

EVALUATION BRIEFS

FINAL INDEPENDENT PROJECT EVALUATION

CIVIL SOCIETY IN AFRICA CONTRIBUTES TO UNCAC (GLOU68)

Region: Africa

Duration: Sept 2017-August 2021

Donors: Austrian Development Agency (ADA)

Evaluation team: Ms. Coralie Pring (Evaluation Expert) and Ms. Suzanne Mulcahy, PhD (Anti-Corruption Expert).

Full report:

https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/evaluation/reports_year_2021.html

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Civil Society Unit (CSU), UNODC, undertook the project “Civil society in Africa contributes to UNCAC and its Review Mechanism to effectively fight corruption and support the SDGs”, a segment of the Global Programme GLOU68, from 2017 until 2021. The project aimed to make the UNCAC 2nd Review Cycle more inclusive and effective, by training African Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to better contribute to the 2nd UNCAC review process, by supporting CSOs to work in partnership with the private sector on anti-corruption initiatives, and by supporting CSOs to enhance their networks with governments, the private sector and other CSOs. The overall budget for the project was 1,176,507 EUR. This evaluation assessed the project according to the criteria of relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, as well as evaluating the project’s inclusiveness particularly regarding human rights, gender equality and leaving no one behind.

MAIN FINDINGS

The project had high relevance for both the UNCAC and the SDGs and responded well to beneficiaries’ needs. Activities were largely implemented as planned, apart from COVID-19 causing delays and the cancellation of one event. The project displayed a reasonable and justifiable use of resources and while two no-cost extensions were required, these were found to be justifiable, particularly given the pandemic circumstances. The experience and flexibility of the team contributed to the smooth delivery of the project. The project was designed to complement other initiatives working towards similar goals and the partnerships fostered via the project, both with the UNCAC Coalition and individual CSOs, were found to be central to several of the project’s successes. The project largely achieved what it set out to and delivered its planned outputs to a high standard. Among the factors aiding effectiveness were the solid reputation of UNODC in the region, the project team’s efforts to build on prior experience of similar initiatives in other regions and the strong strategic partnership with the UNCAC Coalition. Among the factors hindering effectiveness were significant delays in the 2nd Review Cycle, the COVID-19 pandemic, internal organisational factors at UNODC and, in some countries, a hesitance on the part of the government to engage with civil society. The project had a positive impact on UNCAC implementation in some countries and contributed to



improved dialogue between government and CSOs, strengthened networks between CSOs and the private sector as well as increased CSOs' capacities on anti-corruption, project management and fundraising. Many of the results of the project have a high likelihood of sustainability, such as successful networks and partnerships built between government and CSOs, knowledge gained, physical outputs and knowledge products.

LESSONS LEARNED

12 key lessons learned were identified in the evaluation which should inform CSU and UNODC future programming in Africa and other regions. Among the main lessons learned were the broader applicability of the multi-stakeholder approach, the need for sustained follow-up to build on successful activities and the importance of nurturing key partnerships with allies in order to increase reach and impact. For example, the partnership with the UNCAC Coalition was successful but partnerships on the SDG agenda were largely lacking and engagement with organisations working with the private sector would have helped complement the expertise of CSU. Future projects should also look to develop a more comprehensive Theory of Change, incorporating results-based management (RBM) principles to develop more sound logical models, drawing inspiration from tools such as the RBM e-learning tool for staff developed by SPIA.

GOOD PRACTICES

Promising practices, which could be emulated in future projects, include the engagement of a strategic, strong external partner with a complementary agenda, as exemplified by the partnership with the UNCAC Coalition in this project. The COVID-19 pandemic forced CSU to adapt to the use of hybrid (online/in-person) meetings and conferencing, which turns out to be a helpful way to broaden participation and reduce the carbon footprint.

METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was carried out in line with UNODC IES guidelines and standards, as well as international best-practice and used a mixed-method, multi-stage approach to gather evidence from various sources, and was gender aware and inclusive. It involved a desk review of 75 key documents, a quantitative online survey of 36 CSO beneficiaries (28 male, 7 female, 1 prefer not to say) and 29 qualitative in-depth interviews (12 male and 17 female) with Core Learning Partners, Internal Stakeholders, CSO beneficiaries, as well as national and international external stakeholders. The findings were triangulated with one another for verification purposes, and to qualify statements and ensure an accurate portrayal of contributions to change. Most significant change analysis was also used, resulting in 3 case studies of impact, from Mauritius, Ghana and South Sudan. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews were conducted online using video conferencing platforms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Broaden the Funding Base:** CSU should seek a broader donor base to ensure continuity of support to CSOs.
2. **Follow up:** CSU should build in follow-up actions to project design to build on the momentum generated by its work.
3. **Scale up:** CSU should apply the multi-stakeholder approach to other relevant thematic areas.
4. **Nurture partnerships:** CSU should deepen existing partnerships and seek new collaborations e.g., on gender & SDGs.
5. **Enhance CSU presence on the ground:** CSU should identify CSO focal points in country offices to foster integration of perspectives.
6. **Improve CSU visibility within UNODC:** Senior management should revisit the placement of CSU in UNODC to improve awareness of work.
7. **Reassess small grant efficiency and sustainability:** CSU should assess the size of grants and place more emphasis on sustainability
8. **Invest in online/hybrid conferences:** CSU should increase capacity for online/hybrid conference hosting for future projects.
9. **Gender, Human Rights and Leave no one behind:** CSU should deepen the understanding of intersectionality issues in project countries during planning.
10. **Review logframe indicators:** CSU should ensure they are measurable, capture the quality, and aligned with the project interventions.



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INDEPENDENT EVALUATION SECTION

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