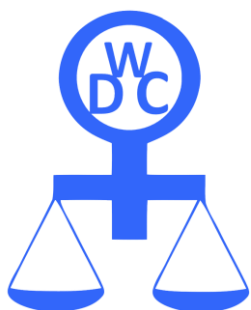# Empowering women for an inclusive and sustainable transitional justice and reconciliation process in Sri Lanka
Final Evaluation Report

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Transitional Justice and Reconciliation (TJR) project sought to empower women in Sri Lanka to participate across ethnic and religious divides in the TJR process. The project was funded by the UN Peacebuilding Fund and led by Humanity and Inclusion, in partnership with Search for Common Ground, the Women's Development Centre and Viluthu. Through working with existing women's forums, the project has created a set of platforms at district and national level through which women can raise awareness of their needs for transitional justice and reconciliation, and advocate for an addressing of those needs. The success of the project was demonstrated at its national advocacy meeting in March 2019, where women from the grassroots presented their needs of the TJR process as they have emerged from the platform the project has built. This represented women whose voices had previously rarely been heard, contesting how 'justice' is understood in that process before an audience that include those responsible for its implementation. This moment captured the project's impact to date and its future potential, to both mobilise women and to make demands of the authorities. This evaluation has used quantitative data collected during project implementation and qualitative data collected as a part of the final evaluation process to seek to **measure the extent to which the project has met its goals and to understand its broader impacts, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability**. The evaluation is driven by the evaluation standards of OECD DAC and the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG). An effort has been made to steer the evaluation with a **gender analysis**.

The primary outcomes of the project have been substantively met: women support a platform that crosses ethnic and religious divides for the purpose of influencing the TJR process and engage in a collaborative platform to provide common perspectives on TJR valued by relevant TJR stakeholders. Survey data show that a vast majority of women involved are willing to work with those of different ethnicity, religion and language and have confidence in the collaborative platform the project has created. Inter and intra-district exchanges in particular have changed attitudes profoundly. There remain challenges in the north however, where Tamil populations are distrustful of the majority community. The women engaged with the platform are everywhere enthusiastic about being a part of it, increasing understanding across communities and promoting the TJR process, both locally and nationally. The platforms provide a space to forge common perspectives on TJR and to share these with concerned actors.

In terms of understanding how change has been driven by the project, it can be seen that there are two very different types of theory of change (ToC) articulated in the project. The first is a programme-oriented ToC as described in the logframe that creates the platform, brings women together and seeks to change attitudes and drive national advocacy. The second is an actor-oriented ToC: once women have come together they define their priorities and the ToC that will drive change in their area. The project – rooted in longstanding grassroots women's forums - creates a space for women on the ground to decide what issues to address and how to make an impact, representing an innovative approach to ensuring agency and ownership and localising the content of the project. This represents an innovative effective effort to drive a bottom-up transitional justice.

Over the two years of its duration, the project has enabled women to both develop agendas for advocacy at the local and national levels and to concretely seek to address local issues. The novelty and value of the project is that it permits a natural contextualization of understandings of justice on the basis of gendered and local needs, since agendas and theories of change emerge on the terms of women working within the platform. This has explicitly gendered how 'justice' in the TJR process is understood, with issues that were previously marginal in national discourse - such as livelihood and land – placed at the centre of advocacy. In multi-ethnic communities the project has advanced reconciliation and conflict prevention by engaging communities and their leaders, notably religious leaders. In the Tamil communities of Jaffna, the project has focused on advocacy with the state for mechanisms to address the needs of the conflict affected, such as around missing persons and the poverty of women-headed households. The project represents the first systematic effort to create a route from communities to the formal TJR process, and one that emerges from a gender analysis. As a result, the project contests a gender insensitive TJR process, by seeking to mainstream gender within it.

In terms of awareness raising, women involved are now aware of TJR and routes to addressing needs and issues, from a starting point of some ignorance. This process is universally seen among the women involved as driving empowerment, in terms of enabling women as actors who can have influence that can address their needs, particularly at the community level, where their issues have been made visible. There has also been success at the level of advocacy with local government where various stakeholders have been made aware of the issues and in some cases action taken to address them. An example is seen in the pledges of support received by the platform in Anuradhapura to address land issues.

The long-term impacts of the project, understood in terms of "promoting the TJR process and mechanisms" and to "provide common perspectives on TJR valued by relevant TJR stakeholders", have only recently begun to be demonstrated. The successful demonstration of short-term impacts that have seen women develop knowledge, skills and awareness of shared interests across diverse communities and define and advance advocacy messages, has created a foundation for the achievement of these. The project has been extended by a third year thanks to additional funding

and at the time of this evaluation national advocacy had just begun. The national advocacy meeting demonstrated the potential of an organised and motivated network to represent women's interests. There remains a year of implementation to advance these impacts. In summary, all project objectives have been met, with the exception of national advocacy, which is in progress and on track to create impact before the project ends. However, project outcomes appear to demonstrate that the original project goals, centred on women's perceptions and interest in coming together in the platform, were rather modest. In practice, the evaluation finds that the project has had significantly greater impact, particularly around local peacebuilding, than was planned.

Empowerment of women participants as a direct impact of the project has been seen not only in terms of knowledge and the advocacy that it enables, but more broadly, including at the family and community levels. A number of women stood in recent elections as a direct result of their engagement with the platform. The women involved are able to raise their voices and make demands about a range of issues, including those that go beyond the traditional understanding of what TJR encompasses.

The project is highly relevant, driven by the fact that Sri Lanka's fragile transitional justice process has been little informed by either the grassroots or women. As such, the TJR process remains gender insensitive and framed in terms that refer more to global prescription than to the needs of conflict affected communities. The grassroots process that the project has catalysed complements the formal process at the national level, but also serves as something that can continue as a source of advocacy should the transitional justice process stall. The project has challenged a process that has been driven by male elites with one that emerges directly from women at the grassroots and reflecting the issues they prioritise.

Implementation has been efficient: for a modest budget the project has created a capacity through which the TJR process in Sri Lanka can be questioned and pushed in new directions on the basis of women's everyday lives. The efficiency that enables this has several foundations, including the use of longstanding grassroots women's forums that use existing resources and expertise rather than creating new, parallel structures, and volunteer facilitators as the key figures in project implementation: whilst significant resources were required to train these women, they now represent a long-term resource for this and future projects.

Project management, consortium structure and partner capacity have all proved to be more than sufficient to ensure effective implementation. The use of women's forums for implementation has created a route to sustainability as TJR has been integrated into all the work they will undertake in the future. There does however remain a question over the longer-term sustainability of the project as one which links the grassroots and the national level, given the potential lack of long-term support for elements such as district platform meetings and national advocacy.

Lessons learnt

The greatest single lesson learnt from this project and its positive performance to date is that of prioritising both the grassroots and women. Transitional justice processes are overwhelmingly developed on the basis of global approaches that may lack local relevance, by male elites who may be unaware of or uninterested in the needs and perspectives of conflict affected women. The TJR project was driven by a desire to enable ordinary women from all communities in Sri Lanka to be given the opportunity to have input into the ongoing TJR process. The project cannot guarantee that those leading that process will act on what women demand, but they can no longer claim they are unaware of those demands.

The element of project implementation and structure that most permitted women's voices to be raised in the TJR process was the focus of the project on working with existing grassroots women's forums. Project partners with longstanding relationships with these forums allowed TJR to be introduced in ways that see such issues integrated into their general perspective and ongoing work, increasing sustainability.

A second feature of this project was that 'transitional justice and reconciliation' was defined not a priori in a project proposal, but during implementation by women coming together in their communities on the basis of their priorities. This very powerfully demonstrates how empowering those traditionally excluded from policy making allows radically different – but radically relevant –approaches to TJR to emerge.

The empowerment of women, technically, socially and politically, that the project has demonstrated is an invaluable element of its success. However, it must be acknowledged that the total number of women involved in the project, and the total number of communities engaged, is few. Whilst the project can meet its goals in terms of national impact, by drawing on the modest number of communities involved, the scale of empowerment on the nation as a whole is minimal. It would be good to see the dilemma of a smaller project focussed on empowerment but that ultimately empowers only small numbers being explicitly confronted in the design of such projects in the future.

1. BACKGROUND[1]

1.1. Context

During Sri Lanka's nearly three-decade-long civil war between the government and the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which ended with the LTTE's decisive defeat in May 2009, both sides have been accused of grave human rights abuses, including summary killings, abductions and enforced disappearances, torture, and sexual violence. The nation had also experienced previous eras of violence, notably that around an armed rebellion by a leftist political party, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), in the late 1980s. There had been essentially no official effort to address legacies of this history of violence until 2015, when the ongoing transitional justice process in Sri Lanka was initiated in response to two catalysts. The first was the parliamentary election of August in which a coalition of parties previously in opposition gained a majority, ending the Presidency of Mahinda Rajapaksa who had championed a Sinhala nationalist approach that opposed engaging with the nation's past violence. The second was the October 2015 resolution of the UN Human Rights Council, dealing broadly with human rights, accountability and reconciliation, and demanding a transitional justice process in Sri Lanka.

Despite the change in leadership in 2015 progress in transitional justice has been slow, with the only mechanism currently in place of the four the HRC resolution mandates being the Office for Missing Persons (OMP), set up in September 2017. The key tasks of the OMP consist of: tracing missing and disappeared persons, clarifying the circumstances in which the act took place; identifying avenues for reparation for those affected; and making recommendations to the relevant authorities in order to prevent the recurrence of such incidents. A reparations bill was narrowly passed in Parliament in October 2018, enabling the provision of individual and collective reparations for those who have suffered from a violation of human rights or humanitarian law. While much attention has focused on the Sri Lankan authorities' apparent reluctance to create transitional justice mechanisms, there has been a lot of state activity motivated by a narrative of 'reconciliation'. This has seen the creation of a multi-layered institutional framework, with a range of government bodies addressing the issue, including several ministries, an Office for National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR) and the Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms (SCRM) established for coordination of these bodies. These 'reconciliation' activities have been assigned significant budgets but there remains a gap between central institutions in Colombo and the districts, with no officers appointed to implement the agenda in the field, beyond two 'integration officers' per district

It is clear however that the nation remains highly polarized. Sinhala communities in the south perceive transitional justice as merely a route to critique the victors of the civil war who are seen there as having successfully defeated terrorism. In contrast, in Tamil areas, there remains little trust that the authorities will deliver on any substantive elements of the transitional justice agenda, suspicion of government's true aims and a desire to ensure international engagement in accountability processes. Powerful domestic Tamil politicians and a still influential diaspora advocate a boycott of any process led by the authorities. More generally, communities remain separated on ethnic lines in much of the country and inter-community violence continues to flare up on occasion.[2] The sectarian bombings of Easter 2019 are likely to further polarise inter-religious relations.

In late October 2018 a dramatic political development made the fragility of the process visible as the President sacked the Prime Minister in coalition with whom he had won the 2015 election, and appointed ex-President Rajapaksa as PM. Given Rajapaksa's past and links to a Sinhala chauvinist agenda, the transitional justice and reconciliation process was assumed to likely be permanently stalled by his presence. The constitutional crisis that saw Prime Minister Wickremesinghe deposed was however reversed with a resolution of the 52 day 'coup' seeing the return of the previous PM in December 2018. As such, the assumption is that the political space for transitional justice will be similar to what was seen before this drama, with the authorities rhetorically committed to a comprehensive process, but in practice showing a reluctance and lack of urgency.

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[1] The structure of this report is taken from that recommended in the OECD / DAC Guidelines: Austrian Development Cooperation (2008) Guidelines for Project and Programme Evaluations, Vienna: ADC.

[2] e.g. Muslim-Sinhala violence in Digana, Kandy district in March 2018:
https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/06/world/asia/sri-lanka-anti-muslim-violence.html

2. THE PROJECT

The project title is: "Empowering women for an inclusive and sustainable transitional justice and reconciliation process in Sri Lanka" and will be referenced in this evaluation as 'the TJR project'. The project seeks to: "empower women, including marginalized women, to participate across the dividing lines in a collaborative platform to provide women's recommendations on the Transitional Justice and Reconciliation (TJR) process and mechanisms in Sri Lanka by engaging in advocacy, awareness and accountability actions."[3] Through working with existing grassroots women's forums, the project aims to create a set of platforms at local, division, district and national level through which women can come together across ethnic and religious divides, raise awareness of their needs for transitional justice and reconciliation, and advocate for an addressing of those needs.

The project was scheduled to last 18 months, commencing in February 2017. However, a 6 month no-cost extension was granted, and additional funds to extend the project by one year were later found. As such, this evaluation is taking place 2 years after the start of the project, but with an understanding that it will continue for an additional year.

