



Norwegian People's Aid

Project CS 2016 Rwanda – Partnership for Organisation and Mobilisation

Mid-term Evaluation

Report

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Executive summary

The study set out to seek answers to six evaluation questions namely:

- a) To what extent are project objectives clear to NPA staff and partners?
- b) To what extent are partners and supported projects match programme objectives?
- c) To what degree is programme learning integral to decision making? Are there opportunities to reflect learn and improve across NPA and partners and within partners themselves?
- d) What is the level of enthusiasm and dynamism between NPA and her partners
- e) How relevant is the project given Rwandan context
- f) What impact has the project mid-way through?

In a bid to get answers to the aforementioned questions, the study reviewed a host of documents, interviewed key personnel at NPA level and partners, target beneficiaries and government officials among others. Overall, the findings show among others that;

- Partners understand the project but some of them pointed out that they did not know enough about the work of other partners.
- The project is relevant to the Rwandan context but NPA and her partners need to strategically think about how best to tackle broader democratic governance within the limited space available.
- The project is filling the coordination void at the decentralised levels.
- Achieving advocacy goals at lower levels is hampered by Government of Rwanda's top down governance approach and lacking advocacy stratagem on the part of partners.
- Documentation of learnings from parents evening forum (PEF) Monitoring advocacy group (MAG) community scorecard weak and a lot more needed.
- Partners have built strong rapport with government institutions and that this relationship could be leveraged to push through their agenda.

In light of the findings, the following recommendations are made;

- Consider training partners in rights based approach
- Build partner capacity in advocacy tactics suitable to the Rwandan context.
- Strengthen advocacy efforts at national level in collaboration with other civil society organisations/international non-governmental organisations given Rwanda's top down governance system, influencing decentralised entities may not yield fruit.
- Develop practical advocacy tools to support the identification of issues, packaging of information developing position papers, fact sheets. This should be considered by partners as well as NPA during the development of advocacy plans of partners.
- Analyse the effect of interventions on both men and women and adopt gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation by adopting tools that generate gender disaggregated. Indicators in the partner and NPA matrix should always show progress and or impact of activities on both men and women. For example having an indicator on GBV prevalence should not be enough. It should show prevalence among men and women.
- Aggregate all learnings from PEF, MAG and create lessons learned document ahead of the final evaluation in 2019. Learnings could also be shared with other stakeholders

- Integrate MAG and community score card into district planning process and ensure that the feedback from these forums is fed into the performance work plans of sectors and districts.
- Integrate policy analysis, research into the advocacy plans of partners. Routine data collected by partners might raise issues that require further investigation. Hence partners ought to be in a position to internally interrogate this data by investigating further. This might require equipping partners with skills to internally analyse government policies and programmes such as vision Umurenge programme, Girinka etc.
- Explore possibility of transferring cross-learning responsibility to one partner or get on-board neutral entity. This entity would on an ongoing basis, document best practises, and case studies and disseminate what is known to work to all partners.
- Use the expiry of the gender based violence strategic plan as an opportunity to influence the next one

List of acronyms

AJPRODHO: Association de la Jeunesse pour la Promotion des Droits de l'Homme et développement

COPORWA: Communauté des Potiers du Rwanda

CSO: civil society organisation

DHS: demographic health survey

GBV: Gender based violence

HMP: Historically marginalised people

HRBA: Human rights based approach

KAP: knowledge attitude and practice

MAG: Monitoring advocacy group

MAJ: Maisons d'accès à la Justice

M&E: Monitoring and evaluation

MIGEPROF: Ministry of gender and family promotion

NGO: Nongovernmental organisation

NISR: National institute of statistics of Rwanda

NORAD: Norwegian agency for international development

NPA: Norwegian People's Aid

PEF: Parents evening forum

PFTH: Pro femme Twese hamwe

RWAMREC: Rwanda men resource centre

RWN: Rwanda women network

TA: Tubibe Amahoro

WB: World Bank

WGI: Worldwide governance indicators

Definition of key terms

Parents Evening forum (PEF) is a platform set up by the Ministry of gender to strengthen family ties. Officially launched in 2013, it brings together both parents (men and women) from the same village to discuss issues affecting families and potential opportunities available in their communities to improve their living conditions.

Monitoring advocacy group (MAG): an ad hoc multi-stakeholder forum set up to advocate for better service delivery at sector level and follow up of issues raised by the community members. It brings together all actors that have an interest in ending GBV in Nyagatare district where AJPRODHO is implementing the programme.

Joint action forum for development (JADF): A forum that brings together all development actors at the district level. Unlike MAG, JADF is operational in all the thirty districts.

Performance contracts: annual work plans in which relevant of government entities set targets to be attained by the end of the year. Typically the contracts are signed between the president and the Mayors. A select committee evaluates performance against targets and reports to the President on the outcome. Best performing districts are rewarded whilst worst performing ones are named and shamed.

