

# END OF PROJECT EVALUATION

# of

# the DIALOGUE FINANCING FACILITY (DFF): 2012-2013



# EVALUATION REPORT

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# LIST OF ACRONYMS

AWP Annual work Plan

CCSF Church and Civil Society Forum

CPAP Country Program Action Plan

DFF Dialogue Financing Facility

DRG Dialogue Reference Group

ECLF Ecumenical Church Leaders Forum

FGD Focus Group Discussion

HR Human Resources

ICT Information and Communications Technology

JLOS Justice Law and Order Sector

JOWOG Inter Youth Joint Working Group

LPC Local Peace Committee

MoJLA Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs

NANGO National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations

ONHRI Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration

UNDP United Nations Development Programme

VIVA Voices in the Vision for Africa

WiPSU Women in Politics Support Unit

ZEPARU Zimbabwe Economic Policy Analysis and Research Unit

ZUNDAF Zimbabwe United Nations Development Assistance Framework

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The facilitation of dialogue has been recognised as one of the three main priority areas in the UNDP Country Programme and Action Plan, as well as the ZUNDAF. The Dialogue Financing Facility (DFF) was established in 2004 by UNDP and the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) as a flexible fund to promote dialogue initiatives amongst Zimbabweans. The key objective for the DFF for the period under review was to support the transition process and the development of Zimbabwe, by strengthening existing National and Local community systems to enhance the role of dialogue.[[2]](#footnote-2)
2. In order to gain a good understanding of the work of the DFF in the period under review, there is need to revisit the context in the five years prior to 2012. Historically, elections have been a source of violence. Polarisation along political lines perceived or real pervaded every facet of Zimbabwean life. Given the economic conditions prevailing during this period, young people in particular found it nearly impossible to find gainful employment and spaces to voice their aspirations. There were feelings of exclusion from economic activities as well as limited consultation on matters of concern to them and how these could be addressed. Women are another group that to a large extent felt excluded from the mainstream economic activities as well as the political decision making processes. Recognising the need for Reconciliation and Healing ,the parties to the Global Political agreement (GPA) under Article 19 of the GPA, created the Organ on National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI) with a specific mandate to lead the process of engaging stakeholders in finding mechanisms of healing the nation and reconciling erstwhile enemies. If Zimbabwe was to transform itself into a united and prosperous nation again, there was need to address the challenges outlined above and find ways of re-building trust and restoring relationships. The UNDP and Sida identified Dialogue as an enabler in this endeavour.
3. The project was designed to be a flexible and catalytic fund to support initiatives that would help in the attainment of the stated project outcomes as well as contribute to the attainment of the ZUNDAF outcome of ‘Strengthened mechanisms for promoting the rule of law, dialogue, participation in the decision making process and protection of human rights and CPAP output of ‘Enhanced national capacity for conflict transformation, policy dialogue and consultative processes’.
4. Results of the evaluation reveal that the project made significant contributions to the attainment of the above through the strategic selection of its partners and the activities implemented. According to the findings, the partnerships forged among DFF partners helped in strengthening each other’s work and effectiveness. Looking specifically at the performance of the project in the period under review, the evaluator found that generally the project was successfully implemented as there is greater awareness on the utility of dialogue across different sectors of the country but most importantly at the local level.
5. Generally, the project execution was effective as evidenced by the high rate at which implementation targets were met as well as the quarterly reporting and at times review of activities. A key contributor to the effectiveness of the project was the close collaboration between the project management team and UNDP and the project partners especially in 2013. Partners found management accessible and willing to provide technical support and guidance as required. While good success has been registered by the project with some innovative initiatives started, the question of sustainability is one that proved difficult to answer for the majority of partners. Sustaining gains made at community level and ensuring local ownership was found to be weak and this is a potential risk that partners may need support in mitigating. Another critical element of sustainability that the evaluation probed into is that of sustaining dialogue activities or the use of dialogue as a tool for engagement among those organisations whose primary mandate is other than peacebuilding. Evaluation results show that the project has made a positive impact on the context, the organisations as well as the individuals that interacted with it.
6. Among the key lessons learnt during this process is that collaboration among DFF partners had a positive impact on enhancing partner activities and results. Communities, if given the space and requisite capacity are well able to transform their context and coexist peacefully. Young people in particular can make a positive contribution towards finding solutions to challenges affecting them if they have spaces and support to deliberate and find common voice in championing their cause.
7. While Dialogue is an invaluable tool in re-building of trust, mending relationships as well as aiding understanding of the other and their importance in this work, it is necessary to note that effective peacebuilding projects are a result of good design informed by deliberate and through analysis, clear articulation of intended outcomes and clarity on the relationship between cause and effect as well as ability to be responsive to shifts in the context.