The project worked in 6 districts of Sri Lanka (Ampara, Anuradhapura, Jaffna, Kandy, Moneragala and Trincomalee) in a number of communities in each. The project was led by Humanity and Inclusion (formerly Handicap International) with implementing partners comprising the Women's Development Centre (WDC) and Viluthu, who used their links to women's forums in concerned districts to drive the project. A third partner, Search for Common Ground, led the training of facilitators – 20 per district – who were the interface to women in the community. A project steering committee consisted of implementing partners together with representatives of the Office of National Unity and Reconciliation, OHCHR and the UN PBF-Secretariat in the UN Resident Coordinator's Office. The project was entirely funded, at a level of $750,000, by the UN Peacebuilding Fund. The project results framework (the logframe) is attached in Annex 1. Intended project outcomes are as follows:

- Outcome 1: Women, including marginalized women, support a platform for the purpose of promoting the TJR process and mechanisms across the dividing lines.
    - o Output 1.1 - Local women's groups of diverse ethnicity, religion and language have increased knowledge and understanding on TJR through regular reflection and learning sessions
    - o Output 1.2 - Women leaders of diverse ethnicity, religion, language and social situation are equipped with the skills to engage in advocacy and monitoring on TJR
    - o Output 1.3 - Women across the dividing lines have increased awareness of shared interests and differences with regards to issues not directly related to TJR

- Outcome 2: Women, including marginalized women, engage in a collaborative platform to provide common perspectives on TJR valued by relevant authorities and stakeholders from community to national level and existing TJR specific stakeholders
    - o Output 2.1 - The women's platform has identified common views on the TJR process and mechanisms and defined advocacy and awareness messages
    - o Output 2.2 - The platform and the women's networks members engage in joint advocacy, awareness and accountability actions

The following groups are targeted or engaged in project actions:
- An estimated 15,000 women members of local groups who are part of the women's networks will be the direct participants or target of the awareness events that will be organised (Output 2.2: the estimate is based on the target districts' members for both networks);
- 120 women leaders from different ethnic, religious, linguistic and social groups will be trained and coached to lead the TJR women's platform;
- An additional group of 1000 women will have participated in the reflection and learning sessions (output 1.1), trust and relationship building activities (output 1.3) or will be contributing platform members (output 2.1);
- An estimated 200 TJR-related and other officials and stakeholders will have been reached by the advocacy actions, including as participants to the national conference on women's perspectives on TJR;

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[3] Project proposal.

- in addition, the general public will be targeted directly, by participating to the awareness actions, or indirectly through some of the advocacy actions (including through media).

Project implementation was revised in the light of delays, such that at the current time TJR stakeholders have only recently begun to be targeted at national level. As such, the planned survey of such actors has not yet been conducted. Similarly, as advocacy work has been ongoing at local level, but less so at national level, the media and general public have not been targeted at the level intended. Both these advocacy targets (TJR stakeholders and the general public) will continue to be targeted by the project in the year of implementation that remains.

3. INTRODUCTION

This summative evaluation takes a backward-looking view of the intervention, to "assess the project's results overall; the extent to which the project has achieved its outcomes as outlined in the proposal and results framework and contributed towards achieving its purpose".[4] The evaluation follows the evaluation standards of the OECD DAC and the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG). As a result, the aim of the evaluation is "to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability" of the action undertaken.[5]

The evaluation examines the extent to which the project has achieved its outcomes as outlined in the proposal and results framework. It seeks to:

- Test the theory of change (ToC) that underlies the project, in terms both of the extent to which its causal assumptions were verified and to which each logical element of the ToC was satisfied in practice, in terms of activities leading to outputs and outputs to impacts;
- Identify outcomes of the project at community, district and national levels;
- Examine the extent to which project activities have contributed towards the projects' expected outcomes as outlined in the proposal and the results framework;
- Examine and analyse the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the project in terms of its design, implementation approaches and strategies;
- Provide recommendations, including both specific recommendations targeting those working with this programme and broader recommendations concerning future interventions, with particular focus on the potential role of HI.

A subjective theory of change approach has been taken, on the basis that those most impacted by the change being sought have the greatest understanding of how such change occurs; the extent to which the project has advanced target goals will be evaluated on the basis of such social actors' perspectives. This permits reflections both on the validity and utility of the ToC assumed in the project and on alternative routes to achieving desired outcomes. Participation was highlighted as a central approach of the evaluation. As such, indicators have been developed – beyond those in the project results framework - and measured, in conjunction with concerned actors, notably project staff and partners, facilitators and women engaged with the project.

Given the extensive set of quantitative data collected to monitor project outputs and outcomes, the evaluation has focused on the analysis of these data and the collection of additional, principally qualitative data, to complement them. These are used to better understand the outcomes that have been measured quantitatively and interrogate causal links between activities, outputs and outcomes through an engagement with all those who can share perspectives on the impact of project activities. Those from whom qualitative data have been collected comprise:

- Programme and partner staff;
- Members of engaged women's groups and group facilitators;
- Civil society actors engaged with TJ issues in general and gender issues in the process in particular;
- GoSL actors engaged with the TJR process, at local and national level.

The evaluation has considered the overall performance of the project, the overall project design, and implementation processes. The evaluation is driven by the aim to test the theory of change that framed the programming logic of the project in the light of data collected and has three principle elements:

- A measurement of project impact;
- Evaluation of management and consortium structure as it impacted project implementation;
- Key lessons learned and recommendations.

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[4] From the evaluation ToR.

[5] Austrian Development Cooperation (2009) OECD DAC Guidelines for Project and Programme Evaluations. Vienna: ADC; emphasis in original

4. METHODS

The methodological approach to the evaluation used mixed methods. Impact/ outcome measurement used the large volume of survey data collected during programme implementation. It should be noted however that no endline data, i.e. survey data collected from project participants at the end of the project, was available to this evaluation, reducing the capacity to make statements about impact on that basis. These data were complemented by qualitative data to understand the causal links between activities and outputs, and outputs and impacts, permitting the contribution of the project to desired outcomes to be assessed. These were collected during interviews, focus groups and evaluation workshops collected during this final evaluation. Whilst short-term impacts (on the timescale of the project) have been measured both quantitatively and qualitatively, the potential for long-term impacts has been assessed on the basis of the qualitative data.
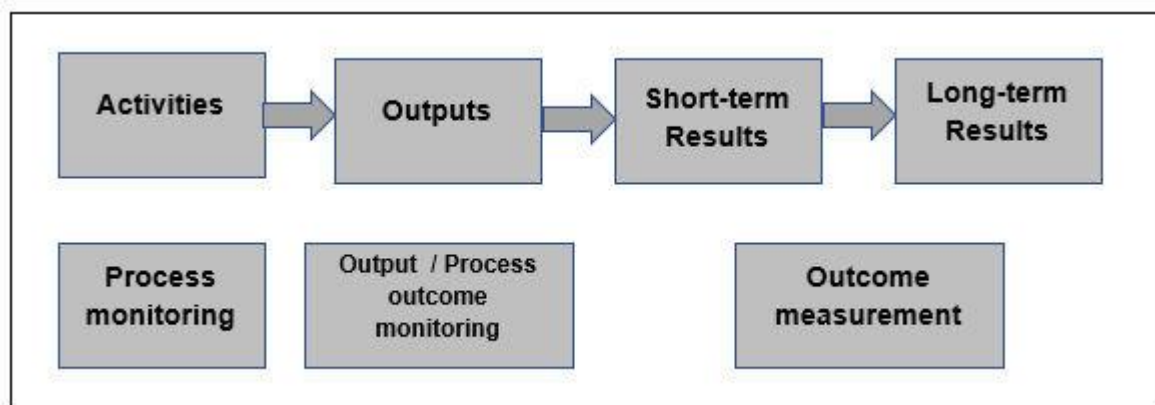

Figure 1 Schematic of the project impact chain.

The methods used in the evaluation were driven by the evaluation questions that are summarised in Annex 7. These are discussed here.

Review of project documents

Project documents were reviewed in the initial phase of the evaluation and this fed the inception report and the development of the evaluation design, as summarised in the table of evaluation questions and sub-questions, the data sources that will address each question and the indicator(s) used (see Annex 7). Documents studied are listed in Annex 3.

Review of quantitative data collected during implementation

The principle measurements of the short-term impacts of the project are made using the quantitative data collected during project implementation. These include:

- The attitudes and practice survey data that explore perspectives on perceptions towards working in collaboration with those from other ethnic and religious backgrounds (outcome indicators 1a and 1b, see Figure 2) and perceptions of the capacity of the project to promote the TJR process. These surveys were made as a baseline and midline, beginning at 5 and 14 months of project implementation respectively: endline data were not available;
- A milestone survey made after 16 months of implementation.

Quantitative data were also used to measure how effectively activities led to outputs, notably in terms of "women and women's leaders having increased understanding of the TJR process, the skills to engage in advocacy and monitoring and more effective understanding of their shared interests" (Output indicators 1.1, 1.2, 1.1.3). The evaluation had hoped to use surveys of officials and TJR stakeholders (outcome indicators 2b and 2c) that can determine the extent to which the process has been impacted by the project, but these data had not been collected at the time of the final evaluation, driven by the delay in programme implementation.

Collection of qualitative data

The principle field activity of the final evaluation has been qualitative data collection. These data seek to contribute by triangulating with the quantitative data and serving to explain the quantitative conclusions, in a number of areas. These consisted of:

- Semi-structured interviews with project staff, local government staff and staff of national institutions;

- Focus groups with women who participated in platform groups;
- Evaluation workshops with project facilitators on a district basis.

Qualitative data was collected in Colombo and in 3 of the 6 districts where the programme was implemented. Kandy, Anuradhapura and Jaffna were selected since they comprise one predominantly Tamil district, one Sinhala and one mixed. Jaffna was also the district where baseline data suggested that women were most suspicious of those of different ethnicity. Data collected in Colombo was from those engaged in the project (HI and partners) and TJR actors from state institutions. Qualitative data collection methods comprised the following:

Workshops with facilitators

In each district visited, an evaluation workshop was held with those women, 20 in each district, who had been trained to facilitate the platform meetings in their areas. The goal of the workshop was to allow them to evaluate the project on their own terms. The workshop structure included both small group work and plenary sessions, creating a space where they were confident to discuss with each other and with the evaluator what they felt worked well and what didn't in the project.

Interviews

Interviews were made with:

- HI programme staff;
- Partner staff (SFCG, Viluthu, WDC as well as with staff of women's forums;
- TJR stakeholders (OMP, SCRM);
- Local government actors at district and division level;
- Civil society actors engaged with the TJR process.

Focus Group Discussions

Focus groups were made with women at the local level who are involved in the platform. These were groups of 6 – 12, with the aim of creating a space where women were confident to discuss and present their local experience of the project.

Data collection summary

More than 100 women participants were met in focus groups and almost 60 facilitators in the 3 workshops 20 interviews were made. The data collected are summarised in Annex 5.

5. EVALUATION FINDINGS

In terms of the two principle project outcomes, this evaluation clearly demonstrates that women from different communities have come together successfully in a set of platforms for the purpose of promoting the TJR process and formal mechanisms, addressing both principle project outcomes. The rest of this section will detail the evidence of this.

5.1. Summary of impacts

The project logframe and the quantitative survey data collected to interrogate project outputs and outcomes provide a summary of the impacts of the project and these are presented here. No endline data was collected, due to the delay in project implementation and to the disruption caused by the bomb attacks at the time when data was due to be collected. This results in the evaluation having quantitative data on relevant indicators only from the baseline and midline surveys (began at 5 and 14 months after project start, respectively). These have been used here to discuss project impacts, but – particularly in light of the lack of endline data – these must be complemented by the qualitative data.
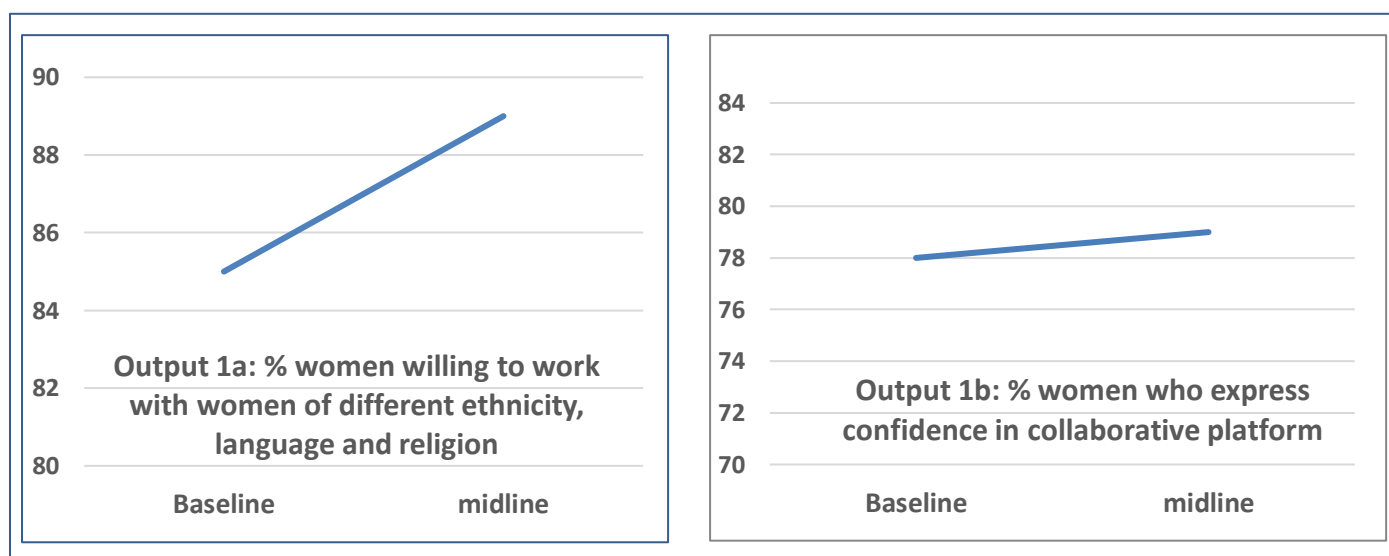

Figure 2 Two of the primary output indicators measuring attitudinal change in women involved with the project.

