

Oxfam GB Project Effectiveness Review Management Response

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Name of Project reviewed: Raising Her Voice – Pan Africa

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Summary of contribution scores

Targeted Outcome	Score	Comments / Contribution of other evidenced explanations (high, medium, low)
Achieve continent-wide ratification of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women preferably without harmful reservations.	 Outcome realised in part & evidence that intervention made a crucial contribution	By January 2013, 48 of the 54 AU member states have signed the protocol, 36 of which have ratified and deposited it. Therefore an impressive 73% of the target outcome expressed in the ToC has materialized . In this research we were not able to investigate all the ratification processes where SOAWR might have been involved during the life of RHV Pan-Africa project, (i.e. Ivory Coast, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Guinea, Kenya, Swaziland, Uganda and Zimbabwe). We have zoomed in on the case of Kenya where we found sufficient evidence to conclude that Kenyan civil society was a key driving force to achieve ratification in Kenya and that SOAWR members were at the forefront of this struggle . A senior government official directly involved in the ratification process stated that the Kenyan ratification would not have been possible without the work of civil society. When asked what civil society she was referring to she identified members of the Coalition.
Increase lobbying capabilities of the SOAWR Coalition to promote the Protocol and to hold member states to account.	 Outcome realised in full & evidence that intervention made a crucial contribution	Members of SOAWR are now more aware and more knowledgeable of the Protocol and have worked with it within the daily programming of their organizations. They have also gained confidence and are more efficient at navigating the politics of ratification and domestication processes both at the AU and at national levels. Furthermore SOAWR as a brand is well known and respected by policy makers for their work on the Protocol. Also the Coalition has contributed to increase this status among their individual members. The financial support of Oxfam GB through RHV to the SOAWR secretariat has contributed significantly to the strengthening of the coalition. Beyond the monetary support, Oxfam has helped building capacity among members and has created learning opportunities sharing their expertise especially in the area of lobbying.

1. What follow-up to the review have you undertaken or planned (if any) e.g. discussion, analysis, workshop?

- SOAWR is currently undergoing another independent evaluation to review the coalitions work over the last 9 years as well as identify the way forward for the coalition. The evaluations will inform the coalition's strategic direction for the next 5 years.
- SOAWR is going to be having a members meeting in **Nairobi, Kenya from July 8-12, 2013**. The Key objective of the meeting is to review and discuss the finding of the two review processes (i) the RHV review and (ii) the above mentioned review. Further to this, the members will be assessing the 10 years of the AU Protocol on African Women's rights and taking opportunity to re-strategise for the next 5 years.
- SOAWR is currently in the process of developing its 5 year (2013-2018) strategic plan.

2. Overall, do the findings concur with your own expectations or assessment of the project/programme's effectiveness?

The overall findings do concur with our expectations however the limitations of the Effectiveness review should be noted i.e. the time constraints as the review was conducted in December 2012, one week before Christmas which made it difficult to reach a number of stakeholders particular those in government and the African Union since in this region organisations shut down around Christmas holidays.

As regards outcome 1: **Achieve continent wide ratification of the Protocol on the rights of Women preferably without reservations:** 73% of this target outcome has been achieved, **making the African Women's Protocol the fastest Protocol to come into force** as well as ratified in the African Union. SOAWR through its members has been instrumental to lobbying governments at both continental and national levels increasing awareness around the protocol and lobbying governments to sign. While the preference was for clean reservations of the protocol more conservative states have lodged reservations on the Protocol Articles to do with land rights, sexual and reproductive health rights, and the minimum age of marriage. The coalition for example has worked effectively to mobilise and campaign to remove the reservations for example in the Gambia as noted on the review and efforts are geared to lifting reservations in Kenya and Uganda.

The evaluation identifies two main influential factors for governments to act and ratify as an important AU meeting hosted by the country, or ratification prompted by pressure from regional and national civil societal organisations typically SOAWR members. However the report goes on to state that it is not possible to quantify the percentage of influence in each of the processes. While it may not be possible to quantify in the percentages. It should be noted that lobbying by national and regional civil society is more significant to the ratification of the Protocol than the hosting of an AU event. However hosting of AU event provides opportunity to bring the lobbying done over time to ahead and make a final push for the country to ratify. This is particularly evidenced in the cited case of Kenya but other cases such as Equatorial Guinea also can be seen in other ratifications by other state parties.

As regards outcome 2: **Increasing lobbying capabilities of the SOAWR coalition to promote the Protocol and hold member states to account** – in this regards the report states that the outcome has materialised and that the SOAWR coalition had been strengthened during the course of the RHV project.

The report however states that there has been a challenge to find sufficient evidence to rigorously state whether and how SOAWR members have increased its members have increased their lobbying capabilities. With regards to this finding the limitations of the report i.e. timing and therefore inability to reach policy makers is significant.

However the report makes findings from which the inference of increased lobbying capabilities can be drawn. The increase in numbers and outreach of the coalition giving it higher level of legitimacy and the enabling coalition members to serve as spearheads and spokespeople on issues pertaining to the Protocol at national level examples are cited in three RHV countries Tanzania, Uganda, and Nigeria where coalition members have contributed to drafting of Gender Bills. The report also notes the SOAWR has increased visibility and legitimacy of their members with duty bearers and policy makers e.g. at the African Union Commission and at African Union Summits.

