



**REPORT
on the
Internal Mid-Term evaluation
of the
Women2030
Programme**

Women CSOs networking to realize the
Sustainable Development Goals (Post 2015)

15 May 2019



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REPORT

of the

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**Women CSOs networking to realize the
Sustainable Development Goals (Post-2015)**

By co-implementers

WECF, AWPLD, GFC and WEP

**As part of the Framework Partnership Agreement with the European
Commission**

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Acronyms

ALGA	Rural Women's Association in Kyrgyzstan (partner)
APFSD	Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development
APWLD	Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development
ARUWE	Action for Rural Women's Empowerment, partner in Uganda
BIOM	Ecological Movement in Kyrgyzstan (partner)
CBD	Convention on Biological Biodiversity
CBO	Community Based Organization
CENWOR	Centre for Women's Research, partner in Sri Lanka
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
CWR	Centre for Women's Resources in the Philippines (partner)
DEVCO	EU's Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FFW	Foundation for Women, Thailand (partner)
FPA	Framework Partnership Agreement (with the EC)
FKM BKA YWU	Organization supporting women with disabilities in Aceh, Indonesia (partner)
GIZ	German International Cooperation
GFC	Global Forest Coalition
GIM	Gender impact assessment and monitoring tool
GWA	Gender and Water Alliance
HLPF	High Level Political Forum
MAT	Monitoring and Accountability Tool
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
MONFEMNET	Movement for women's human rights in Mongolia (partner)
NGO	Non-government organization
REFACOF	African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests
ROM	Result Oriented Monitoring
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SILAKA	Cambodian NGO (partner)
SO	Specific Objective
TG	Target group
ToT	Training of Trainers
UN	United Nations
UNEA	United Nations Environmental Assembly
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change
WECF	Women Engage for a Common Future
WEP	Women Environmental Programme
WOREC	Women's Rehabilitation Centre, partner in Nepal

Executive Summary

The Women2030 programme aims to build the capacity of women's and gender civil society organizations to advance gender-responsive sustainable development policies, especially related to the implementation of the SDGs, through participation in monitoring and policy development, mobilizing citizen's support and demonstrating best practices. The three areas of the programme are capacity building, policy advocacy and communications and outreach.

The Women2030 project is part of the Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA), which all the coalition partners signed with the European Commission, which supports global and regional network organisations of civil society. The implementing coalition partners are Women Engage for a Common Future (global network of women and environment organisations), Global Forest Coalition (global network of indigenous and forest groups), Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (a regional network of women and feminist organisations in Asia), Women Environmental Programme (a regional women and environment network in Africa) and Gender and Water Alliance (a global network of civil society gender and water experts).

The 54 month-project started in May 2016 and will be completed by November 2020. An internal Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) was conducted in the first quarter of 2019 by the co-applicants with the support of a consultant¹. It was initially planned for mid-2018, but moved because of an overlap with an external evaluation from the European Commission. The MTE aims to reflect on the activities and achievements so far, to learn from this and to plan for the remaining period. This report presents the findings of this MTE review.

Implemented activities: There is strong consensus among the co-applicants and the interviewed partners that the activities of the Women2030 project were useful and appropriate, and crucial to making SDG monitoring and review possible. Especially useful is the capacity building through trainings by and for the Target Groups, regional partner meetings and media trainings. The increased understanding on gender equality and the SDGs is highly appreciated and crucial for engaging in further Women2030 activities, such as advocacy and outreach. Obtaining new skills is also valued, such as drafting shadow reports, conducting gender assessments and negotiation and advocacy skills. The feedback about sub-granting was positive for local beneficiaries but quite a burden for the co-applicants and their partners due to overly high monitoring and administrative costs when put in relation with their small size.

Constraints: The nature of encountered constraints varied from structural barriers, such as patriarchal values and traditional gender roles, to more practical constraints, such as the remoteness of the communities of local community-based organisations (CBOs). Various identified constraints are part of the *raison d'être* of the Women2030 project and are hence addressed by the project. Practical constraints are usually addressed by finding local solutions wherever possible, but sometimes accepting that a desired solution is not fully in reach. Overall, despite constraints, the implementation of Women2030 has been progressing largely as planned.

Implementation arrangements: The implementation arrangements largely suit the needs of the co-applicants and partners and the project aligns well with the existing objectives of the partners. The participatory approach and flexibility in implementation to meet local needs are much appreciated. Still, various implementation-related challenges were identified, such as the high administrative burden, the limited budget and the requirement to bring in 20% co-funding.

¹ Kitty Bentvelsen of Femconsult, Consultants for Gender and Development

Efficiency and effectiveness: The coalition partners consider the implementation of the Women2030 project as efficient and effective, which is in line with the positive findings in the ROM report². In particular, the combination of capacity building and community-based activities is found to enhance the project's effectiveness. Several suggestions for strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness were provided, see also the recommendations from this MTE.

Impact so far: Within the first two years, the project has already achieved many of its targets. Also examples of genuine outcomes and impact could be reported at four levels: (i) at organizational level; (ii) at the level of increased capacities and awareness; (iii) at community and individual level - such as more women's leadership and self-confidence-; and (iv) as a result of advocacy, such as changed policies and the inclusion of gender concerns in national plans.

Sustainability and follow-up: Many of the capacities built and results achieved are likely to last. At the same time, there is general consensus that the continuation of activities, such as monitoring of SDGs and influencing policies, will require continued support and funding. The co-applicants and partners have the ambition to continue working on this, preferably in a joint follow-up project. Sufficient funding for follow-up is both essential and a challenge. During the meeting in Bangkok the modalities for a follow-up project were discussed based on current lessons learnt, and funding opportunities are being explored.

Visibility and linkages with EU delegations: In line with the recommendation of the ROM report, it was reaffirmed during the Bangkok meeting that EU support could be made more visible in Women2030 publications, at least those in the English language and where there is no risk that EU visibility could have a negative impact on target groups. The ROM report also observed little cooperation between Women2030 partners and local EU delegations, which the ROM consultants described as a missed opportunity. The Women2030 coalition partners are in principle open for more cooperation -e.g. to provide input into EU consultations-, however, some partners observed that earlier attempts to contact delegations had not been fruitful; others felt that certain EU policies, such as on trade, which are contradictory to the SDGs and the achievements of women's human rights that the partners are working on, e.g. those on natural resources, on public services and women's democratic voices and participation, thus undoing the benefits of the EU support for civil society.

Recommendations based on lessons learnt: The co-applicants and partners participating in the MTE exercise and/or the Bangkok meeting provided ideas and recommendations for the remaining 20 months of the Women2030 project. These recommendations focus on further improving the project's efficiency and effectiveness and/or expanding successful activities, also to enhance the project's impact and sustainability.

1. **More capacity building**, partly because one-time trainings were not always effective enough but also to expand successful training, consultations, exchanges and/or regional meetings.
2. **More networking:** Building more and better networks and alliances, integrating women's groups in broader movements and/or creating "Women's Major Groups" in countries where Women2030 is being implemented.
3. **More targeted advocacy:** a need for flexibility, targeting those policy levels, including local level, where there are most needs and/or opportunities for changing policies.