# INTRODUCTION

This report serves to outline the findings, lessons learnt and recommendations of the end of project evaluation of the Dialogue Financing Facility (DFF); a joint program funded by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida). It covers activities implemented during 2012-2013.

1. **Contextual background**

In order to gain a good understanding of the work of the DFF in the period under review, there is need to revisit the context in the five years prior to 2012. Historically, elections have been a source of violence as the two main political protagonists campaign for votes.The 2008 elections in particular, were marred by unprecedented violence at the local level resulting in deep polarisation. To a large extent, day –to –day life was viewed through a political lens leading to mistrust among neighbours and at times relatives.

The uneasy relationship between government and non-state actors especially civil society became further strained as one perceived the other as being the enemy of the people of Zimbabwe. The prophetic role of the church during this time was replaced by its priestly role at times to avoid undue attention and at others to meet the needs of a hurting nation[[3]](#footnote-3). Polarisation along political lines, perceived or real, pervaded every facet of Zimbabwean life.

Given the economic conditions prevailing during this period, young people in particular found it nearly impossible to find gainful employment and spaces to voice their aspirations. There were feelings of exclusion from economic activities as well as limited consultation on matters of concern to them and how these could be addressed. Women are another group that to a large extent felt excluded from the mainstream economic activities as well as the political decision making processes. Campaigns were held by women’s interests groups to increase the participation of women in political competition and to ensure that representation of women in parliament was in line with international conventions. This exclusion played out at the local levels and was exacerbated by the patriarchal nature of Zimbabwean society.

The formation of an inclusive government in 2009, while a welcome development in that it brought in some measure of socio-economic stability, led to a new set of challenges, namely those related to policy direction. Potential external investors adopted a wait and see attitude and withheld the much needed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to stimulate the economy.

Recognising the need for Reconciliation and Healing ,the parties to the Global Political agreement (GPA) under Article 19 of the GPA, created the Organ on National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI) with a specific mandate to lead the process of engaging stakeholders in finding mechanisms of healing the nation and reconciling erstwhile enemies.

If Zimbabwe was to transform itself into a united and prosperous nation again, there was need to address the challenges outlined above and find ways of re-building trust and restoring relationships. The UNDP and Sida identified Dialogue as an enabler in this endeavour.

One of the key opportunities and entry point to address these challenges was to strengthen the capacities for dialogue – not as an end in itself, rather as a process of engaging with key stakeholders and facilitating the convergence of minds on issues of national importance. Dialogue in this case is therefore perceived as a tool for building relationships, nurturing development partnerships, facilitating the process of reaching consensus and also facilitating inclusive and collaborative decision-making. UNDP by positioning itself as an impartial and trusted convener and with support from Sida continued to support the strengthening of national and community capacities for Dialogue through leveraging the Dialogue Financing Facility. [[4]](#footnote-4)

# PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The facilitation of dialogue has been recognised as one of the three main priority areas in the UNDP Country Programme and Action Plan, as well as the ZUNDAF. The Dialogue Financing Facility (DFF) was established in 2004 by UNDP and the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) as a flexible fund to promote dialogue initiatives amongst Zimbabweans. The key objective for the DFF for the period under review was to support the transition process and the development of Zimbabwe, by strengthening existing local community systems to enhance the role of dialogue.[[5]](#footnote-5)

The DFF focused on dialogue processes and activities that would ensure a full participation of all, including the disadvantaged groups like women and youth, leading to four outcomes:

* + Outcome 1: Public participation in decision making on national issues;
  + Outcome 2: Strengthened processes that seek to support maintenance of peace, national healing and nation building;
  + Outcome 3: Strengthened national forums that promote policy dialogue; and
  + Outcome 4: Progress made towards improved international perceptions of Zimbabwe