Figure 2 shows the evolution over the project implementation period of two primary output indicators and are the result of the baseline and midline surveys began respectively at months 5 and 14 of the project. These demonstrate that both women's willingness to work together across ethnic, language and religious boundaries and their confidence in the platforms the project created, grew with time. It is worth noting however that in the baseline survey, i.e. before implementation had begun, the 80% target level for output 1a was met and for output 1a was almost met, questioning the extent to which the project had such impacts. It is also relevant that the change in output indicator 1b over the 6 months between the two survey is minimal.

The district-wise data for output 1a (Figure 3) shows that this high average hides very significant regional variations. While both high levels and good progress across the first 9 months of the project are seen in Anuradhapura, Trincomalee and Moneragala, in both Jaffna and Ampara no change – or a modest decline in willingness to work together – has been seen across the first months of the project. This shows the challenge in a district such as Jaffna where the low level of trust reflects horrific wartime experiences and a Tamil population that remains alienated from the majority community of Sri Lanka and with few opportunities for contact beyond the large presence of security forces and officials. In Ampara, similarly a majority Sinhala community has little contact with other ethnicities. However. Moneragala and Anuradhapura both saw a significant improvement in capacity to work together in districts of a similar nature to Ampara: this evaluation is unable to identify any factors that might explain this divergence. In all districts where qualitative data were collected (Anuradhapura, Kandy, Jaffna) women met were both enthusiastic about the opportunity to meet those of other regions and ethnicities and keen to work together with them. Even in Jaffna, the strong distrust of Sinhalese people was articulated as an attitude they had overcome. Given the lack of endline data,

it is not possible to state if the qualitative data simply reflect the project having greater time to have impact, or the survey and focus group methodologies yield different results.
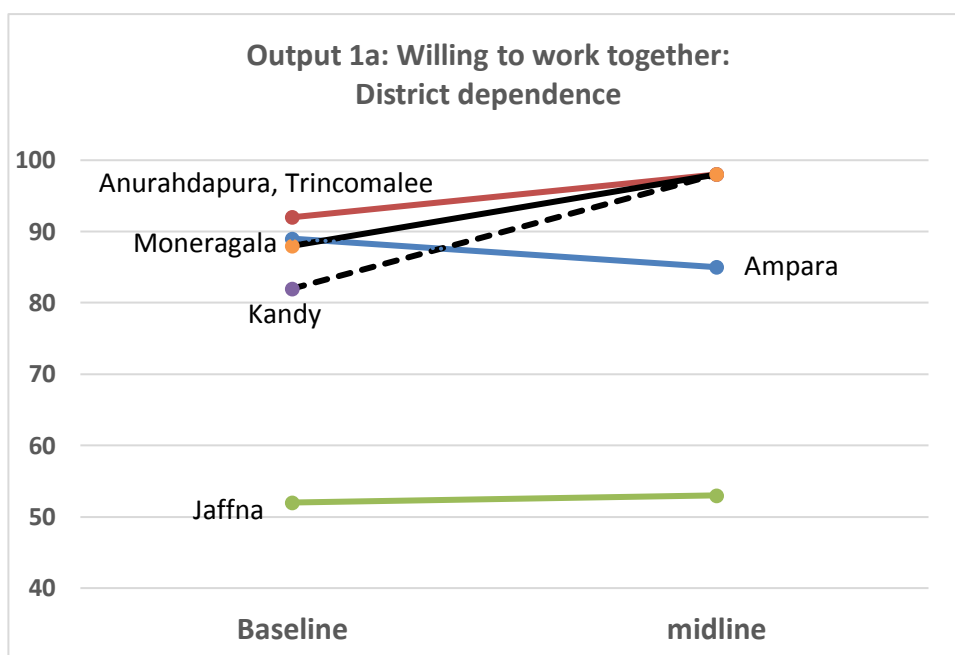
Figure 3 District dependence of output indicator 1a.

Figure 4 shows how women's knowledge of TJR has increased across the first months of the project, on the basis of surveys of that knowledge. This demonstrates the technical success of the project in enhancing women's knowledge from a low base.
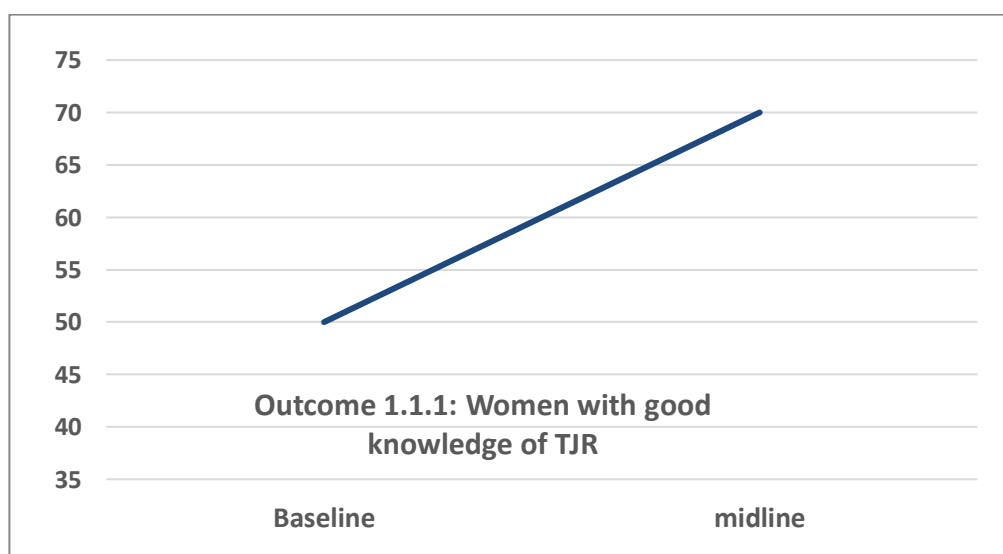
Figure 4 Survey measures of women's knowledge of TJR across the first months of the project.

5.2. Testing the theory of change

The ToC has been tested in two ways, firstly to confirm the logic of the causal linking of activities, outputs and outcomes and secondly, to measure if the project did drive the change envisaged.

Women's desire to work together in the platform was clear. In the one mixed district, Kandy, where qualitative data was collected, the platform included women from all communities, but some – notably Muslims – were under-represented. Given that most districts of implementation are largely monoethnic, the logic of the platform providing a space for inter-community engagement was not always highly relevant. The causal chain of education and

empowerment of women emerging from the platform and allowing them to raise issues in the transitional justice process is clear and confirmed as happening from the data. Women identified the building of their technical knowledge as the foundation of the process of empowerment that has occurred through the project. That process of empowerment is articulated by women as giving them new confidence to engage at all levels of their community and with local authorities to present their needs and to make advocacy. Whilst women engaged in the platform emphasised empowerment around the TJR process, it was also seen to have occurred more broadly, such as in the family, permitting a degree of renegotiation of gender relations. Routes for women to advocate for TJ process driven by their needs have been created at local level (division and district) and have driven positive outcomes. At the national level, with the recent creation of the national platform, such advocacy has now begun in earnest but has yet to impact significantly.

A key success of the project for women engaged has been their ability to advance local reconciliation. Women's action, notably in terms of outreach to community and religious actors and direct and proactive engagement in violence prevention, represent a real and concrete success of the project (see Section 6.1), despite its absence from the project logic and logframe. This demonstrates the fact that the project creates a space for women to develop their own goals and ToCs to achieve these, beyond the pre-defined project logic, which discusses only 'raising awareness'.

In summary, all project objectives have been met, with the exception of national advocacy, which is in progress and on track to create impact before the project ends. However, project outcomes appear to demonstrate that the original project goals, centred on women's perceptions and interest in coming together in the platform, were rather modest. In practice, the evaluation finds that the project has had significantly greater impact, particularly around local peacebuilding, than was planned.

District dependence: A space for women's agency

Both qualitative and quantitative data reveal a strong district dependence on women's needs and on how the project has been instantiated in practice and what it has achieved. ToCs – in terms of what and how change is driven - are a function of the issues and context in each district: the project structure gives women space to define the issues of greatest interest to them and advance their own priorities. This represents the project design being naturally contextualised and taking quite different forms in each locality. This is summarised in Table 1.

District	Nature of context	Project goals	Impact
Kandy	Mixed community (Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim), living in close proximity to each other	- Women as a catalyst for increasing inter-community understanding - Direct engagement at all levels of the community to increase awareness - Urgent intervention to prevent and defuse violence - Address language policy and land issues	- Increased contact across communities and changes in attitudes - Greater awareness amongst communities and their leaders - Reduction in inter-community violence
Jaffna	Monoethnic Tamil community	- Articulate needs linked to conflict: missing persons, land, poverty & women-headed households - Impact national TJR process	- A route created from grassroots to national TJR process - Structures to raise women's voices in TJR process
Anuradhpura	Border communities: predominantly Sinhala, with minorities nearby	- A need for action on issues: land, missing persons, livelihood - Reparations for displacement and property losses	- Land issues being addressed - Engagement with nearby Muslim communities

Table 1 The district dependence of project goals and implementation.

In addition to these district-dependent approaches, broader approaches to reconciliation – in terms of inter-community understanding - have been advanced by the exchanges that the project facilitated. This is discussed further in Section 5.3. One concern of this strong district dependence is over the extent to which this evaluation – where qualitative data was collected in only half of the 6 districts of implementation – can be generalised.

In terms of understanding how change has been driven by the project, it can be seen that there are two very different types of ToC articulated in the project. The first is a programme-oriented ToC as articulated in the logframe that creates the platform, brings women together and seeks to change attitudes. The second is an actor-oriented ToC: once women have come together they define their priorities and the ToC that will drive change in their area. The project creates a space for women on the ground to decide what issues to address and how to make an impact, representing an innovative approach to ensuring agency and ownership and localising the content of the project.

5.3. Project impacts

In terms of the goals of the original project logframe, both primary outcomes (see p. 7) have been met. The women engaged with the platform are enthusiastic about being a part of it, increasing understanding across communities and promoting the TJR process, both locally and nationally (Outcome 1). The platforms provide a space to forge common perspectives on TJR and to share these with concerned actors (Outcome 2).

In terms of awareness raising, women involved are now aware of TJR and routes to addressing needs and issues, from a starting point of some ignorance. This process is universally seen among the women involved as driving empowerment, in terms of enabling women as actors who can have influence that can address their needs. This has most notably been successful at the community level, where their issues have been made visible. There has also been success at the level of advocacy with local government where various stakeholders have been made aware of the issues and in some cases action to address them has been taken. An example is seen in the pledges of support received by the platform in Anuradhapura to address land issues (see below). Some success has also been achieved in linking women to service providers in both local government and NGOs. At the national level advocacy has begun with the formalisation during the evaluation process of the national platform.

These impacts are discussed in detail below.

Local conflict resolution / reconciliation

Planned project outcomes made no explicit reference to 'reconciliation', rather framing goals in terms of "increased awareness of shared interests and differences". However, the evaluation has found that the project has had significant impact on understanding and relations across community lines, both within the platform and beyond it.

Given the monoethnic nature of most districts, the platform itself does largely not provide a space for inter-community contact, other than in Kandy district. However, the exchanges both within and between districts were considered very impacting in building both an understanding of the other and in constructing solidarity, in terms of shared issues. This was typically articulated as allowing an awareness that "we have the same problems" or "we didn't know they suffered". In Jaffna, a woman confessed that "we hated the Sinhalese" and that encounters with women from the south challenged this thinking. Those from outside the North and East in turn began to understand that Tamils had lacked rights, conceptualising justice in broad terms as part of a positive peace. Exchanges were perceived everywhere as driving radical attitudinal change and being a practical articulation of the conceptual lessons of the reflection and learning sessions that constitute the most routine activity of local platforms. In some cases, exchanges led to the development of business links, with goods being brought across the country for sale. The great personal impact of the exchanges also confronts the fact that few women are directly involved in them and raises the question as to how to increase their impact.

Language issues were seen as an important issue to address and in some cases an obstacle to greater communication across ethnic divides. In Kandy in particular language was seen as crucial and conceptualised within the platform as being linked to ending discrimination against minorities, leading to a focus on ensuring implementation of national language policy.

A second and potentially more impacting route to reconciliation is the outreach that women have made through the local platforms. This is predominantly done informally and represents the women's platform seeking to raise awareness and change behaviour of men and community leaders. In particular it takes the form of:

- Influencing family members, notably husbands and sons, to change perspectives on other communities and to not engage in violence;
- Targeting religious leaders as important influencers in the community and bringing such leaders together across religious divides to increase communication and understanding;
- Working through other community organizations, where men are dominant, such as Rural Development Societies, to take messages beyond women;

- Advocating with local government at divisional and district levels to increase understanding of TJR and of local women's needs. Whilst in some places women have achieved a semi-formal role in educating local officials in most there is resistance at 'village women' seeking to inform male administrators.

Because it is the most mixed district, these impacts were most visible in Kandy where the platforms engaged with communities in the light of anti-Muslim violence around the Digana incident.[6] Powerful personal stories were heard during the evaluation process of platform members working with religious leaders on both sides to defuse violence as well as seeking to offer assistance to those impacted and displaced by it. This involved women addressing rumours and false stories and in some cases confronting their own communities, including the police, as well as ensuring that their menfolk were not involved in violence. The platform led a survey of victims to understand the drivers of violence and the support needed.