² A ROM exercise (Results Oriented Monitoring) commissioned by the EU (DEVCO) took place at the end of 2018, and included field visits to the Netherlands, Paraguay, Nigeria and Thailand. The report was presented in January 2019

4. **Supporting diversity:** The Women2030 coalition supports diversity, solidarity and cross-movement building, with women's rights and women's leadership as a main focus. This can also include working more often with men or non-binary persons, whenever appropriate.
5. **Improving tools and discontinuation of MAT:** Suggestions were made to improve some of the Women2030 tools; the MAT tool will be discontinued as less useful than expected.
6. **Sub-granting:** The small sub-grants (€1000-2000) have stimulated local capacity building activities and created local ownership, but the high administrative and monitoring costs involved in the "sub-grant" format has caused disproportionate administrative burden for local community organisations up to the Women2030 coalition partners. It is therefore strongly recommended to bring the sub-granting under another budget line (i.e. capacity building), requiring a simpler administration involving only one invoice.
7. **Follow-up programme:** A follow-up programme, building on the Women2030 experiences, is highly relevant; the identification of feasible project ideas and funding options is a priority.
8. **Linking with EU delegations:** To increase the visibility of the project and garner more support, seeking cooperation with EU Delegations in target countries is recommended where it would be preferable and seen as advantageous for the local partners.
9. **Show cases:** The coalition agreed on the development of one or several coherent and powerful showcases to demonstrate the main achievements of the Women2030 project as a coalition and to enhance the visibility of the Women2030 project, e.g. also by producing joint SDG shadow reports.
10. **Budget changes:** The implementation of several recommendations requires budget changes and unlocking the contingency reserves. This is also needed for participating in important events –earlier unforeseen– in the remaining project years, such as Beijing +25 and HLPF2020.

Introduction

This report presents the findings and recommendations forthcoming from the internal mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the Women2030 project, which was conducted in the first quarter of 2019. This evaluation was included in the project proposal to the EU and foreseen in the budget. It is meant as an internal learning process contributing to increased insight in the project's functioning and its results so far. The MTE also aimed to increase coherence, improve the strategy and activities for the remaining years of the project, reflect on the exit strategy and options for follow-up and/or up-scaling.

“Regular contact with GFC and capacity building exercises have been very useful, including the interview for this mid-term evaluation that helped reflect on what has been done.”

- GFC partner in Paraguay

The Women2030 project

The overall objective of the Women2030 project is: “Build capacity of women’s and gender civil society organizations to advance local, national and regional gender-responsive sustainable development policies (Agenda 2030 and climate) through participation in policy development and monitoring, mobilizing citizen’s support and demonstrating best practices”. The project not simply aims to contribute to the implementation of the SDGs as they are, but to ensure the achievement of Development Justice by addressing more structural inequalities. The Women2030 partners are mainly working on SDG2 (zero hunger), SDG5 (gender equality), SDG6 (water), SDG7 (energy), SDG8 (decent work), SDG10 (reducing inequalities), SDG12 (responsible production and consumption), SDG13 (climate) and SDG15 (sustainable ecosystems). The activity areas of the Women2030 project are (i) capacity building, (ii) policy advocacy, and (iii) communication and outreach.

The co-applicants and partners

The Women2030 program is implemented by a coalition of co-applicants, who have all signed a Framework Agreement with the European Commission (contract nr. CSO-LA/2016/374-340). WECF International (Women Engage for a Common Future) is the lead applicant, a global network organisation based in the Netherlands. There are four co-applicants: the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD, Thailand), the Global Forest Coalition (GFC, Paraguay/Netherlands), the Gender and Water Alliance (GWA, Netherlands/Bangladesh) and the Women Environmental Programme (WEP, Nigeria) and the all being regional or global network organisations. However, per February 2019 GWA, the smallest co-applicant in terms of budget allocation, had to withdraw from this project because GWA was reduced to local activities in one country only and could not raise the 20% co-funding for its global activities as required. The activities with two of the three target group 1 partners of GWA (in Brazil and Bolivia), including the project coordinator from GWA, have been taken over by another co-applicant (GFC); the activities with GWA’s office in Bangladesh ended per end of February 2019. GWA has not been directly involved in this MTE; however, the former GWA staff member who joined GFC, did participate in data collection among previous GWA partners.

Apart from the (co-) applicants, the project targets 60 Expert CSOs as target group 1 and 200 member CSOs as target group 2 (all member organisations of the co-applicants); 2000 local CSOs as target group 3 (via the CSOs); and 10,000 local beneficiaries as target group 4. The duration of the Women2030 project is 54 months; it started in May 2016. More information on the project can be found in relevant project documents and on the project’s website (www.women2030.org).

About the MTE

The MTE was conducted by the co-applicants with the support of a consultant³. The evaluation process consisted of the following steps:

- Design of the evaluation approach and the evaluation questions by the co-applicants with input of the consultant (see Annex 1 for the evaluation questions)
- Data collection among partners and beneficiaries, analysis and answering the key evaluation questions by each co-applicant (see Annex 2 for information on the methodology)
- Review of reporting received from the co-applicants by the consultant and elaboration of a consolidated draft report
- Discussing the draft report and collecting additional information during the 3-day MTE and planning meeting held in Bangkok from 28 to 30 March 2019 by the co-applicants and the consultant
- Finalizing the report by the consultant, in coordination with the co-applicants.

This report thus presents the findings of the MTE by having consolidated the individual reporting by the four co-applicants. The sections in this report cover the evaluation questions of Annex 1, but with some adjustments in the order and/or by combining several evaluation questions into one section.

³ Kitty Bentvelsen of Femconsult, Consultants for Gender and Development

1. Assessment of the implemented activities

The main activities implemented by the co-applicants and partners since the start of the Women2030 project were:

- **Capacity building:** ToT training of co-applicant staff and of 60 partner organisations on many topics relevant to the project (targets achieved, but some continuation) and development of monitoring and training tools (all achieved, apart from MAT); training and capacity building of local CSOs and sub-granting to these CSOs for need-based activities such as trainings, policy advocacy, outreach, demonstrations, etc.; and capacity building of community-based organisations.
- **Policy Advocacy:** Gender-sensitive audits at country level to feed into SDG monitoring; policy consultations and drafting shadow reports; regional / global network meetings; facilitating women's participation in regional policy processes and global (UN, etc.) policy meetings, including development of policy papers.
- **Communication and outreach:** Media ToT training and media toolkit development (finalized); implementation of social media and other outreach campaigns.

There is strong consensus among the co-applicants and the interviewed partners that the activities of the Women2030 project implemented so far were useful and appropriate; the project being crucial to making SDG monitoring and review possible.

“Despite the systematic challenges, all partners were extremely positive about the project activities and their usefulness and appropriateness” – APWLD

“This project has contributed to the appreciation of this new form of struggle, i.e. the monitoring of the SDGs. This is something that we don't really do before. We now engage with the Parliament. The project will help to strengthen the people's movements, including at grassroots level. We have yet to see as to where this will take us. The appreciation comes from us in the organization.” – CWR, Philippines

*“The activities of this project are very useful; from a personal point of view, of REFACOF, as well as of beneficiary communities. As far as I am concerned, I want to thank this project because I have strengthened my capacities. Before the project, I had a very vague idea of the SDGs ...”
- African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF), Cameroon*

Many examples were given of activities that were useful. Commonly mentioned were the capacity building activities through creative trainings, the regional partner meetings and the media trainings. The regular partners' meetings were identified by partners as being a crucial activity for building capacity and learning. The increased knowledge and understanding on gender equality issues and the SDGs (Agenda2030) was highly appreciated and was also crucial for engaging in further Women2030 activities, such as advocacy and outreach. Apart from increased knowledge, obtaining new skills was also valued, such as on data collection (using tools), drafting shadow or gender assessment reports, negotiation and advocacy skills, networking, and/or connecting local communities to national policies. Also the reflections on the importance of women's participation and women's leadership were considered important.

