



EVALUATION REPORT

UDF-13-538-GHA - Strengthening participation of women in geographically deprived Communities in local governance in Ghana

Date: 5 June 2017

Acknowledgements

The evaluator would like to thank Esther Tawiah, Elliot Stephen and all the women of the WOMGA, who took the time to share their experiences and information with the evaluation team. In particular, I would also like to extend my appreciations to colleagues at Cicada Consulting Ltd. and William Adokoh who is learning on the job. I would also like to thank UNDEF project staff members, for their assistance, information and logistical support. All errors and omissions remain the responsibility of the author.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluator. They do not represent those of UNDEF or of any of the institutions referred to in the report.

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides findings from the post-project evaluation of the UNDEF funded project “Strengthening participation of women in geographically deprived communities in local governance in Ghana”. The goal of the project was increased participation of women in decision making to develop sustainable, decentralized, bottom-up planning processes and its objective was to institutionalize Women’s Group Advocacy Platforms (WOMGA) to engage and dialogue with local government authorities in decision making processes and public service delivery. The project had three outcomes, each one addressing underlying challenges to women’s participation in political life. Specifically the three outcomes were:

- **Capacity and Institution Building:** enhanced capacity of women’s groups at the district level so that they are mobilized, strengthened, and united under one platform to be mutually recognized by the district assemblies and other stakeholders as champions of women’s concerns
- **Awareness Raising:** increased understanding of gender inclusiveness in decision-making by local citizens, traditional authorities and local government officials as well as enhanced knowledge of social accountability mechanisms and how they can be applied to hold local government authorities accountable for service delivery.
- **Participation:** active participation of women in local governance in the three target districts.

At the heart of the project strategy was the mobilization and empowerment of 150 selected Women’s Group Advocacy Platform (WOMGA) members in all three target districts. These women were trained and deployed to monitor policy implementation at the district level using a Gender Monitoring and Tracking Tool (GEMOTT). The women’s platforms were also intended to champion the participation of women in local planning and implementation processes within each project district. By institutionalizing the WOMGA platforms so that they could engage in regular dialogue with local government authorities, the project effectively contributed to the overall development goal of increasing women’s participation in decision-making process and public service delivery. The intervention logic was sound and had clarity and coherence.

The project was also effective in that it led to changes in the behaviour of the targeted women in the three districts. The women who participated in the WOMGA have taken on new roles including monitoring government programmes. WOMGA dialogue with local authorities and contribution to public service delivery started with issues such as child care, education, health and domestic concerns. The process of empowerment led to further engagement with public officials on other issues such as duties on farms and in trading, however they also discussed

non-traditional areas such as contesting for and winning political office. While the project conducted almost all of the activities outlined in the project document, the lack of qualitative monitoring tools and practices prevented a deeper assessment of the impact of the targets set.

Having said that, the project did clearly have an impact: the WOMGA opened channels of communication with local authorities and their activities led to changes in public service delivery. In this respect, WOMGA achieved creditable results including a reduction in the structural marginalisation of women in these districts. Some further examples of impact include:

- Monitoring the Government Free School Feeding Programme. WOMGA members monitored the quality and quantity of food provided to students by the caterers. Subsequently they made suggestions to the School Feeding Programme authorities on how to improve the quality and some of their suggestions were adopted.
- Monitoring the performance and operation of the Community Health Programme (CHiPs) Compounds. In one incident, inactivity at a CHiPs compound was observed by a WOMGA member in Asemaneye where patients were told there were no drugs available at the compound. This was reported to the District Health Directorate which responded by ensuring the compound was supplied with the needed drugs. The WOMGA in their monitoring of this sector also observed and acted on incidences where free medical supplies e.g. mosquito nets, were being sold instead of distributed, and incidences of bribe-taking.

In all these examples, when the WOMGA platforms acted, the authorities were compelled to investigate and sanction accordingly. This has served as a disincentive for corruption and misappropriation of public goods in the districts. By tackling corruption and misuse of public goods there is better access to and quality of services and the project has given legitimacy to the claims of women in the eyes of the authorities.

The challenge of how to sustain WOMGA, however, was not well addressed in the project design and implementation. The project document anticipated that the operational cost of sustaining WOMGA would be \$10,000 US per year; however no activities were conducted to raise these funds nor were any staff members given responsibility for the development and implementation of the sustainability activities. In spite of this, there are signs of sustainability: some WOMGA groups have been registered¹ as Community Based Organizations (CBOs) with the District Assembly. Official registration enhances the stability, legitimacy and credibility of WOMGA, and makes it an attractive partner to other development actors looking to support women in Ghana.

¹ Juaboso registered 25th April 2016 no. JDA/DOTI/2016/0042, Sefwi-Wiawso registered 26th April 2016 no. SWM/BOP/2345; Bia West registered 28th April 2016 no. BDA/BOP/138,

In conclusion, this UNDEF-funded project has played a role in beginning to fill the gap in women's participatory governance and has had a significant impact in the three districts. At the beginning of the project, there were no women's groups in the three districts and no regular forum for women to interact with local authorities.

Recommendations

The following recommendations could chart the way forward for the current WOMGA groups and simultaneously inform subsequent similar programmes, should the project be implemented in other districts:

- More emphasis should be made in project design on developing an exit strategy including the allocation of resources to ensure sustainability such as the development of a business strategy for the WOMGA groups, training on CSO management, the development of board charters for CSO, training on proposal writing training and basic financial management for CSOs.
- In future similar projects there should be more focus and resources given to capacity building.
- Project indicators should be designed that are appropriately matched to the available tools for data collection and analysis such as perception surveys, media monitoring and regular field inspections. These tools should be budgeted for in the project and rigorously implemented. Proper data collection and analysis would enable better substantiation of project progress and achievements.
- More resources should be allocated to media campaigns and structured workshops and talks to organized groups rather than on one-to-one outreach.
- While transport allowances for participants were useful in the first year to motivate beneficiaries, in future these allowances should only be paid for the first year. Subsequently individual contributions should be requested to build a spirit of self-sufficiency and self-reliance.
- It is recommended, that the WOMGA members who have won public office be cultivated by GenCED and other women's NGOS to serve as WOMGA ambassadors, mentors, and role models to also mobilise resources and support for the existing WOMGA groups.
- For WOMGA to be self-sustaining the ownership of WOMGA has to be firmly in the hands of the members of the group. It is recommended that from the onset grantees should clearly and consistently reinforce this message not only in words but more practically in deeds by supporting them to take ownership of the group.

