

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PROMOTING ANGOLAN WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CSOS 2012-2015

SUBMITTED TO

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This report is the result of the evaluation of the programme “Promoting Angolan Women’s Empowerment through CSOs”, conducted by an external and independent team from A3S, between July and September 2015.

This programme ran from 2012-2015, as the result of a tripartite partnership between the Embassy of Norway, United Nations Development Programme Angola and the Ministry of Family and Women Promotion and had as a general objective to contribute for awareness and consciousness of women's rights in their political, economic and social dimensions, with a specific focus on the issues of domestic violence and promotion of gender equality.

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the main results of the programme, the achievement of the objectives, the sustainability of the actions and results, as well as drawing up recommendations for future intervention in the area of gender equality in Angola.

The evaluation considered the following aspects as essential assessment criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The methodological strategies applied in the evaluation process are based on triangulation and sources of information, with an eclectic methodology centred on the following techniques: (i) document analysis; (ii) individual and/or collective semi-structured interviews, (iii) group dynamics and (iv) survey. Six cases studies of the funded project were carried out, whilst being selected according to criteria of diversity and representativeness for the following parameters: the nature of the actions and target audiences involved; the domain of policy priority; the field of political priorities in which the activities fall under; to the year of implementation and to the province.

The programme has achieved a high level of effectiveness, having fulfilled its overall objective of increasing the awareness and sensitisation on the domestic violence and the rights of women in Angola, in line with national policy guidelines.

A large number of direct and indirect beneficiaries was covered in awareness-raising activities on domestic violence and the economic, social and political rights of women. Through the projects surveyed in the evaluation process, we have identified positive qualitative result indicators, such as:

- The participants recognised the usefulness of the educational and awareness-raising activities (lectures, discussions and conferences) in both cross-cutting issues (Human Rights, Democracy, Civic Education) as well as in GE-specific themes (women's rights, electoral procedures, law of domestic violence).
- High number of participants in the activities of projects, which acknowledge having acquired basic knowledge (on domestic violence, women's rights....)
- Groups of women who partook in the projects that acknowledge improvement regarding the level of personal, economic and political development, namely: self-esteem, increase in the participation in decision-making, greater ability to contact with other people....
- Production of materials with replication capacity (radio programmes, brochures, theatre plays, comic books...)

The programme has also achieved relevant results in terms of the contribution for the training of women's groups and CSOs. A large number of beneficiaries were equally covered, and several positive result indicators were identified (which deserves a reflection on the potential for intensification in the next cycle of the programme, 2015/18):

-Individuals, groups and communities, which benefited from economic training actions (training in business management, financial support for their micro-businesses; support to collective initiatives of economic productions – acquisition of equipment by groups of women);

-Trained strategic audiences with ability to multiply knowledge: leaders of organisations and communities, educational agents; agents of other sectors of social intervention (health – doctors and nurses; justice – police officers, judges and lawyers); public agents; representatives of municipalities and MINFAMU); human resources of CSOs.

- CSOs acknowledge bigger collaboration with the general community (and with women belonging to that particular community), with the central government through MINFAMU, and with the administration of municipalities;

- Created new associations (of women and/or others)

- Created new municipal and inter-sectorial networks (of women and/or others)

- Created new services to answer basic needs of the population in the areas of domestic violence (family counselling centres, shelters)

The specific objective, to evaluate and follow up the policies through studies, reached a low level of effectiveness, being the one which registered the lowest number of activities, both in terms of number of applications and of implementation.

The table that follows systematises the critical factors, which on the one hand explain the high levels of effectiveness of the project and, on the other hand, the factors that weakened the chances for a greater efficiency and sustainability in the Angolan context.