In Anuradhapura the exchanges were valuable in confronting stereotypes, in particular in neighbouring Vavuniya district, where there is otherwise little contact across communities.

In Jaffna there is perhaps the greatest need to confront stereotypes, given their experience of conflict and distance from Sinhalese communities. However, it also confronts the fact that reconciliation concerns both violations of the past and current perceptions of marginalisation, and thus involves not just individuals from the other communities but also the state. Most of the Sinhalese people Tamils in Jaffna meet are soldiers or police. This emphasises that reconciliation for such populations demands an addressing of the violations of the past and cannot be conceptualised as purely being about relationships between individuals, which is perceived as a potentially depoliticising approach.

Empowerment

Empowerment is a crucial element of the project and a prerequisite to realise its goals. It is a need at the grassroots, where women remain highly marginalised, and a practical requirement for women to advocate to make demands of the TJR process. It should also be acknowledged however that women do have a history of activism around transitional justice in Sri Lanka, notably driven by families of the missing from the North and East: one respondent described women as having "included themselves" in the transitional justice process.

In the project proposal empowerment is understood as largely technical, concerned with development of knowledge about TJR and the process in Sri Lanka, and this was echoed in how women themselves articulated empowerment. However, the qualitative data provided evidence that empowerment an as impact of the project went further than this:

- In the family there is evidence that power relations have shifted in the home in favour of women;
- Women have new confidence to approach people and talk about TJR and other issues, including important male figures in the community, such as religious leaders and local government officials. Women described how they are now 'respected', 'recognised' and listened to:
    o In Anuradhapura one facilitator is now formally training local officials;
    o Several groups said that local government officials have come to them for advice or information;
    o Village leaders have come to reflection and learning sessions of the platform.

This has implications not only for TJR issues, but more widely, demonstrating that power relations are being positively renegotiated by the women as a result of the project. Also visible however is a hierarchy of empowerment, where the facilitators are more confident, knowledgeable and engaged than others.

There is evidence of greater political participation having been driven by the project. Women platform members ran in local elections in both Jaffna and Anuradhapura, and in the latter one candidate was successful.

Inclusion of the marginalised in the project remains poor in some cases. Muslim and Tamil women in Kandy are under-represented for example, although they are present, including as facilitators. In Anuradhapura, Muslims are absent, largely as a result of the fact that they live separately, and targeted villages are predominantly Sinhala. Disabled women are also present in the platform, notably in Kandy, where explicit efforts at their inclusion have been made, as well as in Jaffna. In both districts the issues disabled women face are on the agenda of platforms. There appears to be an

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[6] Anti-Muslim riots began in Ampara on 26 February 2018, spreading to Kandy District by 2 March. Muslim citizens, mosques and other properties were attacked by mobs of Sinhalese Buddhists, and mobs of Muslims attacked Buddhists Temples and Sinhalese populations.

awareness among partners that inclusion of People with Disabilities demands additional resources and special attention, but this has not been an integral part of the project.

Advocacy

Advocacy at the local level emerged naturally from the agendas that developed in local platforms, supported by the advocacy training women had received. This was framed by the technical approaches to which participants were introduced. Notable among these was use of Right to Information (RTI) legislation, passed in 2016.[7] RTI has enabled action on a range of issues and local platforms have used them around some of the most important transitional justice issues in the country, such as to seek information about missing persons, as well as in areas beyond TJR that affect their lives. An example of the latter was undertaken by the platform in Anuradhapura, where RTI was used to understand why a project to deliver water to a community had stalled. Pushing local officials for information about the project led ultimately to its completion. There have been several stories demonstrating the success of such advocacy in mobilizing local authorities. Another example concerned land issues in Anuradhapura, where families have long been without deeds to their land: advocacy at the local level has led to commitments from the Land Commissioner in Colombo to address the issue by the end of 2019. A report of the issues identified by distrcit groups for advocacy has been prepared[8] and advocacy reports, one or two per district, prepared reflecting the work that has been done and the results of that advocacy.[9] This demonstrates that advocacy by platform members is not just a concern for transitional justice, but a broader process of empowerment to enable more effective citizenship, as well as pushing the state to deliver. District and local platforms now have an advocacy plan.

The advocacy of local platforms has been seen to provide a bridge between local needs and national mechanisms, demonstrating what populations need to feel served by the TJR process. The clearest example of this is the demand of all district platforms for local representation of the Office for Missing Persson (OMP). Even in areas such as Kandy and Anuradhapura, where the missing are few, they are demanding local offices, driven both by the impact of the cases they have and from solidarity with those more affected, such as in the North and East.

The networking that is at the heart of the project both drives and is driven by advocacy. As advocacy succeeds more people will choose to join the platforms. At the national level, the issues the platform will target were presented at a national advocacy meeting in March 2019 in Colombo, in which relevant government ministries participated. This demonstrated the potential of an organised and motivated network to represent women's interests. As an example, at the national advocacy meeting, officials responded to pleas for action on land issues by claiming that 90% of land seized during the conflict had been returned. The national network will now conduct their own study to challenge this number and demonstrate how much land remains outside the hands of those to whom it belongs.

5.4. Programme Implementation

Here programme implementation will be reviewed on the basis of the data collected, primarily the qualitative data. The greatest achievement of the project has been the creation of platforms at local, district and national level that are already effective in allowing women to agree an agenda and advocate for this as a part of the TJR process. Despite the women participating in the forums as volunteers and not being financially rewarded, they are hugely motivated. At the local level, facilitators report that participation has largely been increasing over time.

Proposal

The preparation of the project proposal was seen as a positive indication of how the project would ultimately proceed. All partners considered this an exemplar of participatory development, utilising the long experience of all those involved, particularly Sri Lankan NGO partners whose experience of social mobilisation and study circles and long engagement with women's forums fed the project approach.

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[7] https://www.rti.gov.lk/images/resources/RTI_Act_Sri_Lanka_E.pdf

[8] Women's National Platform for Transitional Justice and Reconciliation (2019) An Analysis to identify the most Critical Problems faced by the Communities in Transitional Justice and Reconciliation process and Recommendations to Address them, March 2019.

[9] Anuradhapura: Report on Land Issues Identified in 165 families of beneficiaries in No. 27 Halmillawetiya Grama Niladhari Division in Kebithigollawa Divisional Secretary's Division of Anuradhapura District; Ampara: Analysis & Recommendations for the Issues of Resettlement of war displaced families in W/104/C East Galapitagala village, Ampara; Kandy: Analysis of Language Issues faced by the Tamil Speaking communities in Gangawatakoralaya DS Division of Kandy District related to the services receiving through Grama Niladhari Offices & Recommendations to address the Issue; Kalumnai (Ampara): Report of reconciliation issues and intended resolutions of war affected female-headed families in Kalumnai North Division.

Training

The training was perceived by all the facilitators who benefitted from it as effective. It was seen as equipping them to do what they needed to, when all knew very little about TJR at the outset. It was the low level of understanding of transitional justice, and its conceptual novelty, that led to the need for some training to be repeated, ultimately contributing to the delay in project implementation. The advocacy training was considered most valuable, perhaps because it most directly supported action that empowered them to address issues of interest. The challenge of the training was summarised by a key informant from Search for Common Ground (SFCG), the partner that conducted it, who claimed that only a minority "really understood" the concepts and a significant minority never grasped them. This observation is not however confirmed by the surveys of women's knowledge (see Figure 4). Discussion with facilitators suggest that while both the proposal and participants themselves emphasise technical knowledge as empowering, the evidence is that softer skills – such as confidence, solidarity and advocacy – are more important in the successful realisation of project goals. For a project that seeks that women at the grassroots have input to a TJR process, it would seem more important that they are empowered to participate on their terms, rather than focussing on technical knowledge of global practice.

Capacity issues

Capacities of all project partners and of the women's forums that are involved with the district and local level implementation were all sufficient for successful completion of the project. The greatest visible challenge to the project is the delay that has seen both a 6 month no-cost extension to the PBF project and additional funding from DRL to extend it for a year in the 6 districts. This was partly driven by modest delays in training but was largely due to the understanding that a longer project will have both greater impact and sustainability – particularly in the light of a national TJR process that was stalled - and that this was enabled by the additional DRL funding.

Rooting the project in long existing Women's Forums and their relationships with implementing partners has the effect of adding TJR to existing structures rather than creating new, parallel ones. The capacity of the forums and in particular their ability to work largely independently of the NGO partners was a huge strength of the project and important for sustainability.

All those engaged with the project, including platform facilitators, participants and local partner staff, are concerned at the limited coverage of the project. The 20 facilitators per district cover one village each, of which there are over 14,000 in Sri Lanka.[10] As a result in a typical implementation district some 4% of villages will be targeted by the project (e.g. in Jaffna 18 of 450 villages are covered). The implications of this can be considered in terms of project goals. If the primary goal is to ensure that women at the grassroots contribute to the national TJR process then this coverage is not an issue: that goal can be achieved. Similarly, at the level of the district administration, the presence of an active district platform can impact district policy and practice. However, any impacts at the local level on women engaged and communities with which they work will be spread very thinly across the targeted districts. Facilitators were insistent that the success of the project demanded that it be extended to address more communities and suggested that they represent a resource that could be used to drive such a multiplication strategy.

Reporting

Reporting was organised in different ways across different districts, with facilitators reporting directly on activities in some WDC-managed districts, while Viluthu use their staff who attend every reflection and learning session. In Anuradhapura, where the project builds on the women's forum of the local NGO Rajarata Praja Kendraya (RPK), RPK Field Officers report. All appear to be adequate for implementation purposes. There is however no mechanism for recording stories from the project, with the brief narrative reporting complemented by a substantial quantitative survey approach to collect monitoring and evaluation data. This appears to risk the stories of impacts, as collected during qualitative data-taking for this evaluation, failing to be visible at project management level in Colombo.[11]

Livelihood

Almost all women participating in the project have livelihood challenges and this is especially true for the many women who are heading households, often due to the loss or disappearance of men during the conflict or are living with

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[10] Technically they each cover a *grama niladhari* division, which is a sub-unit of a divisional secretariat. There are 14,022 grama niladhari divisions under 331 divisional secretary's division in the island.

[11] In general, in some cases women's stories were not documented in order to minimize potential harm to participants. A consultant did collect 18 example case stories from women involved in the project.

disability. (In Jaffna, for example, 63% of project participants are heading households.[12]) Because the project privileges the perspectives of grassroots women it positions such livelihood demands as a TJR issue and as a gender issue, and this is perhaps its greatest potential for contesting how the TJR process is understood in Sri Lanka. However, whilst the project was able to raise such issues it contained no elements to address the poverty participants confronted and who saw their livelihood issues as challenging their capacity to participate in the platform, essentially constraining their empowerment. In a few cases, platforms had managed to link a limited number of participants to local government and NGO projects that were able to support them in some way. Despite this, during the evaluation, when asked an open question about how the project could have unfolded differently both facilitators and participants made pleas for the project to include a livelihood element.

5.5. External engagements

Engagement with TJR stakeholders, and in particular the state, is a crucial component of the project objectives. At the national level the project remains rather poorly engaged, but this also reflects the fact that the project has only now entered the phase where this can occur and the reluctance or resistance of some state actors. The only operational transitional justice mechanism, the OMP, has been only modestly engaged. Despite this however, the platform has already begun to make advocacy demands on the OMP, including gendered issues such as ensuring women officers are present and childcare available when statements are given. The OMP has also been in direct contact with the women's forums and has met with platform members in Jaffna. A major success of the platform's advocacy has been to raise the issue of an increased compensation payment to families of missing persons, which has been discussed in Parliament.

In part the challenges to engagement come from the state's side. For example, while the SCRM has a coordination role, it is actually quite remote from any concrete activities at district level. It may however be possible to use the SCRM to broaden how TJR is understood, on the basis of the gendered, grassroots perspectives that the project gives access to. ONUR is nominally on board - and signed the project proposal – but has not promoted a supportive relationship with the project.

At the district level, the District Reconciliation Officer (DRO) has responsibilities that are relevant to the project, but these overlap with a range of other positions, ensuring that TJR interests are spread across many different posts. The lack of knowledge of TJR at the district level suggests the project may have a role in supporting the capacity building of district level officials, but this has been resisted by government. Despite this, at the local level relationships have been forged that have allowed the project to engage. These include the presence of local officials at the reflection and learning sessions and the sharing of reports with them.

Civil society is also an obvious partner for the project, and links have been made with local actors. Contact has recently been developed with national level civil society, which anyway remains challenged by north-south divides and – for Colombo NGOs – a concern of excessive proximity to the current government.

5.6. Sustainability

Given the short duration of the project it is important to understand the extent to which any impacts are sustainable and notably the extent to which the platforms will continue to function following the end of project funding. The greatest source of sustainability is the fact that the project represents a mainstreaming of TJR into longstanding grassroots women's forums and as such, these issues are likely to be integrated into their future work even without continuing financial support. This can be seen in the way that some forums (in Kandy) have integrated TJR into their Constitutions, to put the work at the core of their activities. The forums themselves all report better knowledge and commitment to including TJR issues in future.

The mechanics of sustainability are driven by the fact that groups at local level say they will continue meeting and that local activities will continue. They do not need funding for local action and anyway other projects will allow the project partners (WDC and Viluthu) to continue offering support to the forums. The integration of TJR into the forums was seem in Anuradhapura, where two of the project facilitators have been recruited to work for RPK. The challenge to sustainability comes largely to those activities where funding is required. For district meetings, women must travel and most are simply unable to do so without support. Advocacy at district level also benefits from funding. Some groups have started to fundraise, through income generation projects and savings clubs, with the intention that these can contribute to supporting future activities, in itself a demonstration of their commitment to sustainability. Demonstrating a positive impact at local level is likely to be a factor in ensuring the continuing commitment of women to the platform.