- If similar projects are undertaken in districts with no history of organized women's groups engaging in governance, the timeline for support should be three to five years given the absorptive capacity in these contexts and the social-cultural realities.

In funding subsequent projects UNDEF should better integrate the exit strategy and ensure that the data collection activities such as development of monitoring tools are appropriate to capture quantitative and qualitative data

II. DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

The project was implemented in the Western Region of Ghana. The Western Region is situated in the south-western part of Ghana. The Ghana Statistical Service in its 2010 census projected the Western Region to have an almost 1:1 ratio in terms of the sexes in 2016 with 1,469,835 females to 1,417,243 male².

Of the three target districts, the Sefwi-Wiawso District has its capital as Wiawso. It was elevated to municipal status in 2012 it has a population of 139,200 of which 46.29 percent are women. At the time of the project baseline survey in Sefwi-Wiawso Municipal only five out of the 45 Assembly members were women. Sefwi-Wiawso Municipal is a predominantly rural economy³. Agriculture employs 78 per cent of the active population.

The Bia West District was formed in 2012 from the splitting of Bia District into separate Western and Eastern districts. Its capital is Essam. It has a population of 116,332 of which 48.35 per cent are women. In Bia West District only four out of the 41 Assembly members were women. The district is remotely located and far away from large commercial centres such as Kumasi and Berekum.

The Juaboso District has its capital as Juaboso with the district having a population of 139,200 of which the 39.44 per cent of the population are in the district capital. Juaboso District has only four women out of the 24 Assembly members. According to the 2010 – 2013 Medium Term Development Plan of Juaboso District, women have more responsibilities, lower rates of utilization of productive resources and lower literacy rates than the other two districts.

In each of the districts there are significant inequalities between men and women with respect to access to and control of assets such as land, credit, education as well as inequality in participation at various levels of decision making.

The Local Government Act (Act 462, 1993) in Ghana requires that local authorities consult with communities, for example, in preparing their Medium Term Development Plan and Annual Work Plans. The law also mandates local authorities to provide information to the local

² 2010 Projection By Sex 2010-2016.Ghana Statistical Service

³ 2010-2013 MTDP for Western Region

communities through their representatives at least twice or up to four times in a year. This mandatory obligation means all citizens have a legal right to participate in local governance. However, local governance planning and policy implementation over the last two decades has not paid attention to women's issues. This is largely as a result of the low representation of women in elected bodies and their lack of participation in decision-making process at the National, Regional and District levels of governance.

The grantee GenCED conducted a preliminary social and environmental assessment in the proposed districts which revealed a violation of section 1(2) of Ghana's National Development Planning System Act, 1994 Act 480-which stipulates that the Medium Term Development Plan is prepared with full participation of the local community including women and youth. The assessment also indicated that participatory budgeting at the district level was very weak and that there was little political participation by women as well as a very limited number of women's agencies and associations engaging in local governance and development processes.

GenCED developed the project based on observations from the USAID programme "Local Governance and Decentralisation Program (LOGODEP)" running from 2011 to August 2015, which aimed to strengthen local peoples' capacity in decision-making and from its own capacity building training for women in the districts under the project titled "Enhancing Women Participation in Local Governance through Social Accountability."⁴

Based on this work GenCED identified a gap between the participation of women and men in the district level governance processes. This gap resulted in women's low civic participation in local governance, exclusion from decision-making and a high degree of apathy. Women and other socially excluded groups were poorly organized and deferred mostly to husbands' decision on whether to attend public events.

Project Approach and Strategy

The project strategy was to mobilize and empower a select group of local women to be deployed as champions for women's participation in local planning and policy implementation in each project district. The project adopted a multi-stakeholder, multi-faceted approach that prioritized mobilization, empowerment, evidence-based advocacy, stakeholder sensitization and dialogue. The key component was the establishment of three Women Group Advocacy (WOMGA) platforms in the three target districts to hold regular dialogues with government authorities - district assemblies- to participate in the local development planning processes, and to monitor the budgeting and service delivery. The three areas of support were: institution and capacity building; awareness raising; and active participation.

⁴ An approximately £13,000 project funded by the British High Commission (BHC) in Ghana from September 2013 and to February 2014)

By institutionalizing the WOMGA platforms so that they could engage in regular dialogue with local government authorities, the project effectively contributed to the overall development goal of increasing women’s participation in decision-making process and public service delivery. The intervention logic was sound and had clarity and coherence.