The project was informed by the Zimbabwe United Nations Development Assistance Framework (ZUNDAF) and UNDP Country Programme and Action Plan (CPAP), where the facilitation of dialogue has been recognized as one of the key main priority areas. It specifically fits under the ZUNDAF Outcome of **‘Strengthened mechanisms for promoting the rule of law, dialogue, participation in the decision-making process and protection of human rights’**, and the expected CPAP Output of ‘**Enhanced national capacity for conflict transformation, policy dialogue and consultative process’.**

The DFF was implemented by UNDP through the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM)and worked closely with the following local strategic partners: National Association of Non-Governmental Organizations [NANGO]; Organ for National Healing, Reconciliation and Integration [ONHRI]; Voices in the Vision for Africa – Zimbabwe [VIVA Zimbabwe]; Women in Politics Support Unit [WiPSU]; the Great Zimbabwe Scenarios Project [TGZSP]; Church and Civil Society Forum [CCSF]; the Ecumenical Church Leaders Form [ECLF]; the Culture Fund Trust of Zimbabwe; Zimbabwe Economic Policy Analysis and Research Unit [ZEPARU]; Civic Education Network Trust [CIVNET]; Zimbabwe Economic Society [ZES].

# CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

As stated in the Terms of reference, UNDP is currently relooking at his support framework to peace building and sustainable livelihoods, with the aim to include support dialogue as a key component and cross cutting tools to provide a conducive environment for development in the country.

The purpose of the end of project evaluation therefore, was to assess the level of achievement of the project performance for the years 2012-2013, while identifying challenges and lessons learned, and to provide concrete recommendations on how to strengthen support to dialogue initiatives as an enhancer for development and peace in Zimbabwe.

1. **Evaluation framework**

This being a peacebuilding project, the evaluation, in line with good practice in evaluating such projects, sought to assess the extent to which the project has contributed to the promotion of peace in Zimbabwe and the enhancement of local capacities for peace and social cohesion through assessing the coherence of the activities undertaken, linkages across different levels and actor groups, coverage- the extent to which the project was inclusive in its implementation as well as its influence on the broader context.

In conducting the evaluation, the following challenges were encountered:

The first has to do with the issue of attribution. Given the nature of the activities that were carried out and supported by the project, it is difficult to say with certainty that a particular outcome has been achieved as a direct result of the specific intervention. This is further compounded by the fact that attitudinal change is difficult to measure and quantify in concrete terms and more so over such a short period of time.

The second challenge has to do with the limitations of available baseline data at the project formulation stage. Documents availed did not articulate the underlying theory of change that informed the design. Coupled with this is the nebulous nature of the intended outputs and indicators as expressed in the AWPs. This is not unique to this particular project but is part of the complexities of evaluating peace building projects in general.

The third pertains to the changes that have taken place in the context in the period under review namely the change in the political context as its impact on project activities and inevitably on the results.

The evaluation did as much as was possible seek to mitigate the negative impact of the above on the evaluation process and outcome. This was done through eliciting form the project management team and key partners information that helped unpack the underlying theories of change and assumptions that informed the design and implementation of the project.

Apart from inquiring into the attainment of stated objectives and intended result, the evaluation went further to look into the processes that were followed and the extent to which they enabled/hindered the successful implementation of the project and efficient utilization of resources. In peace building projects, process is just as important as the outcome.

1. **Evaluation methodology**

The evaluation was conducted using the following primary data sources and means:

* A review of all project- related documents availed.
* Face-to face interviews, using semi-structured interview guide, with key informants that were partners to the DFF, select beneficiaries of partner-implemented activities, project management team and funding partners.
* Focus Group discussion with representatives of the various Local Peace Committees (LPCs) in Nkayi district, Matebeleland North .

Stakeholders interviewed included:

* Project Team UNDP
* DFF funding partner Sida
* UNDP procurement and HR officers
* 80% of the Project partners 2012 and 2013
* Participants to some of the activities conducted by the DFF partners.

A schedule of Key informant interviews conducted is attached as Addendum One.