“For the first time, I had a better understanding of the goals” (i.e. the SDGs) – Lifetime Empowerment Centre, Ghana

“The project was useful for reaching our policy aim of mainstreaming gender in all our programs and campaigns” – GFC

“Without the women2030 project, there was no other platform for the civil society organizations to engage in the SDGs process in the country” - WEP Togo

“When the local groups organized the meetings with local governors in January we went there but we did not speak; the local groups spoke. We were just recording. The local governors were really curious and they said: “we did not expect you to speak about SDGs, we expected you to speak about yourselves”. Even they were not familiar with those SDGs and so they were surprised. I think this is a success story.” - MONFEMNET, Mongolia

The feedback about sub-granting was more mixed, though positive as a useful activity. Sub-grants give opportunities for women to undertake self-driven actions (GFC), enable beneficiaries to acquire knowledge on Agenda2030 and the nationalisation of the SDGs (WECF), or support a broader mix of activities, such as retention of girl education in schools and providing income generating skills to women (WEP). But sub-granting was also an activity with some critical notes, varying from the 20 per cent co-financing requirement (WECF and APWLD) to the relatively high administrative and monitoring costs required for such grants (WEP and GFC), see also section 3.

2. Constraints encountered and overcome

When implementing the Women2030 activities, all co-applicants and partners had to deal with constraints and barriers, some of which could be easier overcome than others. Various identified constraints are part of the *raison d'être* of the Women2030 project, i.e. part of the problems the project aims to address. This means that certain problems, including overcoming them, were fully foreseen. Some constraints may have affected -at least to a certain extent- the effectiveness of the project, but the project's activities also contributed to addressing constraints, such as tackling the lack of awareness on women's rights. The co-applicants and partners are convinced that despite the constraints, the implementation of the project's activities have largely been as planned, with certain outputs even exceeding their targets.

Main constraints

The nature of the encountered constraints varied from structural barriers, such as patriarchal values, to more practical constraints as remoteness of the communities where local CBOs are based, see box 1 for a detailed overview of the reported constraints.

Box 1: Main constraints encountered when implementing the Women2030 activities

- Remoteness of and difficult access to rural target communities (local CBOs), including high transportation costs and/or lack of internet
- Cultural barriers, such as traditional gender roles and male dominated structures preventing women's participation
- Poverty, income inequality, unemployment and other threats to livelihoods, either forcing rural communities to resort to unsustainable practices, or limiting opportunities for sustainable practices
- Discrimination, increased levels of insecurity and growing violence against women
- Women's total workload (reproductive and productive work) limiting their potential to engage in project and/or community activities
- Lack of awareness and knowledge, on SDGs, women's rights, government policies, etc., including difficulties in mastering the “technical terminology”, also related to climate change and scarcity of natural resources
- Capacity building is not a one-time event, rather a process
- Women's limited access to infrastructure, resources (including land), services, decision-making platforms and media
- Challenges posed by governments: lack of political will, lack of transparency, political instability, lack of gender-sensitive / feminist perspectives, etc.

- The nature of Agenda2030 as a voluntary framework, lacking genuine accountability, therefore ensuring that there is no way to hold governments accountable even if they fail in their implementation of the SDGs.
- The nature of the SDGs that is still very much based on neoliberal economic growth will not actually lead to genuine systemic and structural changes.
- Shrinking spaces for civil society and activism, persecution and criminalization of social and environmental leaders, as well as limited resources and capacity and high workload of civil society organisations
- Languages and/or limited access to information: partners in francophone areas or using local languages, lacking English speaking staff, had difficulties understanding the full concept of Women2030 project; no or limited resources for translations
- Financial constraints, sometimes combined with human resources related issues
- Official data on SDGs is often unavailable, scattered, incomplete or not reliable

“Now they (i.e. the government) have the process that if they don’t have available data, they drop that indicator” – SILAKA, Cambodia

“Lack of funding opportunities could be a barrier to the implementation of the activities” – WISDOM, Moldova

“The work of WEP and her partners in Africa specifically on Goal 5 target 5.5 (on equal opportunities for leadership) seem not to be achieving the desired result due to cultural factors in Africa of relegating women to the background by men” – WEP

“In some cases, women only spoke local languages and difficult with translations. High transportation costs” – GFC partners in Bolivia and Paraguay on communication and access as a barrier

“Rural communities in Armenia cannot afford electricity and gas due to high unemployment and instead cut down forest for firewood to meet their need”- GFC partner in Armenia

Overcoming constraints

Various of the more structural constraints listed in box 1 coincide with the needs and problems which the Women2030 project is addressing, as described in the Relevance section of the Women2030 project proposal. Examples of such constraints are the persistent inequalities, discrimination against women, challenges to women’s rights and empowerment, and lack of government policies (or lack of enforcement) on natural resources, climate change and (gender) equality and justice issues. In particular, addressing lack of knowledge and awareness on gender equality and Agenda2030 is key to the Women2030 project. The project addresses those issues by capacity building and awareness raising on women’s and gender issues as well as on SDGs, collecting data, movement building, policy advocacy towards governments at all levels, and communication and outreach through social and mainstream media. Sub-granting is especially a means to address constraints at the local community levels.

“Existing cultural practices should be challenged through knowledge sharing, creation of awareness and sensitization of the community”- ARUWE, Uganda

On violence against women as a constraint: “This has been addressed by some groups by the empowerment of women through various activities” - GFC

Practical constraints, such as remoteness of target communities and language barriers, are mostly addressed by doing the best the partners can to overcome the problem, accepting to some extent that the desired solutions are not fully in reach (e.g. translating documents in all local languages).

Combining Women2030 activities with activities of other projects carried out by the same partner is one way of overcoming constraints.

“Financial constraints limited the amount of communities that could be visited. Therefore, we integrate with projects already being carried out” - GFC partner

Financial constraints are sometimes overcome by finding complementary funding, for example by WEP partners. Other aspects of financial constraints are discussed in the next section as part of the implementation arrangements.

3. Suitability of implementation arrangements

There is general consensus that the project activities and implementation arrangements suit the needs of the co-applicants and partners. The project aligns well with the existing objectives of the partners. The participatory approach and flexibility in implementing activities to meet the needs of each co-applicant and its partners are much appreciated. The combination of capacity building combined with more pro-active activities is highly valued.

“This is a suitable way of implementation because it promotes women’s leadership capacity, community organizing, collective action, and community-based monitoring of social services”- ARUWE, Uganda

“The training received and the discussions around development justice and current information of international partnerships have helped us very much in designing (our project) and implementing the design”- CENWOR, Sri Lanka

“The compañeras from Crescencio González community in Paraguay confirm to be in agreement with the way the project is implemented” - GFC

Having said this, all co-applicants and partners involved in this MTE also identified challenges in the implementation arrangements. These are mostly related to the administrative burden, financial issues, monitoring and reporting obligations and the developed tools, as demonstrated by the following examples:

- The administrative burden was mentioned as a key problem by some, due to too many activities, too much work with too little funding and organizations usually being under-resourced and under-staffed.

“The workload on the Women2030 project has increased more than was anticipated during the design of the project” – WEP

- For most co-applicants and partners a gap between the desired quality of operation and the available budget was felt, for example, the lack of budget lines to pay stipends as incentives for staff of partner CBOs and the limited budget for translation in local languages.
- Financial concerns were especially raised in relation to sub-granting, varying from the difficulties to raise the 20% co-funding (especially in cash) requirement, which is unsustainable and burdensome even for large organisations such as the co-applicants’, the relatively high costs for effective monitoring of these small grants and the financial reporting obligations for small organizations being too strenuous.
- The requirement for partners to bring in 20% co-funding is often challenging.
- Some partners identified the need for capacity building on fundraising.
- The budgeted amounts per activity are not always sufficient.