Logical Framework

The table below summarizes the project’s intervention logic

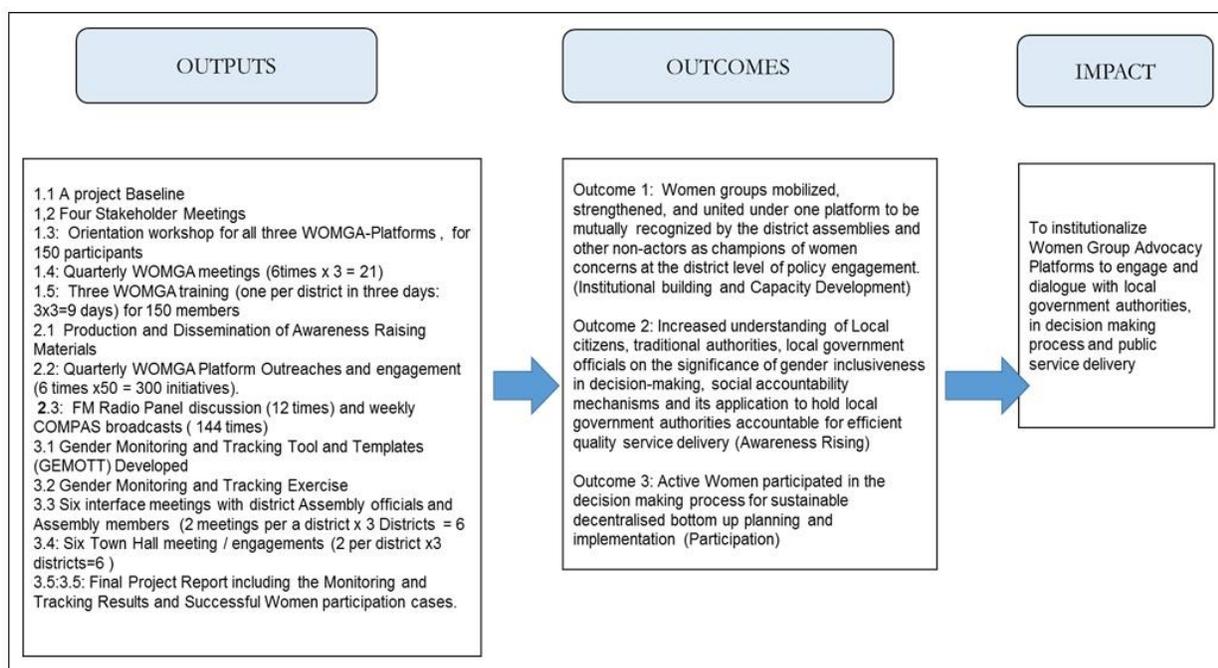


Table 1: summary of the project logical framework⁵

Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation took place between March and April 2017 with the field work in all three districts occurring within the period of 27th to the 31st of March 2017. The methodology used was in line with UNDEF evaluation requirements and United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) participatory approaches ensuring inclusion of all categories of stakeholders. The evaluation also adopted the standard questions that focus on the project’s relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and value added from UNDEF funding⁶ as seen in the structure adopted by this report. The evaluation questions addressed are further outlined in the evaluation matrix in Annex 1. A qualitative methodology was adopted involving (but not limited to) the following:

- Desk review⁷ and field data collection
- Structured and semi-structured interviews with key informants⁸

⁵ A comprehensive detail logical framework is in annex 5

⁶ Annex 1

⁷ Refer annex 2 on documents reviewed

- Focus group discussions (30 women comprising 20 per cent of the 150 WOMGA members)
- Identifying evidence and success stories through the Most Significant Changes approach
- Analysis and Reporting

The evaluator examined all available project related documents as well as GenCED’s websites and various online articles and reportage from news websites. The evaluator would have appreciated more transparency in sharing of all UNDEF related documentation. Overall the information provided through triangulation with other local authority, government and donor agencies working in the community to a large extent corroborated the information provided by the WOMGA participants and GenCED.

As part of the evaluation 58 stakeholders were directly interviewed using the evaluation matrix as the interview guide. Stakeholders interviewed included the GenCED staff and assignees including ex-employees who worked on the project, local authorities and officials in the districts including district and municipal assembly officials such as the district education officers, district health directors, directors of the National Commission for Civic Education, programme officers of other civil society organizations working in the district, opinion leaders, religious leaders, members of international and local civil society actors in the districts and lastly the media; comprising of radio presenters in the districts program managers and talk show host of the various FM stations. A conscious effort was made to survey a representative sample by ensuring that members represented diverse professions, trades, income bracket, social status and location. Consultants who were engaged by the project including those who conducted the baseline study were also interviewed.

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

(i) *Relevance*

The project proved very relevant to the districts in which it operated. The baseline study undertaken by the grantee revealed a gap in governance whereby the negative view of politics held by women at the district level discouraged them from participating in local governance because of the low opinion of public office holders and the kinds of insults that they were subjected to. Women’s historical exclusion from district level decision-making activities had created a situation where women were voiceless and uninterested in governance issues, even at the local level. The project also effectively raised awareness and knowledge of

“The formation and activities of WOMGA is very relevant to National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) at the local governance level, they complement our mission especially with regards to getting women involved in district assembly and local government processes”

District Director National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) BIA West-Cornelius Ahiekpor

⁸ Reference annex 1 for interview guide

Ghana's Local Government Act⁹ which guaranteed citizen's rights to participate in local governance.

The project's targeting of the three districts was also relevant since the few women's groups that do exist in the region focused on welfare and religion rather than on advocacy for women's rights.¹⁰ At the local level in all three districts, public officials attested to the importance of the workshops, conferences and round table discussions held in the community. They commended the high level of preparation they had to do for the sessions where they faced thorough

To quote Mr. Stephen Kobblah, the District Director of Education Bia West,

"Much as I enjoy the meetings greatly, I have to prepare very well for them to respond to questions from the WOMGA, they are very thorough",

questioning by the WOMGA members and the community.

The interest shown in the WOMGA by other development actors such as World Vision, Cocoa life, ABANTU for development is indicative of the relevance, appropriateness and the high expectations of the project. It is also

indicative of the dearth of donor interventions in these districts thereby increasing the relevance of UNDEF's project. The project also received significant patronage from local dignitaries such as Chiefs, Queen mothers and assembly members.

While the UNDEF funded programme has ended, its continued relevance is evidenced by the fact that women continue to be interested in joining WOMGA and in participating in the training provided by the project.

(ii) Effectiveness

To a large extent the project has achieved its objectives. Although the project experienced some short term problems in its early stages it managed to adapt to ensure activities implemented had an impact. Before the project there were no women's groups in the three districts, no regular stakeholder forum to monitor women's issues, only 29 per cent of the target population with any knowledge about the Local Government Act 462, and only 11 per cent of women with access to information on district budgets. There had also been no success story of women's participatory local governance. In this way, the project, to a large extent, has improved the situation significantly.

"Prior to my participation in WOMGA I was afraid to speak in public settings, and did not even know I had a right to be at some of these district assembly meetings. The training has brought me and many of my friends out of the shadows."