It was the intention of the evaluator to interview all the partners supported by the DFF in the period under review, however, three were not available namely the Great Zimbabwe Scenarios Project (GZSP) as they had wound up operations at the completion of their mandated activities, the Zimbabwe Economic Policy Analysis and Research Unit (ZEPARU) and the Zimbabwe Economic Society (ZES). Insights on the experiences and lessons from the activities carried out by these partners were drawn from reports shared with the evaluator.

The information received from the interviews and the FGD was analysed by means of clustering emerging themes form the transcripts as well as the frequency of those theme. Using a matrix outlining the various layers of inquiry, the information was then coded then interpreted to arrive at the findings contained herein.

1. **Evaluation criteria**

The project was assessed using the following criteria:

* **Relevance** - the extent to which the interventions carried out helped in addressing the real issues and needs of the intended beneficiaries as well as how it contributed to the attainment of the intended outcomes. A further point was that of assessing the relevance of the chosen processes in relation to the context particularly for grassroots level interventions.
* **Effectiveness** - the degree to which the intended results were achieved or progress made towards achievement.
* **Efficiency** - here the deployment of resources was analysed vis-a-vis the results achieved. In addition, the evaluator sought to explore whether the approaches used were the most efficient.
* **Sustainability** – whether the positive gains made during the tenure of intervention can continue to be realised and built upon without external support. Whether the platforms/ structures created will continue to function at the same level or better in the future.
* **Impact** – How the project has brought about tangible changes in the lives of the beneficiaries as well as the context. Both the intended and the unintended impacts were assessed.
* **Partnerships** - The extent to which the DFF partners collaborated in the pursuit of attainment of project outcomes as well as the relations between the funding partners, UNDP, project partners and other key stakeholders.
* **Coverage** – The degree to which the project was inclusive in working with partners from a broad spectrum of sectors, groups as well as the geographical location of its partners.

# RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The project was designed to be a flexible and catalytic fund to support initiatives that would help in the attainment of the stated project outcomes as well as contribute to the attainment of the ZUNDAF outcome of ‘Strengthened mechanisms for promoting the rule of law, dialogue, participation in the decision making process and protection of human rights and CPAP output of ‘Enhanced national capacity for conflict transformation, policy dialogue and consultative processes’.

Results of the evaluation reveal that the project did make significant contributions to the attainment of the above through the strategic selection of its partners and the activities implemented. This section discusses and interprets the findings of the evaluation considering each of the projects four expected outcomes:

* + **Public participation in decision making on national issues.**

Despite the lack of baseline information against which to measure gains made, it is evident from the results achieved by some of the DFF partners that significant progress was made towards the attainment of this outcome. Of note are the following:

* The extensive consultations carried out by NANGO in collaboration with the ONHRI on the establishment of an Infrastructure for Peace in Zimbabwe whereby communities had opportunity to input into the consultative process.
* The work of the GZSP and consultative workshops and meetings conducted to develop scenarios and disseminate the most desired one to move the country towards prosperity and recovery.
* The public policy dialogues convened by the ZES and ZEPARU.
* The participation of the JOWOG in the revision of the National Youth Policy launched in 2013.

Partners who participated in these processes spoke of the empowerment they felt at being able to lend their voice to such important conversations. Youth who were participants to one of the GZSP workshops in Masvingo commented that “ ***the workshop opened my eyes to what was possible and that youth can contribute to a new Zimbabwe***”

According to the findings, the partnerships forged among DFF partners helped in strengthening each other’s work and effectiveness. The ONHRI representative interviewed highlighted the benefit derived from partnering with ECLF, VIVA, the JOWOG, WiPSU and CCSF and leveraging these platforms to reach out to a larger population.

* + **Strengthened processes that seek to support maintenance of peace, national healing and nation building.**

Again, through working with specific partners, the project contributed to the attainment of the above outcome in the following ways:

* The financial and technical support given to the ONHRI in carrying out consultations on the establishment of a mechanism for national healing and reconciliation and the development of a draft policy and practice document on healing and reconciliation. Partners who worked with the Organ, shared experiences of the immense benefit derived from the partnership in terms of providing a linkage between a state institution and communities and how this demystified the Organ in the eyes of communities.
* The establishment of 52 Local Peace Committees nationwide under the ECLF project is an example that demonstrates success in the attainment of the above. These local level structures are a mechanism of preventing as well as resolving local level conflicts and in some ways empowering communities to engage constructively with issues that present threats and shocks to sustainable and resilient communities. It is hoped however, that efforts will be made to transfer full ownership of these to the communities.
* The ONHRI – CCSF EWER dialogue platform that resulted in the drafting of an EWER framework for Zimbabwe is another example of the DFF’s contribution to the attainment of this outcome. Whereas such collaboration would not have been imaginable a few years ago. It is probably the trust and confidence that the parties had in the UNDP and the DFF in particular that such a relationship was fostered.
  + **Strengthened national forums that promote policy dialogue.**