“Due to the limited funding of the project, we did not do everything we thought were important to realise, and we are applying to get more funding for the production of the shadow report, which may result in the delay in delivering this activity”- WISDOM, Moldova

- Some comments were given about one-time capacity building trainings not being sufficient or sufficiently effective; there is no room for refresher trainings in the budget. Other comments regretted that the budget did not allow replication of successful activities.

“Especially the regional trainings were considered highly useful, as people felt more comfortable to discuss gender in a regional setting, and the cultural backgrounds were more recognizable. We could have done more if there had been more (financial) support for additional regional trainings”- GFC

- It took many trials to develop a more satisfactory format for the progress reporting and the correct completion of monitoring sheets. The financial reporting remains a challenge for some of the partners, in particular the smaller organizations / sub-grantees lack capacity for proper administration. However, overall the reporting has been improving over time.
- Practical comments on the use of the questionnaire for gender assessments, the GIM and the monitoring and accountability (MAT) tool.

4. Efficiency and effectiveness

The partners of the Women2030 project are considered to have been effective and efficient so far in reaching ambitious goals with the limited resources and the social, political context they are operating in. At the same time, a co-applicant flagged that it would have been more effective and empowering if there would have been less but more coherent and relatively better funded work packages within the project. This would also decrease the administrative burden. Co-applicants and partners alike indicated that in particular the search for co-funding can be time-consuming, thereby a reason for inefficiency.

“Effectiveness and efficiency have been ensured by using expert consultation for financial reporting, using common planning processes, and sharing and exchanging between communities...” – GFC partner, Kyrgyzstan

Box 2 – Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Women2030 projects according to the ROM report

A ROM exercise (Results Oriented Monitoring) commissioned by the EU (DEVCO) took place at the end of 2018, and included field visits to the Netherlands, Paraguay, Nigeria and Thailand. The report was presented in January 2019.

About efficiency: The existing coordination mechanisms are so far effective, contributing to the project ownership. The project team is capable of managing and implementing the project well and leading it to the achievement of the expected results. The implementation is not experiencing significant delays, except for printing the GIM tool. The spending is slightly lagging behind considering the elapsed project time, with especially under-spending under “publications, studies, shadow reports, annual audit costs and conferences/seminars”. The cost-effectiveness is considered satisfactory, with the outputs of the project being produced in a cost-efficient manner and with the implementation on track.

About effectiveness: The project deliverables have been produced, in general according to the project time-schedule and work plan. The quality of the outputs can be considered as good. All outputs were found empowering and meaningful, addressing the real needs of the target groups and beneficiaries. The deliverables of the project are well linked to its outcomes, due to the very sound structure of the project’s intervention logic; thus, the production and dissemination of the project deliverables are likely to lead to the achievement of its foreseen outcomes. The project addresses real needs of the partners and their member organizations. Even though the real impact is yet to come, the prospects of real and high-quality impact are evident.

Improving efficiency and/or effectiveness

All co-applicants and partners involved in the MTE provided suggestions for improving the efficiency and/or effectiveness of the Women2030 project. These suggestions are sometimes specific for the work of a single partner (about including more teachers in project activities as menstrual hygiene) to issues that potentially apply to the entire partnership. The below oversight of suggestions cover especially the latter category.

- More exchanges between partners (also of different co-applicants) and/or strengthening bonds with other organizations in the same country and/or region, in order to exchange lessons learnt and to build synergies, would help to increase efficiency and effectiveness;

“The need for WECF to follow-up on the facilitation of a closer partnership between Women2030 partners for greater effectiveness of the outcomes of the project” – ALGA, Kyrgyzstan

- There is also a need to foster connections between Women2030 partners and local NGOs to jointly monitor SDGs, as this is more effective;
- Embrace diversity, for example by involve more men in activities where appropriate, as their support is needed to create space for women in decision-making and political processes;
- The effectiveness of social and mainstream media campaigns can be improved, e.g. by better using the provided template and making media training more context-specific;
- Various suggestions concern the effectiveness of capacity building and training, e.g. addressing topics that are missed so far or need deepening (e.g. re policy influencing), the need for more or refresher training instead of single training events, especially for target group 2 and 3 and by revising some budget lines;

“I think programs of this nature (referring to capacity building training) should not be a one-time activity. It should be continued for a period to help people better understand the concept they are working with” – WEP partner

- More involvement of local governments;
- Reduce the administrative burden of the small sub-grants (now up to two days per grant for the co-applicant, plus the time for the partners and the CBOs who received the sub-grants);
- Address the MAT tool, as it turned out to be not as efficient and effective as intended, due to technical problems, too many indicators and often without a clear purpose, lack of structure and the time-consuming way of entering the data.

Several of the above suggestions would require some revision of budget lines. As a result of the Bangkok MTE meeting, the coalition agreed to stop the use of the MAT tool and to reallocate the remaining budget for this tool to activities that have proven useful for the beneficiaries, such as translation costs. The sub-grants have proven to be much needed in empowering local women’s groups and community organisations and their initiatives, however, the reporting and monitoring requirements of administrating the grants have been burdensome to local groups and Women2030 coalition partners. This issue merits further attention, due to the high “overhead” costs for the partners in monitoring and administrating the sub-grants as compared to the small grant amount. In particular, the question is whether the costs in administrating the grants, be it financial or staff time, are in balance with the effects of the grants.

Adjustments in the Women2030 project already made

In the first years of the Women2030 project a few adjustments were made based on first experiences and practical reasons to make activities more efficient or effective. The main reported adjustments made were:

- Revision of the Logical Framework and budget in 2017, with more flexible targets, such as a lower number of targeted countries and a potential reduction of number of sub-grants and an increase in the amount (from €1000 to €2000 maximum).
- One co-applicant reported about the withdrawal from two countries because of lack of cooperation from the partners in those countries; instead more CSOs in the remaining countries became involved, keeping the number of expert partners the same.
- Some adjustments were made in the sub-granting system. One co-applicant supplemented the small amounts with funding from other donors to ensure that longer-term and more sustainable support could be provided; another co-applicant also provided sub-grants to target group 1 CSOs, which was not foreseen (only for TG2 and 3) to ensure that these CSOs remain interested in the project and provide better opportunities for them e.g. to do mentoring of TG2, 3 and 4 members.
- Combining meetings and activities to enhance cost-effectiveness;
- A co-applicant also reported to have reduced reporting requirements for their partners to reduce their administrative burden.

5. Impact so far

Impact is achieved through the activities and outputs. The following box provides an overview of selected outputs of the Women2030 project. Annex 3 presents all indicators for the three Specific Objectives, comparing the targets with the achievements until the end of Year 2 and demonstrating that many targets already have been achieved –with some even overachieved-, whereas the others are well in the process of being achieved.

Box 3. Selected outputs achieved during the first two years of the Women2030 project (May 2016 – May 2018)

- 1333 experts in 56 countries trained and mentored CSOs, local authorities and other SDG implementers
- 405 CSOs and in 48 countries have received training on gender equality, SDGs and how to build capacity of their local CSOs
- 189 women CSOs participated in local and national SDGs and climate action planning
- 52 local organisations received sub-grants
- 1480 local CBOs benefited from capacity-building of sub-grantees.
- 7700 grass roots people were trained by our gender experts
- 19 shadow reports and 8 gender assessments were produced by our local partners, with guidance from Women2030
- 1 media toolkit was produced in 5 languages
- 40 million people were reached online
- Publication of 1 Gender Impact Assessment and Monitoring tool.