1.0 Background

1.1 Country context

Rwanda has made tremendous progress since the 1994 human calamity that claimed about one million lives. The central African nation has since emerged to become one of the progressive states in economic and social spheres. Today, Rwanda is regarded as a leader in women empowerment, doing business and access to education among others. With about 64% of parliamentarians over 50% of cabinet members being women respectively, Rwanda is now seen as a model in terms of gender empowerment. The inclusion of women in decision making circles at all government structures has provided an opportunity for all voices to be heard in the decision making.

Under the decentralisation structure created in 2006 reforms, avenues for citizens to engage duty bearers have been created. Through district advisory councils, sector and cell general assemblies, citizens in theory have opportunities to weigh in on issues that concern them. In practice however, these opportunities are hardly exploited either due to dearth of strong civil society organisations with capacity to act as counterweight to the powers that be or unwillingness of citizens to engage the state organs.

The government of Rwanda recognises the role of civil society in the development process and has created a space for NGOs, private sector, and other players to contribute to the process. Through sector working groups (SWGs) at national level, joint action forum for development (JADF) at district level, avenues have been created for CSOs to contribute to discussions on issues that concern the citizens. Quite often though, the GoR sees CSOs as extensions of the state with the mandate of delivering services to the population. Promoting democratic dispensation is generally regarded by the powers that be to be a 'soft' and minor contribution to the central African nation's current needs. Even as government claims to have introduced decentralisation system of governance, the populace have limited influence in terms of prioritisation at different levers of the state.

The planning process at national and local level tends to be top bottom with passive involvement of the citizenry. The CSOs either due to limited capacity or fear of being seen to be antagonising government efforts, have been less successful in acting as counterweight to the government. Yet without achieving this breakthrough, the upheavals that characterised Rwanda's history since independence, may be far from being assuaged -in the absence of empowered citizenry. Achieving a critical mass of CSOs with capacity to challenge the state and ensure the views of the most marginalised are heard can go a long way in awakening the citizenry, ensure proper accountability and a democratic dispensation in Rwanda.

1.2 Norwegian people's aid in Rwanda

NPA's work dates back to 1994. In the aftermath of the 1994 genocide and ensuing mayhem, the organisation focused on service delivery especially in the health sector. Between 1997 and 2000 following a period of relative stability, NPA country strategy shifted to institutional support with a major focus on health and justice sectors. Since 2005, the country strategy has focused on

strengthening civil society capacity to mobilise communities and demand their rights from state actors at grassroots and national level. Currently six partners are engaged in efforts designed to put gender based violence at the forefront of government's agenda. Through partnership and mobilisation project [also known as CS 2016) GBV related interventions are being implemented in nine districts of Rwanda.

I.3 Background to Midterm evaluation

Research Hub was contracted to do a mid-term review of the partnership and mobilisation project that commenced in 2016 and is due to end in 2019. The project funded by NORAD, is being implemented by Norwegian people's aid (NPA) in seventeen countries. In Rwanda, the project is implemented in nine districts by Pro-femmes Twese hamwe, AJPRODHO, Tubibe Amahoro, RWAMREC, COPORWA and Rwanda women network (RWN). Through mobilising partners around common issues, and helping civil society to achieve effectiveness in organising people who have a common cause, the project hopes to contribute the long term goal of strengthening democratic process in Rwanda.

In the medium term the project seeks to achieve three major outcomes;

- a) Civil Society Organisations influence political decision making (project purpose)
- b) Partners mobilise around common issues (intermediate outcome one)
- c) Popular organisations are more effective in organising people who have a common cause (intermediate outcome two)

To achieve the aforementioned results, the project is supporting 6 CSOs to strengthen their capacity in terms of

- a) Ability to challenge authorities
- b) increasing their representative member base
- c) Building internal democratic structures

I.4 Purpose of Mid-term evaluation

The overarching objective of midterm evaluation was to inform programme planning in the remaining years of the project. By pausing, reflecting and learning from what has been achieved NPA hopes to look ahead with a fresh perspective, hence the need for an external consultant to guide the process

The study sought to answer six key evaluation questions;

- g) To what extent are project objectives clear to NPA staff and partners?
- h) To what extent do partners and supported projects match programme objectives?
- i) To what degree is programme learning integral to decision making? Are there opportunities to reflect, learn and improve across NPA and partners and within partners themselves?
- j) What is the level of enthusiasm and dynamism between NPA and her partners
- k) How relevant is the project given the Rwandan context
- l) What impact has the project mid-way through?