Various platforms covering a range of issues and sectors were established, namely:

* The JLOS working group to deliberate on matters pertaining to effective justice delivery in Zimbabwe. The DFF provided both technical and financial support to this initiative leading to the drafting of a JLOS policy framework document to formalise the establishment of the JLOS. At the start of the project, the sector was fragmented with each of the key institutions (Police, Judiciary and prisons) focussing solely on its mandate and processes with little regarding to how they impact on others in the Justice Delivery chain. Now, as a direct result of the project, there is evidence of greater collaboration, enhanced understanding of each actor’s role as well as the appreciation of the role played by civil society actors.

* In choosing to work with the youth sector, through its support to the VIVA ‘**No to Violence Campaign in 2012**’ and subsequently to the JOWOG, the DFF was able to harness the potential of young people and support them in finding entry points through which to table their concerns and aspirations. Interviewees shared the challenges they encountered prior to working the DFF. They told of how they were viewed with suspicion by their peers because of the peace building work that they were doing. There was little understanding of or willingness to work with VIVA especially among the politically active youth groups. Coupled with this, was the lack of a forum where youth could come together and deliberate on issues affecting them. The support provided by the DFF changed this. The creation of the JOWOG has enabled them to foster collaborative relationships not only among each other but with the Ministry of Youth and other Ministries that deal with youth-related issues as well as being able to engage parliamentarians. They attributed these gains to the technical support received from the project as well as the value of dialogue in building consensus on key issues affecting young people. In the words of one of them, “***the DFF made a big impact on the youth movement in Zimbabwe, JOWOG is now the leading National voice on for the Youth”*** The results achieved by JOWOG have helped them in attracting funding from other donors.
  + **Progress made towards improved international perceptions of Zimbabwe**

It was difficult to ascertain the project’s direct contribution towards this outcome primarily because of a number of factors. First, the formulation of the outcome made it difficult to understand which perceptions were being referred to and how international is being defined. Secondly, it is doubtful whether a project such as the DFF could in reality be able to change international perceptions of Zimbabwe. Third, it is difficult to measure shifts in perceptions let alone attribute these to the project. This notwithstanding, it is possible that the support given by the DFF to the ZEPARU led Dialogue series in 2013, on ‘**Improving the Doing Business Environment in Zimbabwe’** leading to a policy brief as well as the dialogue on **‘improving tourism competitiveness in Zimbabwe’** may have made an indirect contribution towards the attainment of the above. Another initiative which may have made some contribution is the leveraging of social media in the creation of an online dialogue platform ‘**My ZimDialogue’** by the Culture Fund. On this platform, Zimbabweans can share their experiences as well as dialogue on pertinent issues. The Culture Fund saw the platform as a means of sharing the Zimbabwe story with international community who visited the platform. However, measuring impact was a challenge.

1. **Project Implementation**

Looking specifically at the performance of the project in the period under review, the evaluator found that generally the project was successfully implemented as there is greater awareness on the utility of dialogue across different sectors of the country but most importantly at the local level.

* **Project Relevance**

Looking at the intended outcomes and objectives vis-a –vis the context, the project was found to be relevant. It was able to address key challenges faced by the different stakeholder groups at the National and Local level. The inclusion of the Arts and Culture sector represented by the Culture Fund, working with Women in Politics through WiPSU, the partnering with VIVA are worth noting. At the local level, the project worked with ECLF 2012 -2013 and CIVNET in 2012 both of whom played a pivotal role in addressing conflict issues at the local level and creating spaces for communities to identify and prioritise issues of importance to them. The CIVNET project in Bindura resulted in improvement relations among community members who had previously been divided along political lines. They were able to collaborate and raise funds to have impassable roads re-surfaced and to engage the local authorities on service delivery, particularly the provision of safe drinking water.