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[12] Baseline report.

At national level, where advocacy requires the production of materials as well as meetings both between platform members and with advocacy targets, an absence of funding will prevent such activities.

There remains a gap between the work of the forums on TJR and government initiatives: the project has so far been unable to systematically create such linkages, despite relationships being built by platforms at the local level. Whilst the project will continue for another year thanks to the DRL funding, it remains unclear if this is sufficient to ensure sustainability. A longer-term commitment to support the work of the platforms would enable better links to be built with local government and with other partners whose activities can ensure the continuation of the TJR work. Partners emphasised the need for such project to be long-term, with one respondent emphasising that "at least 5 years" was needed to create true sustainability.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1. Summary of impacts

The national advocacy meeting that took place in March 2019 demonstrated the power of this project, as women from the grassroots presented their needs of the TJR process as they have emerged from the platform the project has built. This represented women whose voices had previously rarely been heard, contesting how 'justice' is understood in the TJR process before an audience that included those responsible for its implementation. This moment captured the project's impact to date and the future potential of the project, to both mobilise women and to make demands of the authorities.

The structure of the programme permits a natural contextualization on the basis of gender and local needs, since agendas and theories of change emerge on the terms of women working within the platform. As a result, in multi-ethnic communities the project has advanced reconciliation and conflict prevention, while in the Tamil communities of Jaffna the project has become about advocating with the state for mechanisms to address the needs of the conflict affected, such as around missing persons. The project represents the first systematic effort to create a route from communities to the formal TJR process, and one that emerges from a gender analysis.

Empowerment as a direct impact of the project has been seen not only in terms of knowledge and the advocacy that it enables but more broadly. The women involved are able to raise their voices and make demands about a range of issues, including those that go beyond the traditional understanding of what TJR encompasses. The platform is now well established at local, district and national levels, and the issues on which it will advocate are defined.

6.2. Relevance

The relevance of the project is high, driven by the fact that Sri Lanka's fragile transitional justice process has been little informed by both the grassroots and women. As such, the process remains gender insensitive and framed in terms that refer more to global prescription than to the needs of conflict affected communities. The grassroots process that the project has catalysed complements the formal process at the national level, but also serves as something that can continue as a source of advocacy if the transitional justice process stalls. The project has challenged a process that has been driven by elites with one that emerges directly from women at the grassroots and reflecting the issues they prioritise.

6.3. Effectiveness

The long-term impacts of the project, understood in terms of "promoting the TJR process and mechanisms" and to "provide common perspectives on TJR valued by relevant TJR stakeholders and government authorities", have only recently begun to be demonstrated. However, the successful demonstration of short-term impacts that have seen women develop knowledge, skills and awareness of shared interests across diverse communities (outcomes 1.2 and 1.3) and define and advance advocacy messages (outcomes 2.1 and 2.2), has created a foundation for the achievement of longer-term impacts. The effectiveness of the project to date in terms of the long-term impacts has been limited due to implementation delays, but these in part have been due to additional funding that has benefitted the project through a longer duration. There remains a year of implementation to advance these impacts.

6.4. Efficiency

The efficiency of the implementation is high: for a modest budget the project has created a capacity through which the TJR process in Sri Lanka can be questioned and pushed in new directions on the basis of women's everyday lives. The efficiency that enables this has several foundations, including:

- The use of longstanding grassroots women's forums that can use existing resources and expertise rather than creating new, parallel structures;
- The of volunteer facilitators as the key figures in project implementation: whilst significant resources were required to train these women, they now represent a long-term resource for this and future projects.

6.5. Sustainability

The use of women's forums for implementation has created a route to sustainability (see above). There does however remain a question over the longer-term sustainability of the project as one which links the grassroots and the national, given the lack of continuing support for elements such as district platform meetings and national advocacy.

6.6. Gender

The project structure elegantly ensures that all elements are driven by gender analysis, simply by ensuring that the focus and activities of the platform – at all levels – are driven by the women involved. Whilst the broad project goals are

defined in the logframe, platform activities, in terms of issues addressed and action to drive change, are open to be taken in any relevant direction. This has explicitly gendered how 'justice' in the TJR process is understood, with issues that were previously marginal in national discourse - such as livelihood and land – placed at the centre of advocacy. The project can be considered as one that contests a gender insensitive TJR process, by seeking to mainstream gender within it.

Given existing power structures in Sri Lanka, the project has also seen women acknowledge the importance of engaging men with the authority to create change, finding routes for example to engaging religious leaders and community leaders.

7. LESSONS LEARNT

The greatest single lesson learnt from this project and its positive performance to date is that of prioritising both the grassroots and women. Transitional justice processes are overwhelmingly developed on the basis of global approaches that may lack local relevance, by male elites who may be unaware of or uninterested in the needs and perspectives of conflict affected women. The TJR project was driven by a desire to enable ordinary women from all communities in Sri Lanka to be given the opportunity to have input into the ongoing TJR process. The project cannot guarantee that those leading that process will act on what women demand, but they can longer claim they are unaware of those demands.

The element of project implementation and structure that most permitted women's voices to be raised in the TJR process was the focus of the project on working with existing grassroots women's forums. Project partners with longstanding relationships with these forums allowed TJR to be introduced in ways that see such issues integrated into their general perspective and ongoing work, increasing sustainability.

A second feature of this project was that what constitutes 'transitional justice and reconciliation' was defined not in a project proposal, but by women coming together in their communities. This very powerfully demonstrates how empowering those traditionally excluded from policy making allows radically different – but radically relevant – suggestions to emerge.

The empowerment of women, both technically and otherwise, that the project has demonstrated is an invaluable element of its success. However, it must be acknowledged that the total number of women involved in the project, and the total number of communities engaged, is few. Whilst the project can meet its goals in terms of national impact by drawing on the modest number of communities involved, the scale of empowerment on the nation as a whole is minimal. It would be good to see the dilemma of a smaller project focussed on empowerment but that ultimately empowers only small numbers being explicitly confronted in the design of such projects.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

This set of recommendations seeks to benefit from the lessons learned in terms of making suggestions for how the project could have been improved and how future projects of a similar nature can be designed.

Implementation

1. The project should seek to better engage the state from the start of the work, at both national and local / district level. This could include engaging state actors at an operational level within the project proposal in order for them to have greater ownership and articulating explicit strategies for engagement at the local level.

2. There is a need for the project to engage in explicit capacity development of the state at local (and potentially national) level as an integral element of its design. Facilitators have the capacity to train local government officials but meet resistance: working with both facilitators and an expert actor to give greater credibility could both educate officials and build a relationship with the project.

3. Extensive quantitative monitoring and data collection should be complemented with greater narrative reporting such that stories of the action, reflecting women's experiences and impacts on them, can be recorded and shared. This can not only improve project monitoring, but also provide a valuable resource to more widely demonstrate project impact.

4. Exit strategy / Follow-on activities:

- o The project needs a sustainability strategy that would ideally include modest funding beyond its planned end date. Investment of such funding, to support district meetings and national advocacy activities, could dramatically increase the sustainability of the intervention.
- o To maximise the impact of the existing facilitators demands that they be supported to continue working and potentially to train others. A relationship with government agencies or an NGO could enable this beyond the project end date.

Activities / programmme elements

5. Protection issues: The project lacks an approach for ensuring an ethical approach to activities and in particular provides no strategies for ensuring a 'do no harm 'approach, or for supporting those who may be negatively impacted by project activities. In particular:
    - o The discussion of experiences during conflict can retraumatize and it is necessary to train facilitators to minimize such damage and respond if they see it.
    - o During local platform meetings it is necessary to provide a referral path for any issues raised that require urgent addressing, such as psychosocial issues or other protection needs.[13]
    - o The group meetings represent a potentially positive therapeutic environment, but this requires that facilitators are aware of how to support those who may demonstrate needs during such meetings.

6. Local reconciliation and violence prevention emerged as a principle goal and activity in some districts, despite this not being seen as a project goal in the proposal. In a divided environment like that of Sri Lanka this is a positive development and should be embraced as acknowledgment of the importance of such work. There is a need to develop project-wide strategies that ensure effective engagement with reconciliation and community-level violence prevention beyond the women of the platform

7. Social media has a huge potential for both advocacy and violence prevention, notably to counter its use in generating conflict. Whilst the project did include some social media training, it has not become a substantive part of the work of the platform. There may be reasons for this – such as access constraints – but there is a need for the project to engage more formally with this issue.

8. Memory and memorialization are not discussed as project elements but emerged as crucial in some areas. In Jaffna the issue is sensitive and important with efforts to remember the Tamil dead of the conflict suppressed by the state. There are examples of effective local memorials that need not be politically sensitive[14] and requests were received during the evaluation from local platforms for support in constructing inclusive memorials. Memory may emerge in the final phase of the project from the local platforms but should be supported as an activity throughout the project.

9. Inclusion of the People with Disabilities: Disabled survivors of conflict are a constituency of particular interest to the project, but have been engaged through district-based initiatives, rather than through a systematic programmatic approach. Such a project demands that inclusion be defined as a priority at all levels and appropriate resources included to guarantee it.

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[13] The project has prepared a document listing national and district services to which women can be referred, but it was not clear that facilitators were aware of and/or using this.

[14] Robins, Simon (2014) Constructing Meaning from Disappearance: Local Memorialisation of the Missing in Nepal. International Journal of Conflict and Violence.

Annex 1. Logframe

Country name: Sri Lanka
Project Effective Dates: 10 April 2017 – 9 April 2018 (initially 18 months, No cost extension requested for 6 months)
PBF Focus Area: 2: Promote coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflicts (Priority Area 2): (2.1) National reconciliation.
IRF Theory of Change: IF women, including marginalized women, are empowered as TJR advocates and are given the space to exchange across dividing lines of ethnicity, language, religion, social situation and economic status, improving mutual trust and understanding as well as skills and experience for working together on TJR, THEN they will be able to engage in joint actions to identify and promote common perspectives and recommendations for achieving an inclusive and sustainable TJR process, BECAUSE women's involvement fosters collaboration, creative solutions and the inclusion of vulnerable groups and minorities.

Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Year 1				Year 2			Milestones
Outcome 1: Women, including marginalized women, support a platform for the purpose of promoting the TJR process and mechanisms across the dividing lines.		Outcome Indicator 1 a % of participating women who report willingness to work with women of different ethnicity, language and religion to address mutually recognized concerns Baseline: TBD by survey in month 3 Target: 80%	Attitudes and practices surveys of women leaders and output 1.1 and output 1.3 activity participants Sample: 200 out of +/- 1000 women	X				X		X	Month 3: baseline survey to assess initial attitudes and practices of women's group members Month 14: mid-line survey to measure if attitudes and practices towards working together are sufficiently positive for establishing the platform (80%) and initiating Outcome 2 activities. Month 21: endline survey to capture end of project levels (sustainability prospects)
		Outcome Indicator 1 b		X				X		X	Month 3: baseline survey to assess initial

		% of women who express confidence that a collaborative platform of women across the dividing lines on TJR contributes to an inclusive and sustainable TJR process Baseline: TBD by survey in month 3 Target: 80%	Attitudes surveys of women leaders and output 1.1 and output 1.3 activity participants Sample: 200									attitudes of women towards a collaboration platform Month 14: mid-line survey to measure if attitudes are sufficiently positive for establishing the platform (80%) and initiating Outcome 2 activities; if results are under target , issues identified in survey will be addressed Month 21: endline survey to capture end of project levels (sustainability of platform)
		Outcome Indicator 1 c % of platform members who report that platform objectives and actions are defined and undertaken through effective collaboration between members of diverse ethnicity, language and religion Baseline: n/a Target: 90%	Survey among platform members Sample: 200			X				X		Month 15: milestone survey to determine if platform's objectives and procedures are widely shared across the dividing lines and to identify any capacity and quality of participation issues which need to be addressed before establishing the platform and initiating Outcome 2 activities; if results are under target and capacity and quality of participation issues are identified; they will be addressed before/as

	▨										part of Output 2.1 activities. Month 21: endline survey
	Output 1.1 Local women's groups of diverse ethnicity, religion and language have increased knowledge and understanding on TJR through regular reflection and learning sessions	Output Indicator 1.1.1 % of local women's group members in the target districts knowing of the TJR process and mechanisms as well as how they can participate therein Baseline: TBD Target: 80%	Knowledge surveys among local women's groups members Sample: 200	X				X		X	Month 3: baseline survey initial knowledge will be determined Month 14: midline survey; to determine if the minimum level to start with Outcome 2 activities has been reached (80%) Month 21: endline survey to determine continued learning (since learning sessions will be on regular basis, learning and feedback sessions with platform members will continue over the course of the project)
	Output 1.2 Women leaders of diverse ethnicity, religion, language and social situation are equipped	Output Indicator 1.2.1 % of women with knowledge to carry out inclusive evidence-based advocacy	- Pre- and post training test reports	X				X			Month 3: pre-tests Month 15:

26

	with the skills to engage in advocacy on TJR Baseline: 0 Target: 80% (96 out of 120 women leaders participating in training)	- Behaviour observation checklists - Platform activity reports											- 120 selected women express their written commitment to engage in the platform - Immediate post-training assessment shows that 90% of trained women have acquired the necessary knowledge Both milestones are necessary to start with Outcome 2 activities. At monthly intervals over the course of Outcome 2 activities, during regular meetings, platform members will review whether they have further capacity needs; capacity building support will be delivered through output 2.2 activities.
	Output 1.3 Women across the dividing lines have increased awareness of shared interests and differences with regards to issues not directly related to TJR	Output Indicator 1.3.1% of women participating in activity 1.3 events who report that they have increased awareness of shared and divergent interests of women of other ethnicity, language and religion as a result of exchange events Baseline: n/a	Immediate post-event surveys among women participating to output 1.3 events and follow up via Attitude and Practice Survey Sample: 200		X						X	Month 21: endline survey

		Target: 80% of those surveyed										
Outcome 2: Women, including marginalized women, engage in a collaborative platform to provide common perspectives on TJR valued by relevant authorities and stakeholders from community to national level and existing TJR specific stakeholders		Outcome Indicator 2 a . Baseline: 0 Target: 1	Platform activity plans							X		End of project/ sustainability indicator. Note: indicators 1a and 1b will also capture at project end women's willingness to collaborate across the divide and their confidence in the platform's added value
		Outcome Indicator 2 b % of relevant authorities and stakeholders surveyed who report being aware of women's inputs, and acknowledging that they should be taken into account to promote the TJR process Baseline: n/a Target: 80%	Survey among relevant officials and stakeholders Sample: 200 persons						X			n/a

		Outcome Indicator 2 c % of existing OMP representatives surveyed who report being aware of women's recommendations, and acknowledging that they should be taken into account Baseline: n/a Target: 80% Output indicator 2d % of women group members who report that they are satisfied on how their recommendation are taken up in a meaningful way by the OMP. Baseline: n/a Target: 80%	Semi-structured interviews with responsible officials						X			n/a
	Output 2.1 The women's platform has identified common views, advocacy strategies and awareness messages on the TJR process and mechanisms	Output Indicator 2.1.1 % of women participants who agree with messages selected for advocacy and awareness	Survey among women who have participated in output 2.1 events Sample: 200			X	X					n/a

		Baseline: n/a Target: 80%										
	Output 2.2 The platform and the women's networks members have undertaken joint advocacy, awareness and accountability actions	Output Indicator 2.2.1 # of advocacy, awareness and accountability actions, defined by the platform that have been carried out at district and national level targeting the OMP and other public stakeholders Baseline: 0 Target: At least 10 events (at district and national level)	Advocacy plans and action reports, Survey of advocacy actions including type, timing, participants, target group of the action					X	X		n/a	
		Output Indicator 2.2.2 % of actions reported at least in one vernacular media outlet Baseline: 0 Target: 40%	District and national vernacular media outlets						X		n/a	

Annex 2. Evaluation schedule

Date	location	Activity
March 15 – 23	Home-based	Document review Discussions with HI Colombo
March 23	Travel to Sri Lanka	
March 26	Colombo	National Advocacy Workshop
March 25 - 28		Interviews / discussion with partners
April 2 – 5	Kandy	Interviews, focus groups, workshop
April 5 – 8	Jaffna	Interviews, focus groups, workshop
April 8 – 11	Anuradhapura	Interviews, focus groups, workshop
April 11	Debrief in Colombo with Reference Group	
April 15 - 30	Home-based	Data analysis Preparation of final report

Annex 3. List of project documents reviewed

Project

- Project proposal
- Services List of Basic Protection and Psychosocial Support Available in Project Districts (Referral List)
- Activity plan
- Peacebuilding Fund project document
- SFCG, Capacity Assessment Report, July 2017
- Logframe

Training

- Training report of evidence-based advocacy for selected women leaders of SFCG partners
- Session Plan- Training on evidence-based advocacy and monitoring for women leaders
- Session Plan - Experience collection and story sharing workshops
- Session Plan - Workshop to jointly define method for selecting common issues and developing advocacy and awareness messages
- Trainers' Manual

M&E

- Peacebuilding Fund Progress Reports [June 2018, Nov. 2018] and annexes
- Baseline Questionnaire
- Baseline report, June 2018
- TJR Excel database
- Indicators list & database
- Midline questionnaire
- Midline report (incomplete), April 2019
- Results Framework
- Report of Milestone Survey.

Implementation

- Reflection and Learning sessions district monthly report (Example)

Advocacy

- Advocacy reports:
  - o Anuradhapura: Report on Land Issues Identified in 165 families of beneficiaries in No. 27 Halmillawetiya Grama Niladhari Division in Kebithigollawa Divisional Secretary's Division of Anuradhapura District
  - o Ampara: Analysis & Recommendations for the Issues of Resettlement of war displaced families in W/104/C East Galapitagala village, Ampara
  - o Kandy: Analysis of Language Issues faced by the Tamil Speaking communities in Gangawatakoralaya DS Division of Kandy District related to the services receiving through Grama Niladhari Offices & Recommendations to address the Issue.
  - o Kalumnai (Ampara): Report of reconciliation issues and intended resolutions of war affected female-headed families in Kalumnai North Division.
- Advocacy Action Plan, Jaffna: Nov. 2018 – April 2019.

Other

- HI Sri Lanka: STRATOP 2018 Sri Lanka
- HI Sri Lanka' strategy approach towards conflict transformation, Dec. 2018

Annex 4. Research instruments

The following are the research instruments used for the collection of qualitative data during the evaluation. In some cases, these were customised for particular sessions or audiences.

Evaluation questions: Women participants

Open question

- How did you find the project?

Needs of women

- What do you want from the TJR process?
- Has the project addressed any of those needs?
  - o How / Why not?
  - o How could it have?

Impact

What has been the impact of the project?

- On participants?
- On communities
- On local authorities
- National level
- On you

Has it changed how women relate across ethnic / religious boundaries

- How?
- What drove this change?

- Did you always believe that working together like this could create change?
  - o Did the project change your mind?
  - o How does it create change?

Do you understand the TJR process better now?

- Does that help you? How have / will you use that knowledge?

Have women's voices been heard at the national level?

- How?

Reconciliation

- Has the project advanced reconciliation?
    - o How?
    - o How did it help women come together?
    - o Dependence on ethnicity /religion in how people engaged?
        - ▪ Why?
    - o Does this mean the chance of conflict has been reduced?
        - ▪ How?
    - o Has reconciliation affected how men in the community think and behave?
        - ▪ How / why / why not?
- What were the challenges to women working together?

- What does it mean that women were more aware of the interests of other women?
    - o What does it mean that they share 'common views'
- How can you see the impact?

Activities

- Which activities were most useful?
    - o Why?
- Which most advanced reconciliation?

- Did you participate in activities throughout the project?

- What are women's advocacy capacities?
    - o What have they been doing?
    - o What has the impact of this been?

Project implementation

Efficiency

- Are there other ways the programme could have worked?
- Other things it could have done?

Gender

- To what extent is the TJR process sensitive to women's needs?
    - o What is needed to make the TJR process gender sensitive?

- How does the project understand empowerment?
    - o Empowerment in TJR process vs. broader empowerment
    - o At family / community level as well?
    - o What evidence of this?

Sustainability

- How have women's groups / forums changed during the project?
- Can they continue to bring women together in the future?

- How will the project continue to impact?

Empowerment
- How do you understand empowerment around the project?
  - o At family / community level as well?
  - o What evidence of this?

Evaluation questions: Partners & project staff

Open question
- How did you find the project?

Project development and structure
- Who was involved?
  What was breadth of input?

- How were districts chosen?

- Women' Forums:
  - o What are these? What do they do? How are they governed/managed?
  - o How were they used in the project?

Project implementation
- How was the project proposal developed?
  - o Consultation?
  - o Engagement: women's groups / local auths / OMP?
  - What engagement did you have with local auths?

- Were capacities of individual partner agencies sufficient to deliver on project objectives?
  - o If not, where did they fail to be adequate and how could this be addressed?
- How did different partners coordinate?

- Was the monitoring and reporting process adequate across the breadth of the project to measure and maintain the quality of project delivery?
  - o Was it too heavy?

- How were the principles of Do No Harm and other ethical prerogatives integrated in day-to-day management and oversight?

1. **Efficiency**
   - Are there other ways the programme could have worked?
   - Could resources have been used more efficiently?
- What were the challenges?
- What would you have done differently?

- Did all partners (HI / partners / forums) have sufficient capacity?
  - If not how was this addressed?
- How was coordination approached and how well did this work?

- How did you incorporate ethics and do no harm principles?

- What local authority engagement did you have?
    o What impact has this had / will it have in future?

Impact

What has been the impact of the project?

- On participants?
- On communities
- On local authorities
- National level
- On you

Has it changed how women relate across ethnic / religious boundaries

- How?
- What drove this change?

Do women understand the TJR process better now?

- Does that help them? How have / will they used that knowledge?

Have women's voices been heard at the national level?

- How?

Reconciliation

- Has the project advanced reconciliation?
    o How?
    o How did it help women come together?

    o Dependence on ethnicity /religion in how people engaged?
        ▪ Why?

    o Does this mean the chance of conflict has been reduced?
        ▪ How?
    o Has reconciliation affected how men in the community think and behave?
        ▪ How / why / why not?
- What were the challenges to women working together?

- What does it mean that women were more aware of the interests of other women?
    o What does it mean that they share 'common views'
- How can you see the impact?

Activities

- Which activities were most useful?
    o Why?
- Which most advanced reconciliation?

- Were levels of participation (e.g. R&L session) maintained through the project?

- How was the training?
    o Were there elements that were better or worse?

- What are women's advocacy capacities?
    - What have they been doing?
    - What has the impact of this been?
-

Gender

- Was the project driven by a gender analysis?
    - What does that imply for the TJR process?
- What does it mean to mainstream gender in this project and in the TJR process more broadly?
    - To what extent does the TJR process contain a gendered element?
    - What is needed to make the TJR process gender sensitive?

- How does the project understand empowerment?
    - Empowerment in TJR process vs. broader empowerment
    - At family / community level as well?
    - What evidence of this?

Sustainability

- How have women's groups / forums changed during the project?
- Can they continue to bring women together in the future?
- How will the project continue to impact?

- Will they continue to work on TJR issues when the project support ends?
    - How?
- What support would they need going forward
- How could they work together with the authorities?

Workshop agenda: Facilitators

Time		Activity	Comments
9:30		**Arrival with tea and coffee**	Snacks

10:00	15'	**Introduction**
		
		- Evaluation intro:
		    - What is evaluation?
		    - How do we do it?
		    - What are our goals here?	

10:15	60'	**Women's needs of the TJR process** - Small groups 20': - What do women want of the TJR process? - Restitution 40'	

11:15	90'	**Activities & reconciliation**
		
		- Small groups 30':
		    - Which activities were most useful? Why?
		    - How has reconciliation been advanced?
		- Restitution 60'
			Provoke discussion about impact and impression of R&L session and exchanges and meaning and extent of reconciliation

	60'	**Discussion**			

12:45		- Other issues, potentially:
		    o Sustainability
		    o Impacting the TJR process
		    o Empowerment			

13:45		**Lunch**			

Annex 5. Summary of qualitative data collected

Date	Place	Type	No.	who	Organisation / role
Participants					
2/4	Heerasagala, Kandy	Focus group	9	Participants	-
2/4	WDC, Kandy	Focus group	11	Participants with disabilities	We are for rights
4/4	Meegammanawatta, Kandy	Focus group	11	Participants	-
6/4	Chavakacherie, Jaffna	Focus group	13	Participants	
6/4	Kaithady South	Focus group	8	Participants	
7/4	Sundarapuram, Jaffna	Focus group	5	Participants	
8/4	Yakawew, Kebitigollewa, A'pura	Focus group		Participants	
8/4	Gonumeriyawa, Kebitigollewa, A'pura	Focus group		Participants	
9/4	Kekirawa, A'pura	Focus group	7	Participants	
Facilitators					
3/4	WDC, Kandy	Workshop	15	Facilitators	-
5/4	Viluthu, Jaffna	Workshop	19	Facilitators	-
9/4	RPK, A'pura	Workshop		Facilitators	
Authorities					
25/3	SRCM, Colombo	Interview	1	Sanjeev	SCRM /
3/4	District HQ, Kandy	Interview	1	Ms Dishanthi	District Integration Officer
3/4	District HQ, Kandy	Interview	1	Ms. Anoma	Women's Development Officer
4/4	NRC Kandy	Interview	1	Mrs. Wirantha	Human Rights Commission / Commissioner
6/4	HRC Jaffna	Interview	1	Mr. Karagaraj	Human Rights Commission / Regional Coordinator
7/4	Jaffna	Interview	1	Kai Rajeevan	Divisional Local Authority / Reconciliation Officer
9/4	District HQ, A'pura	Interview		??	District Authority / Women's Development Officer
9/4	District HQ, A'pura	Interview		Sumit Rathnayake	District Authority / NGO Coordinataor
Project partners					
25/3	HI. Colombo	Interview		Gayani Meegamuge	HI / Project Manager
26/3	Colombo	Interview	1	Maitri + X	Viluthu /
2-4/4	WDC, Kandy	Interview	1	Ms.W.L.A.D. Chandrathilaka	WDC / Deputy Coordinator
3/4	WDC, Kandy	Group interview	3	WDC Project Staff	WDC / Project officers

3/4	WDC, Kandy	Interview	1	Kumar Weerarathne	HI / MEAL Manager
5/4	Viluthu, Jaffna	Group interview	2	Viluthu project staff	
5/4	Viluthu, Jaffna	Interview		Suganja Thuraisingam	HI Monitoring and Data Officer
7/4	Jaffna	Interview		Velraj	Viluthu / Mobilisation officer
8/4	Kekirawa, Anurdhapura	Interview	3	RPK project staff and management	RPK
Civil society					
2/4	WDC, Kandy	Interview	1	Nisha Shariff	We are for rights / Head
3/4	Kandy	Interview	1	Muthu	ISD
6/4	Jaffna	Interview	1	Anushani Alagarajah	Adayaalam Centre for Policy Research
9/4	Anurdhapura	Interview	1	Mr Nirmal	Rural Development Foundation

Annex 6.   Terms of Reference

The purpose of the project Empowering Women for an Inclusive and Sustainable Transitional Justice and Reconciliation (TJR) Process in Sri Lanka is to contribute to an inclusive, sustainable and ultimately successful transitional justice and reconciliation (TJR) process and mechanisms in Sri Lanka. The project objectives are; 1) Women, including marginalized women, support a platform for the purpose of promoting the TJR process and mechanisms across the dividing lines and 2) Women, including marginalized women, engage in a collaborative platform to provide common perspectives on TJR valued by relevant TJR stakeholders.