It also must be noted that because the review was focusing on the RHV countries, it could not capture elements of successful outcomes in non RHV countries.

3. Did the final results of the Effectiveness Review identify areas that were particularly strong in the project (ie large impact)?

The achievement of 73% of the target outcome expressed in the theory of change i.e. **Achieve continent wide ratification of the Protocol on the rights of Women preferably without reservations**

If so, please comment briefly on why you think this was so.

- Building a coalition with a clear purpose i.e. ratification and implementation of the Protocol
- Strong institutional and personal bonds
- Relationships with organisations across the continent that can bring expertise and resources to bear on complex issues
- Increasing the membership has amplified SOAWRs outreach capacity
- Creating strong links with national organisations
- The score card, as naming and shaming strategy, which in 2005 ensure a total of 11 countries ratified the treaty
- Awareness raising targeting government and civil society actors, professionals (e.g. legal practitioners) and the general public

Secondly, the success of enabling ordinary women's rights actors and civil society representatives to be capacitated and facilitated to access corridors of power and decision making at the continental level is a huge achievement.

4. Did the final results of the Effectiveness Review identify areas that were weak or very weak (ie no or very little impact)?

- The need for a clear internal communication strategy that creates a cohesive culture and addresses the needs of members
- need for long term/strategic funding
- need to generate evidence that can enable SOAWR attribute results to its and/or its members' work
- need for members to readily identify themselves and their work with SOAWR (its noted that only 8 members have SOAWR on their websites and also only in news sections etc)

5. a) Is the reviewed project continuing? If yes, what actions are being taken in response to the weak areas identified in question 4?

- SOAWR will be having a meeting of its members in July 2013. This meeting will provide a forum for members to discuss these identified gaps and weaknesses and to propose concrete ways of addressing them through their 5 year strategic plan.
- SOAWR will so be entering the planning phase for its new strategic plan and the outcome of the review together with the second evaluation will inform future programming and strategies development to advance the campaign to enable SOAWR realize set goals.
- The members' meeting, the review of SOAWR, as well as the development of a new strategic plan are all processes that are intended to increase cohesion within the coalitions as well as strengthen the SOAWR brand and work and clarify expectations of members from the coalition and expectation of the coalition from its members and as map a way forward for the coalition and the work on the Protocol at national levels.

b) What actions are you planning in response to the Programme Learning Considerations?

Programme Learning Considerations:

- A recommendation coming from most stakeholders for SOAWR and particularly for Oxfam is to take a long-term approach, securing funds and focusing increasingly on national contexts.
- Increase the level of engagement of partners via the production of an internal communication strategy that creates a cohesive culture and addresses the potential and needs of all members.
- SOAWR members are going to consult on the need to develop/or not a common shared values (such as their views on abortion or sex workers) beyond the common purpose of encouraging a conducive legal environment.
- More effort to capture strategies and results so that institutional memory is not lost.
- Generate evidence that can enable SOAWR attribute results to its and/or its members' work

Actions in response:

- Oxfam and SOAWR have submitted joint proposals to NORAD and SIDA, and are currently undertaking fund raising activities as well as the development of a resource mobilisation strategy.
- The Pan-Africa Programme's GJ strategy focuses on domestication; implementation and enforcement of the Protocol at national level, as well as seeking harmful reservations on Protocol provisions being lifted.
- The Pan Africa programme is currently developing a Legal Empowerment Programme based on the RHV
- SOAWR has hired a new co-ordinator
- SOAWR will be having a meeting of its members in July 2013 and this meeting will provide a forum for members
- SOAWR will so be entering the planning phase for its new strategic plan.

6. If the project/humanitarian response is ending or has already ended, what learning from the review will you apply to relevant new projects in the future? How can the Regional Centre and Oxford support these plans?

Currently the Pan Africa Gender Justice Programme is prioritising fundraising and working to secure funding for phase two of the RHV project. As noted, proposals that build on learning, challenges as well as networks and stakeholders established in the duration of the RHV Project have been sent out.

The PAP-Director and Gender Justice Lead presented the programme and the opportunities for country programmes to join the RHV brand at a recent RLT planning meeting for southern Africa with a view to scale up the RHV project and transform it into a regional programme. This was discussed and is currently explored. Further to this, the Southern Africa RC has requested the support of the PAP GJ lead in developing a regional programme for Southern Africa which will learn and lean on the RHV.

The programme is also working closely with the RHV global coordinator to produce various products out of the overall evaluation to ensure as an organisation we learn and internalise the success as well as the challenged tied to the programme. As well as linking it to policy and the campaign team.

One of the critical challenge of which the team is already working with both regional as well as Oxford funding team is around securing a long term funding for RHV phase two: Legal Empowerment Proposal. We hope to continue this effort and ensure we build on the programme and ultimately continue the campaign for gender equality and women empowerment across Africa.

The reports will be published by Oxfam. If you have objections to this, please say so and explain why.

No Objection.