* **Project Effectiveness**

Generally the project execution was effective as evidenced by the high rate at which implementation targets were met as well as the quarterly reporting and at times review of activities. The rationalisation of partners in 2013 is good evidence of the same in that the DFF, responding to shifts in the context, reduced the number of partners. The successes realised at the local level give greatest evidence of the effectiveness of the DFF. The ECLF has capacitated over 34 000 individuals with basic conflict transformation skills and trained 303 Community Peace and Dialogue Facilitators However, it is necessary to note that all the partners cited the complicated administrative and reporting requirements as having contributed to delays in implementation of some activities. The dialogue platforms established at the National Level yielded mixed results.

A key contributor to the effectiveness of the project was the close collaboration between the project management team and UNDP and the project partners especially in 2013. Partners found management accessible and willing to provide technical support and guidance as required.

* **Project Efficiency**

A total of **USD 1,486 000** was availed to the project in the period under review. Given the number of partners supported and the results achieved, the resources were efficiently utilised. Some partners, by the nature of their work and constituency served, such as WiPSU that works with the Women Parliamentarians Caucus, achieved less for every dollar spent in terms of number of activities carried out and number of beneficiaries.

What the evaluation found was that most partners relied on the workshop approach in the implementation of their activities. When probed on whether they could have achieved the same result using other approaches which were not as costly, they remarked that this had not been given much thought but was possible in some instances.

* **Sustainability**

While good success has been registered by the project with some innovative initiatives started, the question of sustainability is one that proved difficult to answer for the majority of partners. Some, such as JOWOG and ECLF are still at the nascent stage in terms of organisational development but have demonstrated commitment and good results. While the DFF, through the technical support given them to develop their strategic plans has begun addressing this issue, more Organisational Development support may be required.

Sustaining gains made at community level and ensuring local ownership was found to be weak and this is a potential risk that partners may need support in mitigating. The question is not just one of sustaining activities but rather, building community resilience against external shocks and negative impacts of the same. The evaluator found this to be a fundamental weakness in the design and implementation of activities at the local level.

Another critical element of sustainability that the evaluation probed into is that of sustaining dialogue activities or the use of dialogue as a tool for engagement among those organisations such as WiPSU, Culture Fund, NANGO-CCSF to some degree and ZEPARU whose mandates are very specific. The evaluation found that in some cases, the size of grants received under DFF and the limited admin support given if any, was a disincentive. NANGO however, has leveraged successes gained through the DFF partnership over the years to attract bigger funding for its peacebuilding work.

* **Project Impact**

Some of the results already identified above demonstrate that the project has made a positive impact on the context, the organisations as well as the individuals that interacted with it. At the local level, experiences shared by participants to the FGD in Nkayi revealed that the work that was done has transformed Nkayi from a district that was characterised by a high incidence of political violence in the run up to the 2008 elections to zero cases reported in 2013. One of the councillors told of how police records show that the level of crime has significantly declined since the roll out of the CPMRT sensitisation training. Participants shared how they have been transformed at the personal and relational levels. A youth participant shared that prior to participating in the sensitization workshop, she had a negative perception towards people who were not from her ethnic grouping but now, she has learned to embrace them and has developed a desire to learn other local languages. Another councillor shared how, prior to the ECLF program, relations between her and her political opponent were very strained but that post the training, they have realised that they share a common identity and destiny resulting in them supporting each other’s programs and visiting with each other. Numerous other experiences of transformation and reconciliation were shared.

* **Partnerships**

This aspect was assessed at a number of levels starting with the partnership between Sida and UNDP in funding the DFF. Both parties were satisfied with the relationship that obtained in the period under review. The quality and frequency of reporting was highlighted as a major contributor to the success of the partnership. The participation of Sida in the field visits was highlighted as having enhanced appreciation of the impact of the DFF.

An interesting aspect of partnerships that was developed was that of supporting the HR and Procurement units within the UN and the UNDP, the evaluation found this to be innovative. Beneficiaries to the support confirmed, that the technical assistance given has made a positive impact. The procurement unit spoke of improved quality and catchment base among its suppliers of goods and services as well as better appreciation of procurement requirements and standards. Similarly, the partnership between the DFF and the Justice project is worth noting. Gains made through this partnership have already been highlighted.