Project/management cycle	Success factors	Improvement factors
Diagnosis and strategic planning	+ Aligned approach with the key stakeholders and with national policies; exploratory and prudent regarding the capability of the CSOs. + Answer of the CSOs by presenting and implementing adequate projects	- Lack of specific knowledge and skills of human resources in the area of GE in the national context
Executive and operational management	+ Strict budget guidance of the projects by UNDP and significant improvement in management + Good diagnosis practices, mobilisation of networks and other resources of replication strategies on the CSOs' part	- Necessity of strengthening the institutional capacity of the CSOs (difficulties of projects in monitoring the activities on the ground, on monitoring and evaluation)
Monitoring and evaluation	+ Strengthening of the capacity, credibility and legitimacy of the UNDP and of the programme in the context of GE in Angola + Incorporation of changes (dispersed and intangible assets) in terms of personal development, organisational networks of actors and services	- Access to formative offer with an effective impact on training of human resources (more participatory formats, methods and results) both in the specific area of GE as in the project cycle or in social research instruments - Production and validation of the quality of pedagogical products and of sensitising to mass dissemination (for instance, radio programmes and pedagogical materials)

There are three roles that the programme played with high relevance and effectiveness in the context of Gender Equality (GE) in Angola: the stimulus to the intervention of the CSOs, the fund manager and the training of CSOs. There are 2 additional roles that the programme may have in

a more intentional manner, with positive effects in stimulating the intervention of CSOs and allowing for sustainability in the advancement of GE: the role of external validator and the role of valorisation of good practices. The guidelines and suggestions that ensue follow the cycle of planning, management and evaluation of the programme and include an analysis of the further development of these phases. They should be understood as a contribution and an invitation for reflection on how to increase the effectiveness of the programme in the three-year period of 2015/2018.

I. Strategic Management

In order to boost the relevance of the programme's design we have 4 recommendations.

1. To bet on the qualification of human resources in the field of GE:

- To qualify the technical workers involved in the operational and strategic management of the programme;
- To include specific courses/modules in the CSOs' training plan, which is already planned for the 2nd cycle of the programme;
- To allocate some of the programme's resources to gain access to GE trainers and specialised professionals, capable of training and qualifying multiplying agents in the Angolan context.

2. To follow the evolution of the national context and the emergence of new stakeholders:

- By analysing the internal and external evaluation data for this programme, as well as the new diagnosis data on the national context and rethinking the strategic goals for the 2nd cycle.
- By developing a wide analysis of GE field stakeholders who currently stand out in Angola. For instance, the PAANE II – Support Programme to Non-State Actors, funded by the EU in the scope of the 10th EDF (European Development Fund), constituted one of the programmes with intervention in the last 3 years, which mobilised, like the programme being analysed, an important set of strategic actors. It is worthwhile to explore, in a more systematic and strategic manner, who are the national and regional actors.
- To debate the relevance and opportunity to create consultation forums with other national stakeholders, besides those represented in the Evaluation Committee, and sharing the knowledge and articulating intervention strategies.

3. To refocus the programme's strategy according to more straightforward result indicators:

- To reconsider the type of project to be funded.

To consider valuing, in the objectives and eligible activities in requests for funding by the CSOs to UNDP, projects that emphasise the objectives of strengthening the awareness and training of stakeholders and multiplier agents.

To ensure, in the application stage and in accordance with the limitations described above, the framework conditions for the implementation and quality of the following types of projects/activities: research and evaluation of public policies; intervention activities in the field of creation/support services to victims of domestic violence; projects aim to create dissemination products of awareness-raising.

Developing an array of result indicators of the programme to guide the projects' reporting models in general and of the projects according to the specific goals of their activities: awareness raising, training of stakeholders and multiplier agents, economic/political and/or social empowerment of women, women's networks and improvements in the operation of the services to the population.

4. To optimise the programme's external communication as a dissemination vehicle for GE in Angola:

- By using tenders to communicate the strategic positioning of the programme regarding Gender Equality.

- Broadening the channels of communication in order to propagate the information to a broader number of CSOs, and disclosing the tender not only in the newspaper (which does not cover the whole country), but also through the radio. Using perhaps the creation of web tools (website, Moodle or other devices) to communicate, to increase the knowledge and sharing of information between projects, containing banks of resources and inspirational practices, and ultimately facilitating the articulation of interests between projects.

II. Operational and executive management

In order to boost effectiveness we consider 4 dimensions:

1. Selection and pre-emptive diagnosis of risks and needs of the projects to be funded

-Review the selection criteria on the basis of possible redefinitions in the strategic guidelines of the project. To keep the formal selection criteria and to clarify the informal criteria which are already in usage and that correspond to important values that guide the choices made by management. In particular, the increase of the number of projects in regions affected by calamities, and the funding opportunity of “new” organisations that present credible projects, among others.