WOMGA member, Bia West

⁹ (12%) of local people particularly women across the surveyed Districts/Municipal are aware and knowledgeable about the Local Governance Act, 1993. Sefwi Wiawso Municipality is the only exception where respondents indicated that about 40% of the people in Municipality are aware of the Local Government Act.-UNDEF Baseline Report-Jan 2015 Mr. Gilbert Sam & Mr. Richard Adupong

¹⁰ During GenCED's previous implementation of 'Enhancing Women Participation in Local Governance through Social Accountability' a British High commission funded project in Sept 2013 to Feb. 2014

The project benefited from a number of contextual factors: the timing of the baseline study (Nov-Dec 2014) coincided with the development of the next District Medium Term Development Plan. The project also coincided with the conduct of the district level elections. The appropriateness of the timing was reflected in outputs of the new MTDP where in Bia West the inclusion of a budget line for women’s capacity-building was subsequently inserted.

However, initial communication about the project in the three districts was not well implemented. The first forum in Juaboso for the formation of the women’s group was attended by a high number of men as well as youth. Many of these young men and women were in primary and boarding schools therefore not ideal WOMGA members. There was also a misperception about the aims of the project with some people associating it with a micro finance scheme. However these initial misunderstandings did not negatively impact the project’s effectiveness.

A significant drawback of the project was the lack of rigour in its monitoring and reporting. The project design established many qualitative targets especially with regards to outcome 2 and outcome 3 indicators. However, the project design did not develop tools to adequately assess or capture the level of performance against these qualitative indicators.

Table 2: summary of project performance

Outcome	Indicators	Comment/Assessment
<i>Outcome 1</i>	1.1.WOMGA platform established and functioning in three districts 1.2 Stakeholder meetings established and functioning	The target for this indicator was largely achieved since the three WOMGA groups have been established and registered. They are functioning by undertaking monitoring and functions and participating and representing at stakeholder meetings. The functioning has not been as effective since the end of the project. Stakeholder meetings were established as a valued forum for dialogue and decision-making for local authorities and WOMGA members, this improved service delivery during the project. However the meetings were not anchored to state or civil society institutions and therefore challenges of funding since project end has prevented the holding of subsequent meetings.
<i>Outcome 2</i>	2.1 Percentage of targeted women (over 30,000) aware and knowledgeable of local governance and ways to participate in decision-making	The achievement of the target for 2.1 cannot be substantiated due to weak tools for quantitative monitoring of the number of people who have benefited from the outreach. The indicator and target set was overly ambitious given the illiteracy rate within the districts. The qualitative indicator (60 per cent 18,360 of targeted women) was also not possible to assess given the weakness of the project’s monitoring.

	2.2 Percentage of weekly radio program listeners became aware of the local governance acts and their rights.	Indicator 2.2 was partially achieved: however this indicator and the associated targets were not appropriate. The radio programmes were broadcast but there were no surveys built into to the design of the project to be able to capture the level of uptake or awareness brought about by the radio programs.
<i>Outcome 3</i>	3.1 Percentage of recommendations of GEMOTT reports implemented by local assemblies and district officials 3.2 Success stories of women’s participation in district planning and service delivery monitoring documented	Partly achieved: anecdotal evidence of recommendations adopted due to issues arising out of the GEMOTT was observed. Data capture was poor and therefore only anecdotal evidence shows some instances of high uptake of recommendations, implementation by local assemblies. These were however not well documented. Seven change and impact stories consisting mostly of testimonies of WOMGA members, Local authorities (Chief District health officer, education officer etc.) were captured. There were other successes attributed to the project such as some WOMGA recommendations that the authorities have adopted. However these were not systematically documented or presented.

The capacity building provided to the beneficiary women was of good quality and deemed to be empowering. This is corroborated by ABANTU for Development, a national NGO focusing on gender issues, that also runs a programme in the Bia West district. ABANTU has engaged some of the members of WOMGA in their individual capacity to assist in the implementation of their project. They attest to the fact that the WOMGA members¹¹ who have been engaged as “animators” to serve as a liaison between the funder, World Vision, and beneficiary institutions are of a superior calibre.

The project completed all activities listed in the project document to ensure regular stakeholder meetings in the three districts. However these activities were limited to the project and not anchored in any other existing institutional framework and therefore the sustainability of stakeholder meetings is directly linked to the sustainability of WOMGA.

The evaluator noted that the printing and distribution of T-shirts was a great source of visibility and publicity to WOMGA and did a lot to project WOMGA and what it stands for. The women in their T-shirts generated a lot of questions and interest from the general public whenever members wore the T-shirts collectively. The publicity gained and the camaraderie it fostered among the WOMGA members far outweighed the cost of printing the T-shirts and was a most worthwhile investment.

¹¹ Specific mention was made of Benedicta, Honorable Rosina and Sheila Kojoaba who are doing exceptionally well as animators for World Vision in their respective communities.

The information, education and communication materials were printed in English and Twi, a local language, and distributed. However, during the period of the evaluation, people surveyed during the field visits were familiar with it but exhibited scant knowledge of the brochure. This may relate to the level of literacy of the target population. Therefore, its effectiveness as an awareness raising knowledge product was minimal. Most of the membership of WOMGA admitted that during the outreach where they embarked on face-to-face interactions with other women, they visited people they had known already and so encountered few if any “cold calls”. Thus, resources devoted to outreach did not yield significant benefit in terms of increased numbers of women and the lack of numeric data capture in the monitoring reports suggests that this was not an efficient use of resources.

Education about the district assembly functions and processes also built the capacity of WOMGA members to become more involved in civic life. One example was the refusal of seamstresses – some of whom were members of WOMGA - to pay levies exacted by the assembly on commercial market rates. Until 2015 the seamstresses refused to pay the levy. An invitation was sent to them to attend the District Assembly budget process forum during which they were educated on the importance of those levies for district development. The seamstresses are now fulfilling their civic duties by paying the levy.

Regarding indicator 2.2 – awareness raising using radio broadcasts – the project lacked appropriate monitoring tools to measure the results of radio outreach. Therefore it is not possible to ascertain the percentage of radio listeners who became aware of local governance acts and their rights. Responses from the general populace in the three districts on whether they had heard WOMGA on the radio was haphazard. Some said they were on their farms during the radio broadcast time and did not hear it. Although the WOMGA members were more animated about their radio outreach, discussions with other residents in the district showed a somewhat haphazard response. However this might also be due to the passage of time since the radio broadcasts. The resources devoted to the radio programmes could have been better used to create a more coherent media outreach package and to ensure that the radio programmes were regularly scheduled and sustained. A sustained media campaign over six months might have had a more empowering effect.