At the time of the interviews for the MTE about 60% of the duration time of the Women2030 project had elapsed i.e. 33 of the 54 months. Although many of the results at outcome or impact level will be the effect of a process and hence will be more often achieved towards the end of the project, already genuine effects and impact of the project were reported by all co-applicants and most of the interviewed partners. Various interviewees had expressed their satisfaction about the impact already achieved; only very few partners did not yet report on impact, e.g. due to “difficulties with monitoring”.

Impact has been reported at all levels, from individual and community level to national and international level. The Women2030 project is also impacting the involved organisations themselves. The main observed impact areas, reported in all four co-applicants' reports, are discussed below.

Impact at organizational level (“movement architecture”): Several organizations reported to have benefitted themselves from increased awareness on gender equality and women's rights, now better being able to truly mainstream gender into their work, also in other projects than Women2030. And there was especially consensus about the project strengthening (women's) NGOs and CBOs networks for the realisation of the SDGs and for jointly contacting authorities. The project led to connecting with sister organizations, increased understanding among partners and new opportunities for exchanges of strategies and experiences.

“At organisation level, capacity building through Women2030 filtered into the organisation, impacting how we implement activities, recognizing the importance of women's empowerment. This year we are doing a lot more to get women involved”- The Development Institute, Ghana

“The Women2030 project also inspired the formation of a national civil society body in Nigeria called Civil Society Advance Forum on SDCs (CAS2030) who harness their efforts and different capacities to advocate for SDGs implementation in Nigeria”- WEP

“For the trainers it has been a life-changing experience in the way they perceived feminism by seeing the very difficult situation that many other women have to endure - Heñoi, Paraguay

Impact at increased capacities and awareness, as well as access to information: The increased capacity to work on SDGs combined with increased awareness on gender equality issues, is an important result of the Women2030 project. APWLD highlighted that partners increased their understanding on Feminist Development Justice, enabling them to better link local situations to larger systemic issues, which is important for engaging in policy advocacy. WECF partners emphasized the increased access to information, also needed for taking further actions. Developing shadow reports and collecting gender data, including the use of relevant tools, are also important learning experiences contributing to increased capacities. Where partners were able to demonstrate such increased capacities, other stakeholders, such as local or national governments, often welcomed this, taking them more seriously.

“For us the essential part of this program was to build women's leadership and women's empowerment to make them stronger. Also to make them attain a sense of ownership of the development process: it is their process. They are not just recipients but rather agents of change and development as active participants. Women liked the exercises to identify their needs and priorities. They started actions to change their situation for the better. They realized that within SDG5 they could make their own priorities and indicators and to our surprise they determined their own focus, not on economic priorities or environmental aspects, but the issue of a safe environment for women and girls in the village and the issue of dignity and life.” – ALGA, Kyrgyzstan

“Learning the Feminist Development Justice framework was useful for our work with women's organizations and networks, for advocacy and our understanding of strategies for the women's movement in Thailand”- FFW, Thailand

“Participation in the project has strengthened partners' existing campaigns and increased their capacity to work on SDGs” – APWLD

“You can imagine that in the national capacity building workshop of CSOs on gender and SDGs that WEP-Togo organized, the 30 or so women’s organizations had no idea about the SDGs. Now they are better equipped and can integrate these SDGs into the action plans of our organization” – WEP, Togo

Impact at individual and community level: Many concrete examples were provided how the Women2030 project impacted local communities, including individual women, and sometimes also men. Common changes are the increased awareness of project beneficiaries, increased self-confidence of women, increased abilities to speak in public, more women in leadership roles, but also men better understanding women’s work burden. Partners reported about first changes in gender dynamics in local communities, such as increased visibility of women and increased recognition of women leaders. GFC and WEP also reported about the improved socio-economic conditions of women due to the project.

“In Uganda, women as a result of the activities have taken more leadership positions within their communities and with local authorities.” – WECF

“Changes are slow, but women have increased the awareness about the work they do. ... Women are vocal about issues of water and their rights in the different meetings” – GFC partner

“In the community there has been a reduction in the teenage pregnancy and domestic violence cases”- WEP partner supporting a local girls’ club in Ghana

Advocacy related impact: All reports provided proof that first impacts due to policy advocacy have already been achieved, including on changing policies and mainstreaming of gender concerns in national plans. Several partners noted that their credibility with governments and international agencies had increased, what resulted in organisations being able to directly engage with governments in new ways and being invited to participate in meetings and consultations. The shadow and other (gender) reports developed by the partners added to the increased credibility, and could form an eye-opener for government stakeholders regarding the relevance of including gender issues within SDG related policies or documents.

“The implementation of the advocacy activities from the partners have also influenced policies. In Macedonia the Minister of Health has changed the controversial Abortion Law after influence by CSOs” - WECF

“It was useful to do research for the shadow report... After attending the HLPF we met with people from Ministries, with participation of UNDP and GIZ. We discussed the shadow report that was produced and compared it to the state report. It showed that NGOs are able to draft reports providing real facts and figures, in addition to the government”- Armenian Forests, Armenia

“Another important result of the project was our contribution to the country’s 6th national report on Biodiversity (for the Convention on Biological Diversity), where we managed to include women’s and gender issues” – BIOM, Kyrgyzstan

“In 2019 women with disabilities will be involved in development planning of Banda Aceh, the capital city. This is new as in the past they were not involved. Now women with disability will have a chance to be involved in development planning so they can bring forward what they need. Maybe what they need will be implemented.” – FKM BKA YWU, Aceh

Several of the interviewed partners had been invited to sit in (national) committees dealing with SDGs or SDGs-related topics, such as a Malaysian partner joining the National SDGs Steering Committee; women from the South of Thailand were able to halt the development of a coal power plant through their advocacy together with other movements. Advocacy by partners –and their coalitions- also impacted local or national governments to take more action. For example, a round-table in Kyrgyzstan in the framework of Women2030 on the importance of gender-disaggregated data in statistics, particularly SDGs, led to the government preparing a White Paper with recommendations about the use of gender-disaggregated data. In some other countries, such as Mongolia, advocacy at the local government and/or provincial level has been most effective.

“The advocacy efforts of a coalition of Women2030 CSOs in Delta state of Nigeria resulted into the establishment of an SDG desk in Isoko North local government area..... The Women2030 SDGs coalition ... provided advice on how the local government will conceive and implement projects on SDGs” – WEP

“After this project, we are invited to all the meetings. Even to government meetings we are called. And with the setting of indicators and writing the draft report, our input is now expected”- WOREC, Nepal

“The local governor requested us to organize a training on the SDGs for the local government. We wanted the empowerment of local citizens by handling this by themselves. The local citizens then did the research and the meeting with local governors on their own.” – MONFEMNET, Mongolia

The project activities enabled partners to access regional or global spaces for advocacy. Co-applicants and/or their partners participated in regional meetings such as UNESCAP’s annual APFSD and consultations with UN special rapporteurs. At EU level the Policy Forum for Development was attended, as well as the European Development Days. Global meetings were attended, such as climate COPs, HLPF, CSW, CBD and UNEA.