-Develop a diagnostic grid for each project to be applied at the time of the signing of the agreement between UNDP and the CSO. Departing from the analysis of the applications, diagnose the possible ex ante weaknesses of the project’s design and implementation conditions of the same, while simultaneously gathering information for the programme’s training plan directed to the CSO. Apply this grid if possible remotely (via email/phone) and/or at the time of the initial training.

2. Training for the CSOs

- To include specific GE training in the CSOs’ training programme, guaranteeing specialised trainers.

- To include 2 new elements in the contract documents for the provision of training: the themes and specific goals to be included in the courses; criteria related with the format and methodologies to be put into action. The goal is to guarantee a boost in the effectiveness of the training (in the operational know-how) of the CSO’s technicians.

- To include in the planning of the training plan, a clarification session on the programme’s report procedures (besides the financial procedures, the narrative reports).

- To contemplate new ways of sharing experiences amongst CSO, and if possible doing so by involving the CSOs that were funded in the 1st edition, so as to share their experience, their difficulties and strategies.

3. Continued monitoring and strengthening of field visits

-The close monitoring of projects was one of the areas that had the biggest observed evolution in the operational management of the programme. This follow-up should be maintained since the early stage of ex-ante diagnosis while maintaining the features of individualised and flexible support.

-The monitoring visits to projects would benefit if they were intensified and if their goals were made clearer: field visits for observation and understanding of the project and of its conditions, balance of the physical and financial execution, the recognition and validation of best practices and their sharing and communication extended to other audiences.

-Introduction of instruments and practices to facilitate the support of reporting, such as the creation of a checklist with everything that the CSOs must report and send to UNPD, prior to preparation of visits and clarification/confirmation of procedures and data

4. Monitoring and evaluation

-The internal evaluation of the projects (quarterly reports) should ensure a general balance of physical and financial execution, with strong emphasis not only on the quantitative indicators but also and above all on

the qualitative factors (how they did things, what difference did it make for the community, what has changed, how they managed to overcome difficulties)

-The evaluation of the management of all projects funded by the programme could contribute to building a dataset of good-practices' resource awareness, inspiring, educational, and of training. Resources to be made available whilst reinforcing the inspirational external recognition of UNDP Angola

-The external evaluation can take on models of ongoing monitoring following, for instance, the annual application cycle and supporting the systematisation of the reflection of the programme and the introduction of improvements in good time.

-In the case of the projects that entail the creation of products (radio programmes, brochures, theatre plays, comic books, pedagogical materials, amongst others), expertise and validation panels for their dissemination should be provided. Due to the deficit of knowledge and competences in Gender Equality in the country, jury panels with the functions of assessing the quality and conformity between products and goals destined to the field of GE should be created.

Panels that put into practice qualifying processes of constructive debate and gauging the quality of processes and content of messages according to the principles, theories and practices of the field of GE, already heavily developed at international level. These panels shall be composed by qualified specialists on these issues, ministerial representatives and civil society organisations.

These processes of expert opinion must be developed since the beginning of the projects, whose activities centre on the creation of the products, being its culmination a final presentation in front of a jury. This presentation gains to be associated with other final events of completion of annual projects cycles, when they meet in person the key stakeholders of the program, sharing experiences and results and disseminating the products multipliers.

To allow for a brief overview of the recommendations drawn up, follows a systematisation table.

Project/Management cycle	Recommendations
Diagnosis and strategic planning	To bet in the qualification of human resources in the field of GE: To follow the evolution of the national context and the emergence of new stakeholders To refocus the programme's strategy according to more straightforward result indicators To optimise the programme's external communication as a dissemination vehicle for GE in Angola
Executive and operational management	Selection and pre-emptive diagnosis of risks and needs of the projects to be funded Improvement in the content and training methodologies for the empowerment of CSOs To continue the monitoring and reinforce the field trips
Monitoring and evaluation	Improvement in the guidelines for the internal evaluation of projects To make available resources and good practices reinforcing the inspirational role of external recognition of UNDP Angola To potentiate the role of external evaluation through the 2 ^o cycle of implementation of the programme To create panels of experts and of validation in the cases of projects in which the creation of products is planned (radio programmes, pedagogical materials)

Lastly, the report present a set of examples of successful good practices, based on the conducted case studies, related with their pedagogical potential and serving as examples for future projects and CSOs.

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