Humanity and Inclusion (HI) is seeking the services of a consultant/consultant firm to conduct a project final evaluation. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the project's results overall; the extent to which the project has achieved its outcomes as outlined in the proposal and results framework and contributed towards achieving its purpose. The evaluation is expected to provide practical recommendations for the design of effective future interventions on reconciliation/ peaceful coexistence based on the lessons learned from this project.

The project is funded by United Nations Peace Building Fund. Following a request from the General Assembly and the Security Council, the Secretary-General established a Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) for post-conflict peacebuilding initiatives in October 2006. The PBF constitutes an essential component of the enhanced UN architecture to provide for a more sustained engagement in support of countries emerging from conflict and will support peacebuilding activities which directly contribute to post-conflict stabilization and strengthen the capacity of Governments, national/local institutions and transitional or other relevant authorities. The United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) is currently supporting more than 120 projects in 25 countries by delivering fast, flexible and relevant funding. Since its creation to the end of 2015, PBF has allocated $623 million to 33 countries to help prevent (re)lapse into conflict and sustain peace.[1]

BACKGROUND

Peace Building Context in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's 26-year long civil war between government forces and Tamil separatists ended in 2009 with the establishment of a "negative peace". The conflicts' root causes remained unresolved, embedded in tensions between the Sinhalese majority and the Tamil minority, with Muslims and other groups, caught in-between. Deep mistrust between and within groups along ethnic, regional, religious, linguistic and political identity lines continued to erode the fabric of Sri Lankan society. The consequences of the war itself also remained largely unaddressed. This included psycho-social trauma, sexual and gender-based violence, a "culture of impunity" and a redress for long-held grievances (such as disappearances). As noted by the UN- commissioned Peacebuilding Context Assessment (March 2016), "the early post-war period from 2009 to 2014 was largely one of missed opportunities", constrained by a victorious regime that was largely hostile to the peacebuilding agenda.

In 2015, a new "national coalition" government was elected with a mandate around peacebuilding and governance reform. This new Government co- sponsored, at the end of 2015, a United Nations Human Rights Council resolution that draws a roadmap for establishing a set of Transitional Justice and Reconciliation (TJR) mechanisms. Most prominent among them is the Government plan to establish an Office of Missing Persons, a Truth, Reconciliation and Non-Recurrence Commission, a Judicial Mechanism with Special Counsel and an Office of Reparations. An independent Consultation Task Force on Reconciliation Mechanisms was mandated to conduct a public consultation process on the proposed initiatives. In addition, several ministries and other offices have been set up to coordinate those mechanisms and to prepare and advance reconciliation and related policies and programs. These include the Secretariat for Coordinating Reconciliation Mechanisms (SCRM) overseeing institutional coherency and the Office of National Unity and Reconciliation (ONUR), focused on non-recurrence through strengthening inter-ethnic and inter-religious relationships and sensitization.

However, the implementation of the agreed TJR mechanisms was slow during the 2015-2018 period due to many reasons. In early 2018, the party led by the former president won the local government elections, further deteriorating the TJR process in the country. This was aggravated further by the appointment of the former president as the Prime Minister by the current President in late 2018, ending the "National Coalition Government". This appointment was meanwhile reversed, but it remains however doubtful if TJR will be a major topic of the government's politicial agenda in future.

Overview of project implementation

The project centres on empowering women, including marginalized women (notably Women with Disability and

Women-headed Household), to promote their perspectives on TJR initiatives and to participate across the dividing lines in a collaborative platform to provide women's recommendations on the TJR process and mechanism in Sri Lanka by engaging in advocacy, awareness and accountability actions.

Project activities focus on making sure that members of existing women's groups of diverse language, religion and social situation are fully informed of TJR principles and the TJR process and mechanisms in Sri Lanka, and have opportunities to exchange and work together. The aim is to establish an informal collaborative platform of diverse women leaders, representing the individual members of their women's groups. Platform leaders will have the objective of defining common views and priorities, and engaging in actions to promote the direct participation of women involved in the project in TJR processes and mechanisms and recognition of their concerns by existing key TJR stakeholders (mainly the Office of Missing Persons).The outcome that will result from this is the increased trust, willingness and capacities among the involved women to work across the divide on TJRissues, facilitating ongoing UN and government peacebuilding efforts by 1) providing the perspectives of women, including marginalized women and 2) by promoting and enabling those efforts in their areas.

The theory of change orienting the project is: IF women, including marginalized women, are empowered as TJR advocates and are given the space to exchange across dividing lines of ethnicity, language, religion, social situation and economic status, improving mutual trust and understanding as well as skills and experience for working together on TJR, THEN they will be able to engage in joint actions to identify and promote common perspectives and recommendations for achieving an inclusive and sustainable TJR process, BECAUSE women's involvement fosters collaboration, creative solutions and the inclusion of vulnerable groups and minorities

Humanity & Inclusion (Handicap International-HI) is the coordinator of the project; implementing partners are Search for Common Ground (SFCG), Viluthu and Women's Development Center (WDC). The project is implemented in 6 districts in Sri Lanka: Ampara, Anuradhapura, Jaffna, Kandy, Monaragala, and Trincomalee and works with approximately 76 women groups represented through 6 district platforms. Project implementation started in April 2017 and ends in April 2019, after a No cost extension of 6 months.

The implementation of agreed TJR mechanisms and processes by the government were slow. The only TJR stakeholder been established during the project life was Office of Missing Persons (OMP). The project requested a no cost extension for 6 months to direct the advocacy actions of the project on OMP.

Project outcomes and outputs

- Outcome 1. Women, including marginalized women, support a platform for the purpose of promoting the TJR process and mechanisms across the dividing lines.
  - o Local women groups of diverse ethnicity, religion and language have increased knowledge and understanding on TJR through regular reflection and learning sessions.
  - o Women leaders of diverse ethnicity, religion, language and social situation are equipped with the sills to engage in advocacy on TJR.
  - o Women across the dividing lines have increased awareness of shared interests and differences with regards to issues not directly related to TJR.
- Outcome 2. Women, including marginalized women, engage in a collaborative platform to provide common perspectives on TJR valued by relevant TJR stakeholders
  - o 2.1 The women platform has identified common views, advocacy strategies and awareness messages on the TJR process and mechanisms.
  - o 2.2 The platform and the women networks members have undertaken joint advocacy, awareness and accountability actions.

PURPOSE AND USE OF EVALUATION

The evaluation shall examine the extent to which the project has achieved its outcomes as outlined in the proposal and results framework and contributed towards achieving its purpose. The consultancy is expected to provide practical recommendations for the design of effective future interventions on reconciliation/ peaceful coexistence based on the lessons learned from this project.

The purpose of this evaluation is to:

1. To identify outcomes and impacts of the project at different levels; community, district and national levels
2. Examine the extent to which the achievements have contributed towards the projects' expected outcomes as

outlined in the proposal and the results framework.

3.   Examine and analyse the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency as well as sustainability of project design, implementation approaches and key strategies and provide recommendations; both specific, immediate recommendations and broader recommendations (for future interventions on reconciliation and peaceful co-existence in Sri Lanka).

4.   Compile the lessons learnt of this project and key success & challenges and provide recommendations for future interventions on reconciliation/ peaceful coexistence in Sri Lanka given the HI's mandate and context in SL.

Scope of evaluation

The evaluation will consider the overall performance of the project, the overall project design, and implementation processes.

At the outset, evaluator should review theory of change that framed the programming logic of the project. The evaluator should propose, where necessary, suggestions for improvement or strengthening the existing theory of change.

Structurally, the evaluation can be broken down into the following three components: Evaluation of the impact of project

The evaluation will examine the effect of the project in order to assess its overall contribution to TJ process in Sri Lanka with special focus on reconciliation.

The broad questions to be answered are based on the OECD DAC evaluation criteria and the UN Evaluation Group standards (including those on gender mainstreaming), which have been adapted to the context at hand as follows:

Relevance:

What was the relevance of the proposed 'theory of change' for the project/ Sri Lanka? To what extent did the project respond to peace relevant gaps?

To what extent did the project help address women's specific concerns or attitudes regarding TJR/ peace and the peace process?

Relevance:

How relevant was the project's design to TJR/ peace process in SL? How relevant was the project's outcomes to TJR/ peace process in SL?

Effectiveness:

To what extent did the project achieve its intended outcomes?

To what extent did the outcomes clearly contribute to TJR/ peace process

To identify and asses which project activites, namely trainings, Reflection & Learning sessions and exchange events, are considered most effective and relevant in spporting the project outcomes?

To what extend did the project mainstreamed a gender dimension and supported gender-responsive peacebuilding?

Sustainability / ownership:

How likely are the results of the project to be sustained?

To identify and assess the sustainability of the established platforms and cooperation of women on TJ and specifically reconciliation. Hereby the structure of aligned women federations, changed attitudes as well as the political context shall be evaluated.

Efficiency:

How responsive has the project been to supporting TJR/ peace process in SL?

How efficient was the implementation of the project and how significant were the transaction costs? Overall, did the investments provide value for money?

Gender:

To what extent were gender considerations mainstreamed throughout the project? Overlapping:

To identify and assess the relevance, effectiveness and potential impact of initiated women platform's advocacy to promote transitional justice;

specifically, on reconciliation in Sri Lanka based on the existing capacities, attitudes and readiness of women and based on the political context.

To identify and explain if/how changes in attitudes, participation in project activities and initiation of the platforms have contributed to the transformation of conflict dynamics, on an individual level as well as on the level of women groups and women federations

Evaluation of management and consortium structure

The evaluation will examine the management of the project implementation in order to comment on the overall effectiveness and efficiency of arrangements. Some of the questions to be examined by the evaluation are as follows:

What was the implementation capacity of the individual partner agency?

How did different partners work together towards common strategic objectives?

What was the process for monitoring and compiling half yearly and annual reviews, and reports and what was the quality of those reports?

How were the principles of Do No Harm integrated in day-to-day management and oversight? Key lessons learned and recommendations

The evaluation should provide an overview of key lessons and recommendations based on the assessment of project results. The lessons and recommendations should speak to:

- the main programming factors of success;
- the main programming challenges;
- the main implementation/ administration factors of success;
- the main implementation/ administration challenges;
- the main challenges and ways to address them.

The major lessons and recommendations should come out clearly in the evaluation Executive Summary.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY/ APPROACH

The evaluation will be summative, and will employ a participatory approach whereby discussions with and surveys of key stakeholders provide/ verify the substance of the findings. Proposals should outline a strong mixed method approach to data collection and analysis, clearly noting how various forms of evidence will be employed vis-à-vis each other to triangulate gathered information.

It should be noted that project has conducted perception surveys – one at the outset and one at mid of the project – to measure the opinion of women on a number of key areas of relevance to the project. As such, the Evaluator will benefit from a rather rich existing dataset, which should be taken into consideration while devising the proposed methodological approach.

The project encourages the evaluators to employ innovative approaches to data collection and analysis. Proposals should be clear on the specific role each of the various methodological approaches in helping to address each of the evaluation questions. The methodologies for data collection may include but not necessarily be limited to:

- Desk review of documentation supplied by the project
- Key informant interviews and focus group discussions, as appropriate, with all major stakeholders, partners and beneficiaries
- Systematic review of monitoring data from the project;
- On-site field visits and interviews with the relevant project stakeholders
- Evaluation principles and standards

The evaluation findings will be evidence based and following the evaluation standards from OECD DAC and the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG).

Management arrangement and quality assurance process

A Reference Group will be created to provide advice on each of the deliverable. The Reference Group is likely to have

members from key in-country stakeholders and representation of PBSO. Its ToRs will be developed and shared with the evaluator prior to the commencement of the assignment. HI will approve each of the deliverables by the evaluator, following internal quality assurance and consultation with the Reference Group.

The evaluator will prepare an Inception Report to further refine the evaluation questions and detail its methodological approach, including data collection instruments. The Inception Report must be approved by the reference group prior to commencement of the evaluator's in-country data collection.

In addition, before leaving the field following in-country data collection, the evaluator will schedule a presentation of preliminary findings. A separate but brief validation exercise will be scheduled with the Reference Group prior to the submission of the draft report.