For outcome 3 - women’s participation in the decision-making process - the development and utilisation of a Gender Monitoring and Tracking Tool (GEMOTT) formed the key part of the project deliverables (output 3.1). The GEMOTT served as a tool for monitoring and tracking local council decisions, budget processes and public service delivery. The output from this tool was analysed and used to produce a report that created

Indicator	Very Bad =1	Bad=2	Fair=3	Good=4	Very Good =5	Remarks
1. Healthcare	☹	☹	☺	☺	☺	
Total / %		✓				
2. Education		✓				
Total / %		2				
3. Water and Sanitation facilities	✓					
Total / %	1					
4. Power	✓					
Total / %	1					
5. Markets		✓				
Total / %		2				

Figure 1 : A sheet of the GEMOTT used for data gathering

advocacy content to stimulate engagement and participation. It was used twice and proved effective at the roundtables (2015 and Jan 2016). The results of the GEMOTT brought out the key issues in each community and served as a basis for WOMGA to focus and categorise key issues enabling them to articulate their issues effectively at the roundtable forums.

GenCED captured seven success stories comprising testimonies of four WOMGA members and three district officials. This number falls short of the nine success stories outlined in the project document (Indicator 3.2). The project experienced other successes: WOMGA members have influenced the district assembly to place a mechanized water system in Asempaneye. Having succeeded in this the WOMGA lobbied for other communities (not in the district assembly plan) to get mechanized boreholes (Kutosam, Danyame, and Antobea). At the time of the evaluation the boreholes were at various stages of construction.

In Bia West, the District Director highlighted that one tranche of District Assemblies Fund earmarked for gender support activities was being released to the WOMGA group. Prior to the project, this fund had never been accessed by any women's group in the district. The establishment of WOMGA and their activities in the district has given credence to the need for district authorities to release funds to support advocacy for women's rights.

The Ministry of Rural Development requires local government in Ghana to use the Functional and Organizational Assessment Tool (FOAT) which is a tool to assess the performance of a district and to determine future resource allocation. This tool includes an indicator requiring the presence of a gender officer. Prior to the project, the Bia West district had the budget officer doubling as the gender officer, now. The resident local project officer in Juaboso was also inundated with calls from more women who have been inspired by WOMGA activities to join the group. Although the project has finished, WOMGA members are being regularly invited by the radio stations in all three districts to share their opinion on local developmental issues. The examples above illustrate the effectiveness of the project activities that have enable WOMGA to engage with local government authorities and participate in decision –making process which has enhanced public service delivery.

(iii) Efficiency

The project was managed efficiently, within budget and on time. In terms of project management, the engagement of a local resident as a project officer was instrumental in the success of this project. While this model can create risks in terms of over familiarity, in this case it worked well since the project officer had access to relevant stakeholders and good knowledge of the local environment which allowed him to leverage existing networks. WOMGA members were full of praise for the project officer as a first point of call and a capable problem solver.

In terms of resource utilisation, the project stayed within budget and to a large extent managed to conduct most activities. However, activities such as developing and implementing a

sustainability strategy (output 1.2.4) as well as the publication¹² of the change stories (output 3.5.3) were not completed as planned.

The programme officer based in Juaboso relied on monthly payments upon submission of a monthly budget to be approved by the Executive Secretary of GenCED before activities were implemented. On two occasions, there was not enough funding, which possibly indicates poor budgeting for district level activities. This resulted in some overruns on activities.

The amount spent on the radio talk shows was not an efficient use of funds. Discussions with the state broadcaster in the districts revealed that it was more economical to procure a package for an extended program than the one-off talk show programs. It would have costed approximately \$410 US a month to have a regular media show with consistent scheduled time slots and daily message reinforcement, instead of the \$50-150 US per show paid when the broadcaster had an empty slot for WOMGA.

WOMGA members consistently requested an increase in the travel and transport allowance to attend meetings. Although poverty in the three districts is endemic and some of the participants' are subsistence farmers there are also traders and retired professionals among the WOMGA members. The demand served as a consistent distraction for the project manager and also used as an excuse for not participating in activities.

(iv) Impact

The evaluation found that the project had considerable impact. The monitoring of government programmes that the WOMGA platforms undertook was effective. The process of political engagement by WOMGA members began with monitoring and advocacy on daily issues related to care – children, health etc. - and other issues traditionally associated with women such as farm duties and trading. Examples of impact include:

- Monitoring the Government Free School Feeding Programme. WOMGA members monitored the quality and quantity of food provided to students by the caterers. Subsequently they made suggestions to the School Feeding Programme authorities on how to improve the quality and some suggestions were adopted.
- Monitoring teacher attendance at schools. WOMGA members monitored the rate of attendance/absenteeism of teachers in the public schools. At Danyame, a WOMGA member reported the persistent absence of a teacher to the District Director of Education which led to their replacement. This was corroborated by the District Education Director as a direct response to a WOMGA complaint.

"We at the NCCE like the fact that WOMGA are "on the ground " and can be relied on to complement our civic education duties especially with regards to child labour, teenage pregnancies, child mortality issues-

District Director NCCE Juaboso, Mr. Stephen TIKOLO

¹² The change stories have been captured however not been

- Also WOMGA members who participated in the various school Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) have been able to challenge and abolish illegitimate levies being demanded and collected from students at school. This was done by bringing informing the District Director of Education. A benefit from the training provided by the project enabled WOMGA members to substantiate their allegations with evidence, making their submissions unassailable. The Education Department responded by sanctioning those concerned, and, in some cases resulted in the dismissal of school staff.
- Monitoring the performance and operation of the Community Health Programme (CHiPs) Compounds. In one incident, inactivity at a CHiPs compound was observed by a WOMGA member in Asemaneye where patients were told there were no drugs available at the compound. This was reported to the District Health Directorate which responded by ensuring the compound was supplied with the needed drugs. The WOMGA in their monitoring of this sector also observed and acted on incidences where free medical supplies e.g. mosquito nets, were being sold instead of distributed, and incidences of bribe-taking. In all these examples, when the WOMGA platforms acted, the authorities were compelled to investigate and sanction accordingly. This has served as a disincentive for corruption and misappropriation of public goods in the districts. There is now a growing sense of responsibility and dutiful conduct of public services and public goods by representatives and officials within the districts. By tackling corruption and misuse of public goods there is better access to and quality of services. The project has also given legitimacy to the claims of women in the eyes of the authorities.