Finally, the project was successful in paving the way for the creation of partnerships among its partners. There was evidence of collaboration in the implementation of a number of activities, for example, the WiPSU/ JOWOG, the GZSP/JOWOG, the CCSF/ONHRI and the ECLF/ ONHRI partnerships. The creation of the Dialogue Reference Group was another way of fostering collaboration and experience sharing and learning among the DFF partners and select dialogue and peace building practitioners.

* **Project Coverage**

Effort was made to work with a diverse range of sectors; however, one weakness is that the project failed to meaningfully engage a critical sector, the media. It has and continues to play a pivotal role in shaping opinion in Zimbabwe. As such, it would have proved a very strategic partner.

Another weakness was the failure to work at the regional level. Good work was done at the national and local levels and yet there are some region specific issues that could have benefitted from the support of the DFF. An example is the facilitation or creation of dialogue platforms to address the question of how best to revive economic activity in Mutare and Bulawayo regions.

While the project worked with WiPSU as a representative of women organisations, when one looks at where the majority of women are located in Zimbabwe as well as who among women is often on the receiving end of structural violence or the negative impacts of conflict, one finds the project wanting. Women may have derived more benefit if other partners working with women at the local level as well young women groups could have been identified. The existing partners could have been encouraged to explore the gender dimensions of the issues that they were engaged in. The CIVNET project in Bindura however did explore these through their analysis process.

# LESSONS LEARNT

1. Collaboration among DFF partners had a positive impact on enhancing partner activities and results. No one actor group or institution can single handedly do this work, there is value in collaboration, complementarity and sharing of experience and know how.
2. The flexible nature of the facility and the DIM allowed for innovation among partners and provided opportunity for the creation of dialogue platforms which may not have been birthed. Sustaining these under the new project needs careful consideration.
3. Communities, if given the space and requisite capacity are well able to transform their context and coexist peacefully.
4. Young people can make a positive contribution towards finding solutions to challenges affecting them if they have spaces and support to deliberate and find common voice in championing their cause.
5. Dialogue is an invaluable tool in re-building of trust, mending relationships as well as aiding understanding of the other and their importance in this work.
6. Effective peacebuilding projects are a result of good design informed by deliberate and through analysis, clear articulation of intended outcomes and clarity on the relationship between cause and effect as well as ability to be responsive to shifts in the context.
7. A responsive and communicative management team is a minimum requisite for the successful implementation of a project of this nature.
8. Providing for interaction between funding partners and project beneficiaries goes a long way in demonstrating the qualitative value that their support provides in transforming individuals and communities. Narrative and financial reports do not always tell the whole story.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings from the end of project evaluation of the “Dialogue Financing Facility 2012-2013” leads to the following key Recommendations:

1. As part of disseminating findings of this evaluation, a joint reflection exercise with partners is necessary. This would provide opportunity for implementing the recommendation made above to inform the design of the new CPR programme. Of particular importance would be the need to answer the question, what has changed in the context as a result of this project?
2. There is utility and value in joint context analysis and scenarios planning. Such planning could include the desired state of the context at the end of the project cycle.. It is recommended that investment is made in facilitating such a process with project partners as a way of enhancing the quality of their programming as well as ensuring common understanding and good coverage in terms of levels, actor groups and issues. The process should clearly articulate the intended outcomes and where the work of each partner organisation will be located as well as how it will contribute to the desired outcome Similarly such analysis needs to be conducted at the local level.
3. Deliberate attention needs to be paid to facilitating community resilience and sustainability of initiatives post- project support while factoring in conflict sensitivity in the manner in which this is done. A practical first step would be at the design stage where implementing partners would conduct the analysis with the communities and jointly explore priorities as well as explore desired results. This enhances local ownership and the community can identify a clear role for itself during the implementation phase as well as be already thinking of how the gains made from the intervention will be sustained. There is need to go beyond projectisation of peacebuilding and reconciliation. The entry point at the local level need not be about conflict. It could well be to support a process of identifying and prioritising key issues the community needs to address in order to enhance its quality of life. Dialogue can then be introduced as a process and a tool of choice.
4. Given that peacebuilding programming capacity and experience is still relatively limited in Zimbabwe, there is greater need for closer accompanying of partners in project formulation and planning incorporating sound RBM principles and conflict sensitivity. To this end, it is recommended that the capacity of partners in these areas be strengthened through a skills enhancement process along with project monitoring support. Additionally, partners could benefit greatly and be more effective in their work if their theoretical underpinning in dialogue, Conflict transformation and peacebuilding could be strengthened. UNDP could establish a roster of 5 or 6 key practitioners that it can contract both locally and internationally to accompany these processes on a need basis among its partners over the life of the new project. This way partners learn by doing and can see the benefits of good practice.
5. The experiences and lessons learnt in leveraging dialogue to foster greater effectiveness in other UNDP supported programs such as the JLOS, should be well documented and used in finding entry points to embed dialogue as a key tool in augmenting development work. A half-day process could be convened for other UNDP supported projects where the JLOS experience and benefits derived can be shared. Participants could then explore how dialogue could be embedded in their programs and what potential benefits they see.
6. It may be helpful in the new programme, to have Dialogue as a key thread and not have it subsumed under the broader CPR thread. The evaluator noticed that in the trainings that were conducted by all the partners, dialogue was a small component of conflict transformation training. Whereas, if dialogue is the approach of choice for Zimbabwe, both in terms of preventive and reconciliation work, then it stands to reason that the focus of the training should be largely focused on dialogue. Another reason is that it will be easier to continue the work of creating more platforms for dialogue at the different levels as well as sustaining the ones that have been established.

**ADDENDUM 1: Schedule of Key informant interviews conducted for the DFF Evaluation**

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| Time | Institution | Focal Person | Venue |
| Monday 7th of July | | |  |
| 09:00 | UNDP | Mfaro Moyo (GGM AAR) | UNDP Offices |
| 11:30 | Sida | Blessing Muchemwa  Magnus Carliquist | Sida Offices |
| Tuesday 8th of July | | | |
| 09:00 | ONHRI – UNDP | Gram Matenga (Programme Coordinator) | UNDP Offices |
| 10:30 | MoJLA – UNDP | Tafadzwa Muvingi (Programme Specialist) | UNDP Offices |
| Wednesday 9th of July | | | |
| 11:00 | Women in Politics Support Unit (WiPSU) | Patricia Muwandi | WiPSU Offices |
| Thursday 10th of July | | | |
| 09:00 | JOWOG | Nqobile Moyo (Coordinator) | UNDP Offices |
| 11:00 | Culture Fund | Chipo Muvezwa | Culture Fund Offices |
| 14:00 | ECLF | Rev. Cele  Bishop Ambrose Moyo | UNDP Offices |
| 15:30 | UNDP M&E Specialist | Sophie Conteh | UNDP Offices |
| Monday 14th of July | | | |
| 09:00 | UNDP Human Resources | Rugare Mukanganise  Bertha Charowedza | UNDP Offices |
| 10:00 | UNDP | Cecile Pentori | UNDP Offices |
| 14:30 | NANGO - CCSF | Machinda Marongwe | NANGO Offices |
| Friday 18th of July | | | |
| 14:00 | NAYO (members of JOWOG) | Misheck Gondo | NAYO Offices |
| Monday 21st of July | | | |
| 10:00 | CIVNET | Wellington Mbofana | CIVNET Offices |
| Tuesday 22nd and Wednesday 23rd of July | | | |
| All day | Nkayi LPC Visit | ECLF Team | Nkayi - Bulawayo |
| Friday 25th of July | | | |
| 10:00 | UNDP Procurement | Prisca Mazise  Melody Saineti  Jairos Chikakayi | UNDP Offices |

1. The Culture Fund, CIVNET, JLOS,NANGO-CCSF, ONHRI, ECLF, JOWOG, WiPSU, UNDP Zimbabwe Human Resources and Procurement Units [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. DFF Programme Document, 2011-2012, p.4 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. In peacebuilding theory, the church can play multiple roles in this work. The one being that of the prophet, who speaks truth to power and points out the wrongs in society and how they can be rectified. The other, is that of healing the wounds of the nation. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. DFF Annual Report 2013 p.4 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. DFF Programme Document, 2011-2012, p.4 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)