“Another important impact has been at the global advocacy level. The contribution of this program (i.e. the Women2030 project) should not be underestimated; the Women2030 partners played a key role in gender policy work around HLPF, UNEA, the UNFCCC and especially the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), where a Women’s Caucus would probably not have existed by now without our efforts”- GFC

6. Sustainability and follow-up of the Women2030 project

Sustainability

If the Women2030 project would stop after its 4.5 years of implementation, some partners think that their work on gender and SDGs can continue, since these are the focus of their organisation and they now have increased capacity. However, most partners have concerns about sustainability if no (financial) resources would not be available any more. Attention to gender may fade, the capacity to play a central role in policy and monitoring processes, including through the Women’s Major Group and the Women and Gender Constituency, will be severely reduced and started processes at community level may halt.

Some selected comments of this MTE review on sustainability are:

- Built capacities will last, but women leaders still need continued support
- Sustainability needs more time, for example, to support emerging women, more women need to be elected in local councils

- There is still not enough ownership in the communities to ensure that they can continue processes and pressurize governments
- We need to continue as more policies need to change.

“Policies need to change and be more progressive and strong in order to ensure women’s rights and gender equality” – ALGA, Kyrgyzstan

This means that there is wide consensus among the co-applicants and partners that the current Women2030 project interventions, even when already having a good impact, need to be extended, replicated and/or amplified in order to continue to raise awareness, engage with policy makers, and develop monitoring groups and networks in each country and globally. Especially because the SDGs will be active until 2030, it is important that the Women2030 project is also continuing.

Follow-up

There is wide agreement and commitment within the partnership that the Women2030 partners should remain engaged in the monitoring of SDGs, including influencing policies and empowering women, after the Women2030 project has ended. Various partners have the capacity to keep working on the Women2030 themes on their own, given that financial resources are available. A few partners even succeeded in ensuring donor commitments (e.g. the Fiji partner of APWLD). However, for all the ideal situation would be to continue in a follow-up project of the current Women2030 project.

“As CENWOR has the mandate and capacity to continue Women2030 we plan to mobilize resources to build on the work already carried out”- CENWOR, Sri Lanka

“We hope there will be a continuation of the EU’s Framework Partnership Agreement” – GFC

“Partners are committed to continue monitoring of the SDGs following the end of the Women2030 project and have the networks and capacity to plan for continued work on the project” – APWLD

“If we don’t act now, it will lead to irreversible climate change” – WECF

Specific reasons mentioned for a follow-up project:

- The relevance and urgency of the Women2030 work in times of conservative backlash and shrinking democratic spaces;
- Sustaining the women’s movements and networks formed or strengthened during the current Women2030 project, in order that they continue functioning and supporting gender-just implementation of the SDGs;
- There are still many policies at all levels that need to be changed;
- Women, women leaders and CBOs at local levels need more capacity building and support, in order to influence local processes;
- Male leaders should be more involved, as well as youth (male and female), also to increase future sustainability.

Sufficient funding for a follow-up project is both essential and a challenge. In particular WECF, as lead applicant of the Women2030 project, is currently exploring funding opportunities for a follow-up project.

“While all organizations have plans to continue to implement activities as a follow-up on the Women2030 project, they said that this depends on whether they are able to find funding for this or not” – WEP

7. Visibility

The ROM report of the EU includes two observations on visibility. The first one states that the Women2030 partners are always trying to explore potential complementarities and to capitalise on previous experience in an effort to achieve higher visibility and impact; the second remarking that the visibility of the EU support (i.e. the EU funding) was not fully ensured. In view of the latter, the report recommended to better ensure the visibility of the EU support. Box 4 describes how the Women2030 proposal foresaw this.

Box 4. Visibility of EU funding as described in the Women2030 proposal (Application Form)

The proposal envisaged that *“the provisions of the communication and visibility manual for EU external actions will be applied to all communication materials to ensure that the EU funding is highly visible. This applies to all communication materials including printed and on-line publications produced and used by project partners. The lead applicant will ensure this item is included in the start-up training meeting for staff and co-applicants”*

Up till now the Women2030 partnership has acknowledged the funding by the European Commission on its website and many of its publications by including a statement on this and/or the EU logo. However, the ROM report recommended that this should be improved for co-applicant APWLD. Below are the reactions of the co-applicants on the issue of visibility.

Visibility of the project: In the context of the MTE exercise, the co-applicants tend to agree that the visibility of the project, its network members and/or its actions and results is important, as more visibility will contribute to better results, e.g. when related to advocacy. There is apparently some room for improvement here. For example, WECF partners report that there is a need for more visibility in mainstream and social media. For APWLD the visibility of members of APWLD’s network and the work they do should be enhanced at local, national and regional levels, thus strengthening impact.

Visibility of the EU support: Only APWLD reacted explicitly on this issue, and particularly on the EU’s perspective and that of its ROM evaluators that the EU’s support to the project should become more visible. In APWLD’s opinion, however, such enhanced visibility does not necessarily translate into increased impact of the project, and in some cases can be even problematic for target groups and beneficiaries because of the social and political context and situation of the country. Also, visibility of the members and local partners is not always tied up to the visibility of the Women2030 project, APWLD and/or the EU. During the Bangkok meeting it was agreed that at least in all English language publications EU support will be explicitly recognized.

8. Coherence with EU policies or strategies

Those co-applicants and partners, who have insight in EU policies, were asked to comment about the coherence between EU policies or strategies and the aim of the Women2030 project. Feedback was received at different levels, showing that, although EU country level strategies can be in line with the Women2030 goal, often there is no relationship between project partners and EU delegations. Also, inconsistency within EU’s own rules and policies was observed.

EU’s country level strategies: Two partners, independently from each other but both from Kyrgyzstan, reported that the EU policies or strategies within their country were largely seen as positive and progressive for their country. These strategies support the advancement of gender equality and women’s rights, education, health, access to justice and strong governmental institution, and are appreciated.

“For us EU policies have been mostly positive. ... We were consulted by the EU for developing a new trade strategy in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia”- BIOM, Kyrgyzstan

However, one of these partners also observed that there is also a need for more transparency on the conditions and how EU funding contributions are utilised by the government.

Consistency in EU’s own policies: Co-applicants observed that EU rules, such as those on trade, tend to contradict various SDG targets, such as the protection of the environment and affirmative action policies for women and other marginalized groups. EU’s Partnership Forums tend to propagate traditional neo-liberal economic and political systems, providing little participation and space for many of the EU’s funding recipients, such as CSOs and women’s rights organization, which is in contrary to the EU’s narrative on women’s empowerment. Overall, therefore, the partnership feels that EU policies and funding flows need to not contradict or undermine each other in order to better support women’s human rights and right-based conservation of natural resources.

Links between Women2030 implementing partners and EU delegations: The ROM report observed that in the countries visited by consultants, the EU delegations are not participating in any respect in the project. And partners in those countries do not have enough information about the country specific EU-CSO Roadmaps (on the Engagement with Civil Society), with partners not having been actively involved in the consultation, design and/or implementation of the Roadmaps. The ROM report sees this as a lost opportunity.

The Women2030 co-applicants noted that in several countries they had regularly asked for meetings with the EU delegation to present the project progress, but had received little or no interest or response. Still, Women2030 partners agree that they would benefit if the EU delegations in their respective countries would know them, and also invite them to consultations such as on the CSO Roadmaps. This could be mutually beneficial: the delegation to provide support to partners and/or project activities, and for the partners to share their lessons learnt and provide input in consultations on new EU strategies. While in some countries, the linkages are not necessarily sought by the local groups and partners due to any undue influence of the EU country delegation or where the country’s political situation can expose partners to further risks due to any obvious linkages.