The project has empowered the women to access resources that were previously denied them. This was most visible in the agricultural sector where formerly women farmers were denied their portion of a government programme for sharing fertilizer. Among the reasons for this denial was that the fertilizer was allocated according to acreage of farmland and most of the women had negligible acreage. The WOMGA members empowered from the training countered that if they aggregate their farm plots it forms a substantial enough acreage to merit fertilisers and they would regulate the distribution to their members. This suggestion has been adopted and is being implemented in Bia West. This situation also repeated itself in Juaboso where women were excluded in the free supply of government pesticides and weedicides to farmers to combat cocoa harming pests. Due to the women being better informed, they engaged and challenged the status quo and they now also receive their quota.

The knowledge that women can address and amplify their concerns at the appropriate forums gives them an avenue for redress and also serves as a deterrent to abusers of women's rights.

Members of WOMGA made it clear during the evaluation that, through the members' collective visibility - at meetings, in groups wearing the WOMGA t-shirts and advocacy on radio and community forums, women have been educated on where to go to in case of issues of child

abuse and other marital/domestic concerns. Furthermore, WOMGA's influence on its members has empowered them to aspire for leadership roles in local and national governance. One of their members stood for Member of Parliament but lost. While the only woman¹³ to stand was elected Assembly member in Asuogya/Kokokrom and another WOMGA member¹⁴ won elected office as a Unit Committee member.

The development objective of the project sought to institutionalise WOMGA to engage and dialogue with local government authorities in decision-making and public service delivery. Although only two years have elapsed since the onset of the project the extent to which WOMGA are making inroads and opening channels of communication with local authorities as well as affecting public service delivery is a measure of the overall achievement of the project.

In this respect, WOMGA from the baseline position has indeed achieved some creditable results, among these were:

- The reduction in the structural marginalisation of women in these districts. For example barriers denying women resources such as fertilizer, have been overcome through the advocacy activities by women farmers' who are now able to access to government distributed fertilisers. Women have also requested that they be included official delegations of chiefs in the districts.
- Two women WOMGA members have been elected as assembly members and one of these women stood to be the presiding officer. Another WOMGA member stood for Parliament and won.
- Inclusion of women's issues in district budgeting. Initially, when the district budgets were prepared there was no involvement of women. As a result of the project and training on district level governance women got involved, providing inputs that were factored into the budget and District Medium Term Development Plan.

(v) Sustainability

In the project document the operational cost of sustaining WOMGA was anticipated at \$10,000 US per year but activities were not undertaken to raise funds nor was any person responsible.

The design of the project envisaged that the three WOMGA Platforms would be registered as Community-Based Organizations (CBO) upon completion of the project. Currently all three are registered however of the three registered WOMGA groups only the Bia West WOMGA was

¹³ Hon, Martha Awuah Assembly member for Asuogya/Kokokrom 024942432

¹⁴ Comfort Kyebire

proactively involved in the registration process. Registration of the other two groups (Juaboso and Sefwi-Wiawso) was done on their behalf by GenCED. Two reasons were given for this: first was that they did not know if they had the explicit “permission” to change WOMGA into anything more than what the UNDEF the project supported them to achieve. Additionally, there was an implicit need for support both in terms of guidance and a “big sister” to shoulder any financial obligations that growth of WOMGA would entail.

Ownership of the project is a key challenge to the sustainability of the project. There is a perception the GenCED Executive Director is the owner of the WOMGA. While GenCED can still serve as a mentor/guide/project implementer and WOMGA can avail itself of the knowledge, network and skill sets available at GenCED, in the long term it will not be advantageous to the sustainability of WOMGA if it is based on one personality and WOMGA platforms are perceived to be an extension of GenCED. Conversely, WOMGA still needs some support so that the WOMGA groups gain enough traction to be self-sustaining. GenCED is well placed to perform this role and could do so in a structured and remote manner.

The focus on internal democracy of WOMGA through elections of their own executives was crucial to the relative peace and harmony all the groups enjoyed. This was attested by the WOMGA representatives who attended the focus group discussions who reiterated that maintaining internal democracy is pivotal for group coherence and sustainability. Though the initial 50 members trained in each district are still meeting after project completion, challenges of sustaining the group as an active force for empowerment remains. Although they still undertake monitoring and inputs at public forums where government plans are discussed, no clear-cut mechanism has been institutionalised, officialised or recorded in any way that would create an expectation by the local government that WOMGA would provide inputs. However, in some cases active members have been co-opted into local authority representative groups as women’s representatives.

The WOMGA groups in all three districts have also become social networks with members attending each other’s weddings, funerals, and other events. This suggests that there is a cohesiveness to the group beyond GenCED funded activities.

Interestingly, testimonies from the WOMGA members in Juaboso and Sefwi-Wiawso report a surprising degree of encouragement from men. During radio call-in shows men pre-dominantly ask the WOMGA members to extend their outreach so the empowerment message reaches their wives and sisters. This demonstrates there is recognition of the need for the practices and messages propagated by the WOMGA groups.

Towards the end of the project WOMGA started forming partnerships and relationships with other organizations:

- World Vision approached the WOMGA in Bia West in 2015 and has now introduced them to two microfinance facilities in district Area Council in Kojoaba (United Women

Association and Nyamebre nye brepa). This has given a fresh lease of life to the WOMGA, providing another reason to sustain the group, since they now have access to personal income changing benefits. The World Vision representative for Joaboso and Bia West District corroborated the information that World Vision has been using members of WOMGA for their programs such as the Cocoa Life project that was aimed at increasing cocoa yield and improving livelihood of cocoa Farmers. Their activities also include gender related issues which are carried out in conjunction with ABANTU for development and confirmed the impact WOMGA has had on the women in the district.

