must sign a Code of Conduct upon acceptance of the assignment”.

Implementation arrangements

The principal responsibility for managing this final evaluation resides with the UNDP Pacific Office, Fiji. The UNDP Pacific Office will contract the consultants and ensure the logistic arrangements within the country for the evaluation team. The selected consultant will report to the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) which will comprise of two Government of FSM (DOHSA) representatives, at least one India/UNOSSC representatives and two UNDP representatives. The Evaluation Manager will provide technical guidance on evaluation and ensure an independent evaluation process, and that the policy is followed. The FSM Gender project manager, the project coordinator will provide required information, furnish documents for review to the evaluation team and provide logistical support. They will also be responsible for the final evaluation's logistic arrangements, setting up stakeholder interviews, arranging consultations, coordination with the Government, etc.

After signing the contract, UNDP will brief the evaluation team upon commencing the assignment on the final evaluation's objectives, purpose, and expected outputs. Key project documents will be shared with the evaluation team. The team should review the relevant documents and share the draft inception report before the commencement of the field mission or data collection. The team should revise the methodology, data collection tools and review questions. The final methodology and instruments should be proposed in the inception report, including the evaluation schedule and evaluation matrix that guides the final evaluation's overall implementation. The inception report submitted by the evaluation team should be approved by ERG prior to the commencement of the evaluation process.

The final evaluation will remain fully independent. A mission wrap-up meeting will be organized during which comments from ERG members, participants and stakeholders will be noted for incorporation in the final report. The draft report will be reviewed by the ERG, concern stakeholders and provide their comments.

The core consultant will maintain all communication through the Evaluation Manager/ERG. The Evaluation Manager/ERG should clear each step of the evaluation.

The consultant will be responsible for updating the ERG team on the progress of the evaluation on a fortnightly basis and deliverables must be approved as satisfactory by the ERG.

Time frame for the evaluation process

3 For this reason, UNDP staff members based in other country offices, regional centres and headquarters units should not be part of the evaluation team.

The envisaged timeframe of the consultancy is a total of **30 working days** spread over September- November 2023. This includes desk reviews, primary data collection, field work, and report writing. The evaluation team should provide division of works among the team members in the inception report.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Task** | **Time frame** | **Estimated number of**  **days** | **Payment** |
| 1 | **Evaluation Inception Report** Secondary research/desk review and development of gender-sensitive evaluation methodology & approach and detailed workplan - needs to be presented to &  approved by ERG before starting the field work component  Evaluation tools/questionnaires  design and finalization. (Home-Based) | Within 10 days of signing the contract | 5 | **20 percent** of the contract amount upon approval of the inception report |
| 2 &  3 | **Administration of the Evaluation**  (data collection in the field) as per agreed sample strategy with ERG, if required (Home- Based)  **Data entry, cleaning and Tabulation**  **Data analysis and presentation** of initial report of findings including case studies/success stories. (Home-Based) | Within 30 days of signing the contract (right after the approval of inception report) | 13 | **40 percent** of the contract amount upon approval of the data collection mission |
| 4 | Evaluation de-briefing meeting to ERG and submission of Draft Evaluation Report to ERG and  UNDP for review | Within 40 days of signing the contract | 7 | None |
| 5 | Submission of **final report** after incorporation of feedback from ERG (Home-  Based) | Within 60 days of signing the contract | 5 | **40 percent** of the contract amount upon approval of  the final report |

Use of final evaluation results

The findings of this final evaluation will be used to analyze the lessons learned and the way forward for the future design of the next phase of this project (if need be) and similar projects. Therefore, the final evaluation report is expected to provide critical and constructive findings and recommendations for future interventions.

Application / submission process and criteria for selection

It will be mentioned in advertisement with selection criteria.

**Annexes**

The following ToR Annexes will be provided to the selected evaluation team upon signing the contract.

* **Relevant Documents**: Relevant national strategy documents, Project Document, multi-year and annual work plan, Annual Work, Project Progress Reports, Financial Reports, Organizational Structure, knowledge products, baseline reports, monitoring reports, partnership arrangement, previous evaluations and assessments, UNEG norms and standards and other policy documents etc.
* **Key stakeholders and partners** to be engaged during evaluation process: A list of key stakeholders and other individuals who should be consulted, together with an indication of their affiliation and relevance for the evaluation and their contact information.
* Inception Report content/outline template including evaluation matrix
* Evaluation audit trail form
* UNEG Code of Conduct to be signed by the evaluation team

Evaluation report quality assessment check list

## Annexe 4 List of documents

A;Annual working plan

2021 Annual working report

2022 Annual working report

2023 Annual working report

B.Project organigramme and project staffing list

C.Project Board meetings minutes

February 2023 minutes

D. Project progress and annual report

Quarterly 3 report 2023

Quarterly 3 report 20222

E. Field visits request and back-office reports

Field visit mission report 2022

Field visit mission report 2023

F. Terms of reference to the FSM states

1. All aspects of the described methodology need to receive full treatment in the report. Some of the more detailed technical information may be contained in annexes to the report. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Standards for* Evaluation *in the UN System, UNEG, April 2005.* (<http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/> documentdetail.jsp?doc\_id=22). *Norms for Evaluation in the UN System, UNEG, April 2005.* (http://www.uneval.org/ papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc\_id=21). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation, UNEG, March 2008* (http://www.unevaluation.org/ethicalguidelines). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See the 2019 revisions to the OECD DAC evaluation guidance criteria originally developed in 1991 in “Better Criteria for Better Evaluation Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf> (accessed 1 November 2021) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. UN Women Fiji Multi-Country Office, gender equality brief for federated states of Micronesia, <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/UN_WOMEN_FSM.pdf>, 2022. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Gender equality and basketball in Micronesia [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Interview with Chuuk women Council. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. ## Honorable Tulensa Palik of the Lelu municipality is the current Governor of Kosrae State and an active gender champion in FSM, cited by Empowering Women and Girls in FSM, Strengthening Gender Machinery Project Focuses on Leadership and Advocacy, October 2, 2023 <https://www.undp.org/pacific/stories/empowering-women-and-girls-fsm>

   [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Terms of Reference (TOR), *Final evaluation of Strengthening the FSM’s national gender machinery Project Pohnpei, Federated State of Micronesia***.** [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Project report 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)