9. Recommendations for the remaining years of Women2030

Overall there is great satisfaction among all partners that participated in the MTE to have the opportunity to work together on this project. All partners have ideas and recommendations for the last two years of the Women2030 project, mainly focusing on further improving efficiency and effectiveness and/or expanding successful activities, both to enhance the project’s impact. Some recommendations address topics that missed in the original design and/or need increased emphasis.

“Partners are very enthusiastic about the project model and activities, and recommend both that we extend the project to additional countries in the region, and that they take on more partners from countries that are already covered by the Women2030 project”- APWLD

The partners’ recommendations can be summarized as follows:

1. **More capacity building**, which means more trainings, including media trainings, especially for the target groups 2 and 3, but also more room for consultations, exchanges and/or regional meetings. Concrete examples are more training on innovative advocacy strategies to increase the accountability of especially local government, more training on advocacy to increase governments’ commitments to the SDGs, and/or more support to sensitization and awareness training on gender, leadership and climate change mitigation.

2. **Networking:** Building more and better networks and alliances, integrating women's groups in broader movements and/or creating "Women's Major Groups" in countries where Women2030 is being implemented. In particular, coordination among the Women2030 partners of different co-applicants in a same country is seen as very important.
3. **Advocacy:** Different recommendations were made, with some partners pleading for more focus on local policy influencing instead of at the international level; other partners for more collective action at the regional or global level. These apparently contradicting recommendations can be interpreted as a need for flexibility, targeting those policy levels where there are most needs and opportunities for changing policies and/or changing project activities given the changing socio-economic realities.
4. **Supporting diversity:** The Women2030 coalition supports diversity, solidarity and cross-movement building, maintaining a main focus on women's rights and women's leadership, including the support to feminist organisations. This can include working with men and non-binary persons when appropriate, as recommended by several respondents.
5. **Improving tools and reconsidering MAT:** Several suggestions are made to improve some Women2030 tools, such as those for surveys and interviews. The use of the MAT tool will be discontinued as agreed in the Bangkok meeting as not efficient as expected, and the wish to reallocate the remaining budget for activities that have proven to be more efficient.
6. **Sub-granting:** The sub-grants have stimulated local activities and created local ownership, but considering their small size, the detailed monitoring and administration (EU) requirements are too strenuous and burdensome for local groups and Women2030 coalition partners. The review of the sub-granting system and modalities is pertinent to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. Most of the sub-grants are being used for training and awareness raising activities. Changing the sub-grants to the budget line of capacity building, requiring a simpler administration involving only one invoice, is recommended.
7. **Follow-up project:** All agree about the importance of a follow-up project that will be building on the Women2030 experiences. Therefore, the next two years should be used to identify feasible project ideas, write proposals and find funding for the continuation and/or expansion of the Women2030 project, as much as possible without a gap after the end of Women2030. The consultation and involvement of partners in this process of shaping follow-up actions is very important. Also workshops on fund raising were recommended by a partner.

"It will probably imply a significant loss of existing capacity if there is a long pause in funding" – GFC

8. **Linking with EU delegations:** To increase the visibility of the project and garner more support, cooperation with EU Delegations in target countries is also recommended. This is in line with the recommendations of the ROM report. However, an earlier attempt of one of the co-applicants to approach the delegation in their country did not lead to a reaction. In some other countries, however, linkages with the EU are not sought by the local partners due to concerns of any unwanted influence by EU delegations, or where liaising with the EU can cause risks for the partners because of the country's political situation.

9. **Show cases:** There is a need for one or several coherent and powerful showcases to show the main achievements of the Women2030 project as a coalition and to enhance the visibility of the Women2030 project, e.g. by producing joint global and/or regional SDG shadow reports and/or a publication highlighting outcomes of the project. This requires further joint strategies, including reflection on the spaces where to show these.
10. **Budget changes:** The actual implementation of several of the above recommendations, such as increased capacity building through more trainings, will require budget changes as is recognized by the partners. If budget lines for capacity building will be increased -and approved-, other budget lines would need to be cut, for example, budget lines that are currently underspent. In addition, the need was emphasized to unlock the contingencies for participating in important events –earlier unforeseen- in the remaining project years, such as Beijing +25 and HLPF2020.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 Key evaluation questions for the WOMEN2030 Midterm Evaluation

1. What are the main constraints / barriers met by the target groups related to the project (can be social, cultural, political, economic, financial, environmental barriers, etc, whatever is applicable); how can they be overcome?
2. How useful were the project's activities for you (your organisation/your community)? Were they addressing your priorities? Which were most critical for achieving results? Were any activities missing and/or is there a need for changing / adjusting / improving activities?
3. Are the ways in which this project is implemented suiting your needs and capacities? This may include monitoring and evaluation, reporting, project management and/or co-funding arrangements, etc.
4. How can the efficiency / effectiveness of the project be improved in any sense?
5. Impact: what has been the impact so-far (at all levels, including impact for the women and men in the communities? Have you noticed changes in the local situation, such as in local (gender) dynamics or relationships and/or other local improvements at the community level? Can you give examples / case studies? This includes the impact of small grants, impact of shadow reports and other advocacy activities, impact of awareness raising, impact of improved capacities, etc.
6. Sustainability: What do you want to "sustain" after the project (continue activities? Ensure results remain in place, etc)? What is needed to achieve sustainability (= factors influencing sustainability)?
7. What are your views on the "exit strategy" and/or follow-up of the project? How to continue after you finish Women2030 activities? Are you in the position or do you have the capacity to make follow-up plans to keep working on the activities you have done so far?
8. Recommendations for the last 2 years of the Women2030 project?

Questions that are more answerable by the co-applicants (and probably less by the partners):

9. Did you already make adjustments in activities to increase efficiency / effectiveness (e.g. based on monitoring data?) and/or do you see further needs for adjustments?
10. Should visibility be improved (as also recommended by ROM team)? And if so, how and under what conditions?
11. Issue of coherence: To which extent are there positive or negative impacts for you (or partners / communities) of EU policies or strategies in the project regions? This question is optional, in case you have insight in this.

Annex 2. Methodology

The following steps were taken as part of the mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the Women2030 project.

1. Design of the approach and identification and confirmation of the evaluation questions

This MTE was an internal evaluation, which meant that it was led by the coalition, i.e. the lead applicant WECF together with the three co-applicants APWLD, GFC and WEP. The fourth co-applicant, GWA, recently left the coalition as it had difficulties meeting the 20% co-financing requirement, and was not actively involved in this MTE; however data was also collected from (previous) GWA partners which were taken over by GFC.

A consultant was involved to support the process, including for the report writing and the facilitation of the Bangkok meeting. The views expressed in the MTE report therefore reflect those of the coalition, and not (or rather not only) those of the consultant.

A first version of the MTE approach and the evaluation questions was developed by WECF and the consultant, and discussed and fine-tuned with input of the co-applicants. The evaluation questions are presented in Annex 1 of this report. It was agreed with the co-applicants that these questions could be adapted by them into more detailed and/or more practical questions in order to be better understood by their partners and/or to make them more relevant to the specific context of each co-applicant.