- The NCCE has on some occasions used WOMGA to educate their respective communities on issues of child labour, child trafficking and teenage pregnancy. The NCCE further intends to use WOMGA in 2017 as part of its educational activities on the Interstate Succession Law.
- A WOMGA member in Sefwi-Wiawso worked with Ghana Health and Education Initiative (GHEI) when they organized the Girls' Empowerment Camp in 2016 which had the most participants ever, a record 26 girls attended the camp. Madam Comfort was also a speaker who educated the girls on business and money management. (<http://www.ghei.org/single-post/2016/09/22/Super-Busy-Fun-Summer-Girls%E2%80%99-Empowerment-Camp-Edition>)

(vi) *UNDEF Added Value*

UNDEF added value to the project activities in terms of building the institutional capacity of the grantee, GenCED. The process by which GenCED developed the project was well supported by UNDEF and helped develop a more logical and cohesive project. This is reflected in the consistent Skype discussions and modifications/corrections suggested by UNDEF which GenCED admitted were instrumental in developing an overall better product. This is also evidenced by the comparison of the initial project proposal from GenCED and the final as well as the narrative report. This training provided indirectly by UNDEF has individually and collectively built the capacity of the Executive Director and her team. This capacity has been imbibed and used in the writing of other proposals by GenCED.

UNDEF's flexibility was an asset to the smooth implementation of the project. It ensured that remedial measures could be taken to adapt to project changes. This was evidenced by the change of the number of radio programmes. Initially one radio programme was agreed on but when it was observed the interest it generated both within WOMGA and the general public, it needed to be sustained and therefore eventually three were agreed for each district.

Though the WOMGA members wore UNDEF branded T-Shirts their understanding of UNDEF was very basic. This did not hamper the project since the UN brand has a positive image in the region.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

This evaluation concludes that the project was worthwhile and good value for money. GenCED's intervention filled a gap in participatory governance in Western Ghana and has had a significant impact in the three districts. The enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated by the women involved, coupled with the appreciation from local authorities and traditional institutions reflects the degree to which the project created change and improvements from the baseline situation.

Since a number of WOMGA members were elected for public office, this evaluation concludes that it would be near impossible to revert to the situation before the project where women were largely excluded from local governance, now that WOMGA has assisted in making women's participation in local government commonplace and public knowledge. This taste for political power and engagement in civic life is a strength of the project that can be used to sustain WOMGA.

There could have been improvements in the design, implementation and closure of the project. In particular the exit strategy in the original project document was naïve since it outlined a sustainability plan without any resources or concerted activities to make sure it happened. The issue of WOMGA ownership needs to be clearly addressed for the self-sustainability of the WOMGA groups. In seeking to institutionalise WOMGA the design should have included concrete activities such as development of a constitution, opening of a bank account, setting up a board of eminent persons , recruiting a one person coordinator from amongst the members, setting up an office, dues collection, or training on how to running an NGO, proposal writing training etc.. Going forward GenCED is well positioned to support them in these activities, but must ensure ownership resides with WOMGA.

There was also a mismatch in some of the project indicators which in some cases were overly ambitious and in others were not matched with the corresponding appropriate tools for data collection and analysis. GenCED as a nascent organization with a young leader would benefit from support especially with regards to documentation, knowledge management and general professionalization of its services.

V. ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Evaluation Questions

Annex 2 – List of Documents Reviewed/Consulted

Annex 3 – List of Persons Interviewed

Annex 4 – Acronyms

Annex 1: Evaluation Questions

	Key Question	Sub questions
Relevance	1.1 Details of the project's significance with respect to increasing voice of women, accountability and responsiveness within the local context.	1.1.1 How well does the project relate to governance priorities at internal, local, and national levels?
		1.1.2 How well did the project relate to UNDEF's aims and objectives?
		1.1.3 To what extent were project stakeholders including beneficiaries involved in the formulation and design of the project
Effectiveness	2.1 To what extent did the project achieve its objectives?	2.1.1. How do the results contribute to each of the outcome areas of the objectives?
		2.1.2. In what way has GenCED contributed to the objectives?
	2.2 Assess the level of stakeholder involvement and its impact on the achievement of objectives	2.2.1 Did key stakeholders fully participate in the project?
		2.2.2 Did the right stakeholder benefited from the project; were there other important stakeholders not included?
Efficiency	3.1 How far funding, personnel, coordination, regulatory, administrative time, other resources and procedures contributed to or hindered the achievement of outputs.	3.1.1 Were there obvious links between significant expenditure and key project outputs?
		3.1.2 Are there examples of leveraging other resources or partners in joint activity during the project?
		3.1.3 How did the project monitoring and evaluation frame work influenced co-ordination and decision making
Impact	4.1 Details of the broader economic, social, and political consequences of the project and how it contributed to the overall objectives of the project and to women empowerment.	4.1.1 What was the project's overall impact and how does this compare with what was expected?
		4.1.2 Did the project focus on the intended target groups and with which audiences did the project interact as compared with those who were anticipated
		4.1.3 Who were the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project?
		4.1.4 What difference has been made to the lives of those involved in the project?
Partnership	5.1 How well did the partnership and management arrangements work and how did they develop over time?	5.1.1 Were there other partnerships that would have made the project more effective or impactful?
Sustainability	6.1 Potential for the continuation of the impact achieved and of the delivery mechanisms following the withdrawal of existing funding.	6.1.1 What are the prospects for the benefits of the project being sustained after the funding stops? Did this match the intentions?
		6.1.2 What were the lasting project results and impact?
		6.1.3 Under what circumstances and/or in what contexts would

	Key Question	Sub questions
		the project be replicable?
UNDEF Value Added	7.1 What value added did UNDEF bring to this project why UNDEF was superficially needed	7.1.1 will be based on best practices and points of improvements identified
		7.1.2 How did GenCED use UNDEF brand and grant?
Lessons Learned	8.1 How can we improve future project design and management	8.1.1 Consider what could have been done differently or better during the lifespan of the project.