Day to day work of the evaluation team and their logistics will be supported by HI, with assistance from other project partners. The HI/ PBSO will retain the copyright over the evaluation.

EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION AND REQUIREMENTS

At a minimum, HI anticipates that the successful evaluator will be a senior expert (ideally with experience in peacebuilding evaluations). The evaluator should have a background on gender equality/ women's empowerment. S/he will be responsible for the evaluation methodology and the overall quality of and the timely submission of all the deliverables.

The Evaluator should possess the following skills and expertise, at a minimum:

- Masters degree in a relevant area including Peace/ conflict studies, social sciences, international development, research methods, or evaluation ;

- Seven to ten years of evaluation experience, including the use of mixed methods. Ideally some evaluation experience within post-conflict countries and peacebuilding programmes;

- Demonstrated familiarity with the United Nations and its Agencies, Funds and Programmes

- Demonstrated understanding of gender issues and women and peacebuilding within evaluation;

- Ability to plan effectively, prioritize, complete tasks quickly, adapt to changing context and demonstrated leadership in managing a team.

- Strong analytical skills, including with qualitative and quantitative research methods;

- Excellent communication skills, written and oral, including in cross-cultural contexts;

- Familiarity with the history of the conflict in Sri Lanka and the current context would be an advantage; Fluency in English; oral and written

BUDGET AND SCHEDULE

The total budget for this evaluation will include:

- A MINIMUM of 20 days and a MAXIMUM of 25 days of work by the Evaluator, out of which minimum 14 days should be in the field;

- One return ticket for Evaluator from place of residence/ current location to Sri Lanka (economy class), with actual cost reimbursed;

- Accommodation and daily allowance for the Evaluator for the days in Sri Lanka as per the HI Sri Lanka travel policy

Travel and accommodation within Sri Lanka would be organized and costs would be taken care of by HI. The schedule of the evaluation is expected to be as follows:

TASK/ SCHEDULE:

1/Scoping exercise: preliminary document review and write up of inception report.

Expected start (tentative): 15 February 2019

Expected finish (tentative): 25 February 2019

2/Field mission, including travel and interviews with all key stakeholders, beneficiaries and partners, site visits and surveys.

Expected start (tentative): 1st March 2019

Expected finish (tentative): 15th March 2019

3/Analysis and preparation of draft report and its presentation to HI and reference group for validation

Expected start (tentative):15th March 2019

Expected finish (tentative): 20th March

4/Finalizing of report following comments Expected start (tentative): 20th March Expected finish (tentative): 25th March

KEY EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

The Evaluator is responsible for the timely provision and quality of all evaluation deliverables. The approval of deliverables will be based on OECD DAC and UNEG standards for evaluations, tailored for the specific purposes of peacebuilding evaluations.

Deliverable: Inception report

Content:

- The inception report will have a maximum of 20 pages and include:
- - the evaluation team's understanding of the TORs and any data or other concerns arising from the provided materials and initial meetings/
  - interviews and strategies for how to address perceived shortcomings
- - key evaluation questions and methodological tools for answering each question;
- - list of key risks and risk management strategies for the evaluation;
- - stakeholder analysis
- - proposed work plan for the field mission;
- - table of contents for the evaluation report.

(The Report will be approved by HI and receive Reference Group endorsement prior to consultants' field travel). Percentage of payment: 30%

Deliverable: Presentation of preliminary results and aide memoir

Content:

The aide memoire will have a maximum of 5 pages and will include:

- - a brief summary of the purpose of the evaluation;
- - an overview of the mission, including activities assessed and stakeholders consulted;
- - an overview of preliminary findings and lessons; an explanation of next steps.

Deliverable: Draft report

Content : The draft report will have around 25 pages, inclusive of an Executive Summary and annexes. The draft report will be reviewed by HI and the Reference Group.

Annex 7. Evaluation data summary table

Evaluation question / sub-question	Data source / indicator	Comment
IMPACT		
Validity of ToC Demonstration of causal links between outputs and outcomes		
Empowered women can identify and promote an inclusive TJR process	Women engaged: - Final evaluation interviews / FGDs / workshops Programme & partner staff: - Final evaluation interviews / FGDs	An effort will be made to understand what 'empowerment' means here and how it is conceptualized in the project and by women engaged with it: - Is this empowerment to influence the TJR system, in which case it appears overstated - Is this empowerment linked to women's disempowerment in the community? And does this project address that?
Women's involvement fosters collaboration and inclusion	Women engaged: - Perception surveys (1,bc) - Final evaluation interviews / FGDs / workshops	
Women's advocacy can impact TJR stakeholders.	TJR stakeholders / NGOs etc - Final evaluation interviews	Not explicit in ToC, but implicit in programme design.
Outcome 1: Women, including marginalized women, support a platform for the purpose of influencing the TJR process and mechanisms across the dividing lines		
	Attitudes and practices surveys of women leaders and participants (M3/9/17) - Outcome 1a: % of women willing to work with women different language, religion and social situation to try to address your mutually recognized concerns - Outcome 1b: % of women who express confidence that a collaborative platform of women on TJR contributes to an inclusive and sustainable TJR process and addresses the issues of war-affected households - Outcome 1c: % of women who report that platform objectives and actions are defined and undertaken through effective collaboration between members of diverse ethnicity, language and religion Outputs 1.1 & 1.3 (below) Qualitative data will be used to understand the validity of these indicators: - Interviews / FGDs / workshops with women participants and leaders	1a: Baseline value exceeded target value: implies this outcome unnecessary? - Investigate district dependence 1b: Baseline value almost reached target value No baseline data for 1c – only M9/17
1.1 Diverse women's groups of diverse	Output 1.1: % of local women's group members in the target districts	

ethnicity, religion have increased knowledge and understanding of TJR through regular reflection and learning sessions	reporting an improved knowledge of the TJR process and mechanisms (M3/9/17)	
1.2 Women leaders of diverse ethnicity, religion, language and social situation are equipped with the skills to engage in advocacy and monitoring on TJR	Output 1.2: % of women demonstrating skills to carry out inclusive evidence-based advocacy and accountability monitoring of the TJR process and mechanisms: test reports Measure quality of advocacy and monitoring of TJR, through qualitative data: - Women's leaders; - TJR stakeholders; - Programme and partner staff.	
1.3 Women across the dividing lines have increased awareness of shared interests and differences with regards to issues not directly related to TJR	Output 1.3.1% of women participating in events who report that they have increased awareness of shared and divergent interests of women of other ethnicity, language and religion as a result of exchange events: post-event surveys.	
Outcome 2: Women, including marginalized women, engage in a collaborative platform to provide common perspectives on TJR valued by relevant TJR stakeholders		
	Outcome 2a: # of post-project activity plans of the women's platform	What does this mean? One activity per group?
	Outcome 2b: % of relevant authorities and stakeholders surveyed who report being aware of women's inputs and acknowledging that they should be taken into account to improve the TJR process. Final evaluation interviews with TJR stakeholders	Is claiming to be aware enough? Need also to confirm that their understanding is correct!
	Outcome 2c: % of the officials responsible for the existing TJR mechanisms who report to being committed to include the perspectives and recommendations put forward by the women's platform because they will ensure a more inclusive and sustainable peace. Final evaluation interviews with TJR stakeholders	How useful is an expression of 'commitment"? Use interviews to understand if this has been acted upon.
Output 2.1 The women's platform has identified common views, advocacy strategies and awareness messages on the TJR process and mechanisms	Output 2.1.1 % of women participants who agree with the common views and messages selected for advocacy and awareness / survey	
Output 2.2 The platform and the women's networks members have undertaken joint advocacy, awareness and accountability actions	Output 2.2.1 % of advocacy, awareness and accountability actions, defined by the platform that have been carried out at district and national level / Advocacy plans and action reports	

	Output 2.2.2 % of actions reported at least in one vernacular media outlet	Where are these recorded?

RELEVANCE

Relevance of the proposed 'theory of change' for the project and for needs in Sri Lanka more broadly - To what extent did the project respond to relevant gaps in the TJR process? - How relevant was the project's design to TJR and the peace process in SL?	Use qualitative data from those close to the process to answer these questions: Interviews with officials, TJR stakeholders, (I)NGOs, to understand: - Role of women in the process, or lack of it - Limitations / constraints of process due to lack of women's input - Other sources of information about women's perspectives input to process - Similar projects seeking to empower women	
- To what extent did the project help address women's specific concerns or attitudes regarding TJR and the peace process?	Compare how women articulate their justice needs with what the process can deliver: - Perception surveys regarding women's needs - Interviews with women - Compare with what process offers in these respects	To what extent does the process, and TJ generally, prioritise issues that are not important to women? To what extent – if any – has the project challenges this, or has it just advanced a definition of TJ external to the women concerned? - If so what could have ben done differently?
- How relevant was the project's outcomes to TJR and the peace process in SL?	To what extent have the project outcomes affected how TJR unfolds in Sri Lanka? - Interviews with TJR stakeholders and programme staff	If little effect on TJR process, why and how can this be changed?

Effectiveness

Which project activities, among trainings, reflection & learning sessions and exchange events, are most effective and relevant in achieving the project's intended outcomes?	Explicitly seek to understand from which activities greatest impact came: - Interviews / FGDs / workshops with participants and women's leaders, and programme staff - Cross-reference this with outputs where greatest impact was seen	
To what extent did the project mainstream a gender dimension and support gender-responsive peacebuilding?	Compare and contrast women's ideas of TJR and pecaebuiding with the mainstream process in Sri Lanka: what are the differences, and why? - Interviews / FGDs / workshops with participants and women's leaders, and programme staff - Interviews with TJR stakeholders	Where gendered ideas of justice conflicted with normative ideas of TJ, which was prioritised?

Efficiency

How efficient was the implementation of the project in terms of use of all resources and delivery of outcomes?	Understand perspectives of those close to project - programme staff, including partners. - Interviews: programme staff and others	Where some output targets were achieved before the project started, how could a different approach have used resources better?
Overall, did project costs provide value for		

money?		
Are there alternative ways in which equivalent or improved outcomes could have been delivered at lower cost?	Solicit input from all those engaged with the project for suggestions for alternative approaches: - Interviews / FGDs / workshops: participants, women's leaders, programme staff, TJR stakeholders - Comparisons with any projects with similar goals	Are there other projects with similar goals that could be reviewed? - e.g. GIJTR TRF?
Sustainability		
How likely are the outcomes of the project to be sustained?		
How sustainable are the platforms and structures used and supported by the project, in terms of ensuring continuity of project outcomes?	Seek to measure: - Prospects for continuity of women's organisations and their TJR role; - Women's continued engagement with organisations Thru interviews with: - Engaged women and leaders; - Programme and partner staff. Outcome 2a: # of post-project activity plans of the women's platform	
How sustainable is the cooperation among women on TJ and specifically reconciliation that the project has advanced?	Confirm women's likely continued collaboration: how robust in the light of potential future tensions? Thru interviews with: - Engaged women and leaders; - Programme and partner staff.	
How sustainable are any relevant changes – in the structures of engaged women's groups, in women's attitudes and in TJR stakeholders – that the project has advanced?	What changes have occurred in women's groups during project (capacity, funding etc)? What are the prospects for their continuation? Thru interviews with: - Engaged women and leaders; - Programme and partner staff.	
GENDER		
To what extent was the project driven by gender analysis and was the conception of the project gender-differentiated?	Understand gender analysis that drove project: Thru interviews with: - Programme and partner staff	To what extent was this analysis rooted in the perspectives of the women concerned and to what extent reflected a global / Colombo understanding of TJR? If eth TJR process is not gender sensitive, what did/ could the project do to inject a gender perspective?
Did women and men make an equal	Thru interviews with:	

contribution to the design of the project?	- Programme and partner staff	
To what extent were gender considerations mainstreamed throughout the project?	Thru interviews with: - Engaged women and leaders; - Programme and partner staff Workshops with: - Engaged women and leaders;	Meetings with women and women's leaders, and in particular district workshops will permit a space where they can express any areas of the programme that did not engage appropriately with gender issues as they perceive them.
Cross-cutting / overlapping issues		
To identify and assess the relevance, effectiveness and potential impact of the initiated women platform's advocacy to promote transitional justice;	A review of all data linked to impact, quant and qual.	
What is the outlook for substantive reconciliation in Sri Lanka based on the existing capacities, attitudes and readiness of women and based on the political context?	A review of all data linked to impact, quant and qual.	There will be limits on the extent to which the evaluation can answer this question globally, due to: - Limited geographical coverage and limited qualitative data that can be collected; - Inability to investigate local dynamics in any depth
To identify and explain if and how changes in attitudes, participation in project activities and initiation of the platforms have contributed to the transformation of conflict dynamics, on an individual level as well as on the level of women's groups and women's federations.	A review of qual. Data collected from women engaged in the project: Thru interviews and workshops with: - Engaged women and leaders	
Evaluation of project implementation		
Were capacities of individual partner agencies sufficient to deliver on project objectives? If not, where did they fail to be adequate and how could this be addressed?	Thru interviews with: - Programme and partner staff	
How did different partners work together towards common strategic objectives and was this coordination sufficient to deliver on project objectives?	Thru interviews with: - Programme and partner staff	
Was the monitoring and reporting process adequate across the breadth of the project to measure and maintain the quality of project delivery?	Thru interviews with: - Programme and partner staff – in particular M&E staff	

How were the principles of Do No Harm and other ethical prerogatives integrated in day-to-day management and oversight?	Thru interviews with: - Programme and partner staff	