2. Data collection approach

Each (co-)applicant could use their own methodology, fitting their own way of working, to collect information needed to answer the evaluation questions. Existing information, collected during recent interactions with partners, could be used, combined with new data collected especially for this MTE, in particular by interviewing partners, from team meetings and/or from Focus Group Discussions. Whenever possible, the co-applicants were encouraged to use already planned interactions with partners or beneficiaries to collect data, such as team meetings, skype sessions and/or field visits. Information was collected among partners and member organizations at all levels, i.e. from target groups 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Instructions were developed for the selection of partners in order to achieve a reasonably balanced sample and avoiding biases. Due to the scale and purpose of this MTE, including the limited resources in terms of time and finances, a real scientific sampling method was not considered possible or fitting. Hence, the co-applicants were requested to deliberately ensure that information was collected from a diverse group of respondents, taking into account the following:

- Ensure geographic diversity, including respondents in (peri) urban and rural areas, in remote areas and areas closer to big cities, in different climate zones (if applicable), etc.
- Ensure diversity in people, including the (main) ethnic groups, young and old, different socio-economic classes and education levels, farmers and employed people, etc.
- Diversity in focus: Ensure that respondents / partners are included with different focuses in their activities, e.g. those focusing on grass root improvements and those working on policy influencing, etc.
- Include strong, successful and/or vocal partners, but also partners who are relatively weaker, less successful and/or less spoken-out.
- Last but not least: document the selection process and make a list of participants / respondents with their names, gender, organization names and community names.

No concrete target for the number of respondents to be interviewed per co-applicant was given; however, it was recommended to cover a good diversity of partners. As at the same time workload and time-limitations of all co-applicants formed a limiting factor, a balance was tried to be found between the (limited) number of respondents and richness of the collected data. Data collection took place in February and early March 2019.

3. Actual data collection per (co-)applicant

WECF: Background information was collected from relevant documents, such as capacity needs assessments, FGD reports, narrative reports, shadow reports, the ROM report, stories from #HerstoryOfChange campaign, minutes of coordination meeting calls and minutes from meetings with other co-applicants. Five partners were asked to answer the evaluation questions. Three of them carried out FGDs and interviews with sub-grantees and beneficiaries to collect further information. One organization, only involved in advocacy activities, answered the questions by themselves. The fifth one did not answer the questions in time. Hence four partner reports were submitted to WECF. Additional insights were provided by WECF.

APWLD: Information collected from earlier partner's meetings was used, specifically during the 3rd Regional Partners Meeting of September 2017 in which eight partners from eight countries participated. The specific evaluation questions were answered by four partners: one through an interview; three by responding in writing. Additional insights were provided by APWLD staff.

GFC: For the purpose of this MTE, GFC interviewed a broad range of partners from various target group levels: eight from target group 1, six from target group 2 and –during an already planned field trip- also members from a target group 4 CSO. GFC's Executive Director and GFC's Regional Focal Point in Central Asia were also interviewed or answered the questions by email. Besides, GFC submitted relevant information earlier collected as narrative progress report.

WEP: Respondents were selected from target groups 1, 2, 3 and 4; WEP also served as a respondent to the evaluation questions. Target group 1 respondents were from all seven countries in which WEP works; target group 2, 3 and 4 respondents were from two countries, and were randomly selected. A selection of two countries was made because of the short time span and limited resources available for the data collection; the two countries –Nigeria and Ghana- were selected because also sub-grants activities were implemented, involving also target group 4 organizations. Data was collected through a combination of methods: face-to-face interviews, FGDs, answering questions by email and retrieval of information from existing reports.

4. Data processing and reporting

The four co-applicants analysed the collected information qualitatively, drawing conclusions where appropriate. They prepared four intermediate reports consolidating the collected information per evaluation question, submitted by the second week of March 2019. Based on these four reports, complemented with some additional information from other sources, such as Women2030 reports, the Women2030 website and the EU's ROM report, the consultant prepared a draft MTE report.

5. Validation and finalizing the MTE report

During the MTE meeting in Bangkok (28 – 30 March 2019) the findings of the report were discussed and validated. The findings of the report led to interesting discussions, including agreements on certain adjustments for the remaining project duration. Several co-applicants also provided detailed feedback to the draft MTE report on an individual basis. Based on such feedback and the discussion in Bangkok, the MTE report was finalized in the current form.

Annex 3. Overview of achievements in the first 2 years of Women2030 as per indicators linked to the three Specific Objectives of Women2030

Indicator	Target	Achieved in Year1	Achieved in Year2	Total achieved per May 2018 ⁴
SO1: Strengthen women's and gender focused CSOs' operational and institutional capacities				
SO1-I1: increased capacity of co-applicants staff to strengthen network member organizations	30 staff ⁵ of 5 co-applicants trained and 1 GIM tool developed	35 staff trained	1 GIM Tool tested	35 staff trained and 1 GIM tool tested
SO1-I2: Cooperation with 300 women's organizations to enhance advocacy capacity	300 women's organizations in at least 92 countries	140 organizations from 44 countries	358 organizations from 77 countries	498 women's organizations from 121 countries
SO1-I3: Gender CSO experts supporting CSOs, local authorities and other SDG implementers	60 experts from 30-52 countries trained	107 experts from 34 countries	26 experts from 22 countries	133 experts from 56 countries
SO1-I4: GIM tool effectively used	tool used to monitor gender indicators		8 gender assessments	8 gender assessments
SO1-I5: member organizations have enhanced capacity	200 CSOs received training	88 CSOs from 24 countries	317 CSOs from 24 countries	405 CSOs in 48 countries
SO2: Strengthen women and gender-focused CSOs' strategic cooperation and policy advocacy skills				
SO2-I1: women CSOs capable to collect data on SDGs and climate agenda	200 women CSOs	108 CSOs	81 CSOs	189 CSOs
SO2-I2: In 35 countries meaningful participation of women CSOs	35 countries	15 shadow reports	13 new and/or updated shadow reports	19 shadow reports = 18 countries
SO2-I3: Gender responsive national plans	in 8-20 countries	national plans in 3 countries	national plans in 5 countries	in 8 countries
SO2-I4: sub-grants for women / CSOs	100 – 200 sub-grantees	14 sub-grants	38 sub-grants	52 sub-grants
SO2-I5: local CSOs benefiting from capacity building of sub-grantees	2000 local CSOs	186 local CSOs	1292 local CSOs	1478 CSOs
SO2-I6: local women and men empowered	10,000 beneficiaries, 80% women	2075 beneficiaries	5661 beneficiaries	7736 local beneficiaries
SO3: Strengthen women and gender focused CSOs' outreach and media skills				
SO3-I1: social media tools and campaigns are being used by CSOs	in 4-8 different languages	1 media toolkit in 6 languages		media toolkit in 6 languages
SO3-I2: social media campaign tools used by trained women's and gender organizations	300 CSOs	45 CSOs;	170 CSOs	215 CSOs
SO3-I3: countries covered by social media and press campaigns on gender-	25 – 52 countries			169 countries (the twitter account of the Women's Major Group alone)

⁴ There may be some overlap in numbers reached in Year1 and Year2 for some of the indicators

⁵ In the budget 30 staff was foreseen to be trained; in the logframe the target was 60.

responsive implementation of Agenda 2030				has followers from 169 countries)
SO3-I4: positive impact of gender equality message is reaching a large public / audience	public / audience reached: 50 M	338,000 people reached by social media; 10-20 M by mainstream media	39.9 M by social media; 92.4 by mainstream media	± 40.2 M through social media; 102-112.4 M through mainstream media
SO3-I5: (Co-) applicants have strengthened capacity to provide tools and train network members on awareness raising, outreach and campaigning	5 co-applicants	20 staff from 3 co-applicants trained	12 staff from 5 co-applicants trained	20 staff