Annex 2: Documents Reviewed

- UDF-13-538-GHA Project Document
- UDF-13-538-GHA Final Narrative Report
- UDF-13-538-GHA Financial report
- UDF-13-538-GHA PO Evaluation Note
- UNDEF operational manual (2017)
- Monitoring and Evaluation report
- Baseline Survey Report
- GenCED brochures
- WiLDAF Ghana, 2016, Desk Review of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Laws and Policies (unpublished).
- Ghana Statistical Service, 2010, Regional Analytics Report-Western Region 2010 Housing Census
- Data Production Unit, Ghana Statistical Service, 16th September, 2016-projected population by sexes 2010
- Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, 2015, National Ghana Gender Policy
- Womens Manifesto-Abantu for Development 2004
- <http://www.ghananewsagency.org/features/election-2016-is-ghana-missing-the-gender-equity-boat--99943>
- 2010 – 2013 MTDP of Juaboso District
- Elliot Mensah,2015, Narrative Report For The Months Of September, October 2015
- GenCED’s website www.genced.org.
- Four press releases in the National Daily Graphic, see links below;
- GenCED initiates governance project in three districts; published on the 3rd December 2014 <http://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/34806-genced-initiates-governance-project-in-three-districts.html>
- Gender Centre implements projects in Western Region; published on 6th may 2015 <http://graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/42765-gender-centre-implements-projects-in-western-region.html>
- CSO embarks on civic education in project districts; published on 24th August, 2015 <http://www.graphic.com.gh>
- Women advocacy group appeals to ministry to halt ‘galamsey’; published on 27th October, 2015 <http://www.graphic.com.gh/news/general-news/52184-women-advocacy-group-appeals-to-ministry-to-halt-galamsey.html>
- Decentralize commemoration of world aids day: <http://www.ghananewsagency.org/health/decentralize-commemoration-of-world-aids-day-genced--97744>

Annex 3: Persons Interviewed

Date	
Esther Tawiah	GenCED Exec. Director
Praise Nkansah	Service Personnel
Margaret Darko	Accountant
Gilbert Sam	Baseline Consultant
27 March 2017	
Debriefing Meeting, Mr. Daniel Andoh	
Mr. Elliot Mensah Steven	Resident Project Coordinator, GenCED/WOMGA
28 March 2017	
Travel to Bia West District (Essam)	
Mr. Stephen Ebo Kobblah	Director, Bia West District Education Directorate
Mr. Peter Mensah	Budget Officer, Bia West District
Mr. Kweku Amponsah Aquaye	District Representative, World Vision
Johnson Buah	Resident Elder, Church of Pentecost
Kofi Anim Yirenyi	Radio Presenter, Vision FM
Cornelius Ahiekpor	District Director, NCCE
10 WOMGA Members.(Bia West District)	
Khalifa Elizabeth	Yawmintah
Olivia Dankwa	Oseikojokrom
Florence Afful	oseikojokrom
Janet Nketiah	Elliokrom
Benedicta Baidoo	Essam
Nana Adwoa Ahu (queen mother)	Essam
Shiela Adoboa	Kwajoba
Lucy Aboagye	Asuantaah
Philipa Dadzie	Debiso
Felicity Mensah	Essam
29 March 2017	
Meetings at Joaboso District (Joaboso)	
Mr. Paul Gyabeng	Assembly Member, Antobia Electoral Area
Mr Isaac Nsiah	Director, Joaboso District Education Directorate
Mr Alex Anton	P.R.O, Joaboso District Education Directorate
Sylvester Mwinierg	Circuit Supervisor, Joaboso District Education Directorate
Stephen E. Tikoli	District Director NCCE
Kwasi Gyamu	Chief, Antobia Traditional Area

Kofi Agyei	Unit Committee Chairman, Antobia Electoral Area
10 WOMGA Members (Joaboso District)	
Elizabeth Gyamfuah	Joaboso
Damata Yusif	Joaboso
Sarah Nkrumah (Queen mother)	Antobia
Yaa Fraa	Antobia
Comfort Gyabeng	Kotusa
Maybel Koomson	Antobia
Cynthia Asante	Joaboso
Felicia Adoma	Dannyame
Lydia Owusu	Asempanaye
Faustina Yeboah	Bremang
30 March 2017	
Meetings at Wiawso Municipal (Sefwi Wiawso)	
Mr. Samuel Ofosu	Planning Officer, Wiawso Municipal Assembly
Ms. Philis Appiah-Kubi	Gender Officer, Wiawso Municipal Assembly
Ms. Tracy Cobbinah	Officer In Charge, Unique FM (GBC radio)
Mr. Andrew Mensah	Chief Technician, Unique FM (GBC radio)
Ms. Vera Asamoah	Radio Presenter, Unique FM (GBC radio)
Mr. & Mrs. Afful	Church Elder, Methodist Church (Local Assembly)
Emmanuel Gyamah	Rural Water-Field Officer
Yele Abraham	Rainforest Alliance
10 WOMGA Members (Wiawso Municipal)	
Theresa Broni	
Juliana Gyebi	
Alberta Boadi	
Augustina Quaicoo	
Pepertual Bih	
Mary Aidoo	
Comfort Mensah	
Nana Tenewaah	
Hanna Asante	
Cynthia Boateng	
18 April 2017	
Esther Tawiah	Executive Director
Mrs. Margaret Darko Korkor	Accountant
Mrs Praises Awuah	Service Personnel (Programs officer)

Annex 4: List of Acronyms

CHiPS	Community Health Improvement Services
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FOAT	Functional and Organizational Assessment Tool
GBC	Ghana Broadcasting Corporation
GEMOTT	Gender Monitoring and Tracking Tool
GenCED	Gender Centre for Empowering Development
GHEI	Ghana Health and Education Initiative
LOGODEP	Local Governance and Decentralisation Program
MTDPs	Medium Term Development Plan
NCCE	National Commission for Civic Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PD	Project Document
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
UNDEF	UN Democracy Fund
UNEG	UN Evaluation Group
UNDP	UN Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WOMGA	Women Group Advocacy Platforms