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Evaluation approach

To get to the bottom of each evaluation question, qualitative interviews were held with all the parties concerned. In particular, the following methods were used;

1. **Desk review:** a host of documents from NPA results framework to partner proposals were reviewed to get an idea of what it is the project aims to achieve and explore synergy and complementarity across.
2. **In-depth interview** with partners and NPA staff. The purpose of these interviews was to get the context of the project and partnership between NPA and partners. Interviews also touched on a number of evaluation questions. In-depth interviews were also held with executive directors/ secretaries, Gender Focal Points, Monitoring Advocacy Group Members, Project Coordinators and Social affairs Officers at sector level as they play important roles in community members' lives. The aim for in-depth interviews was to explore their perceptions of GBV and prevention measures, reporting channel, advocacy plan, research agenda, project achievements, best practices and success stories and the challenges they encountered so far. The interviews took on average one hour.

3. Focus group discussions

Focus Group Discussions were organized to understand participants' perceptions of Gender Based Violence, GBV prevention measures and how it affects men and women, the level of knowledge in Gender issues, best practices, successful stories and innovations and the effect of the knowledge acquired during the training. In total, the study team spoke to 85 people in all 5 districts, 5 Focus Group Discussions, 1 Focus Group Discussions per location. Each Focus Group Discussion took between 1.5- 2 hours.

Table 1: Focused group discussions per district

District	Gender	Status	CSO	Number
Nyarugenge	Females and males	Community paralegals	Rwanda Women Network	27
Nyaruguru	Females and males	Members of Historically Marginalised People	COPORWA	30
Nyagatare	Females and males	Community Change Agents	AJPRODHO	6
Karongi	Females and males	Local citizens involved in drama and skits aimed to convey message of GBV	TUBIBE AMAHORO	12
Muhanga	Females and males	Young Women from Higher Learning Institutions	Pro femmes /Twese Hamwe	8
Rulindo	Females and males	Parents evening forum coordinators (paired interviews)	RWAMREC	2

3.0 Findings and discussions

3.1 introduction

This section covers major findings against each evaluation questions. Where deemed necessary, potential issues for reflection are given notwithstanding the recommendations to be given towards the end of the section. Suffice to add the study team’s own interpretation of issues is also part of the section.

1) Partner understanding of the project.

To understand how well the project is understood by key stakeholders notably the implementing partners and project staff, the study team used a number of measures. These awareness of what it advocacy goals that are project, partners’ ways degree to which they to deliver on key

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proxy/indirect included among others; takes to achieve embedded in the of working including the have set themselves up project outcomes.

i. Understanding limited to partners’ focus area

Overall the study teams’ assessment is that the partners understand and are quite articulate about their own interventions (not necessarily the entire project) and their role in rolling back violence in Rwanda. To the extent that partnership and mobilisation project focuses on GBV, there is convergence of interests and understanding of the intention of the project. Some partners felt that they did not know enough about the work others were doing and that the current structural set up did not favour cross-learning. Underlying this thinking is the deep-seated perception that somebody else (NPA and Pro-Femmes Twese hamwe -the only umbrella) should take lead.

Perceived achievements as reported by partners

- Gender mainstreaming in performance contracts
- Capacity building of local leaders
- PEF
- Engaging women to build their leadership

In the round table dialogue with representatives of all heads of institutions the issue of joint planning and proposal writing was raised so was the question of who should play a convening role amongst the six partners and NPA. A view among the partners is that PFTH’s and NPA in their capacities as the umbrella platform and funder respectively should be playing leading roles. Confusion as to how advocacy should be structured was noted. The plan by AJPRODHO to have a public policy dialogue forum appear not to have gained traction with one partner threatening not to be part of it.

Evaluators' perspective.

Cultivating a culture of sharing and learning among independent organisations implementing a similar programme is often challenging due to a number of reasons. Firstly as pointed out by NPA partners, the funding cycle is too short (one year) hence, limited time to organise 'non-core' activities, lest they fall short of spending and completing 'core activities'. The situation is compounded by absence and limited appreciation of knowledge management in the organisation's growth and development.

Secondly, organisations often come into partnerships with entrenched positions on certain issues as well as perceived self-importance on certain areas. From evaluators' experience such organisations are hard to influence especially when they perceive new knowledge as an affront to their *raison d'être* (core reason for existence). This is unlike consortium arrangement where power dynamics naturally compel partners to come together. It is tempting to make parallels with NPA partners. All the six partners have unique capabilities and strengths that may subconsciously make them less inclined to be willing to be swayed by others. PFTH is for example at their best when explaining their role in empowering women in leadership positions. RWAMREC on their other hand is keen to project herself as the "go-to" institution on men engage approach. COPORWA is very passionate about the plight of historically marginalised people. AJPRODHO's prowess in convening stakeholders through the monitoring advisory group (MAG) was noted. This is not to say that the partners' entrenched positions is the reason collaboration has not happened. It is important to be aware that some organisations may be less inclined not to share if the outcome of that is letting go of their signature initiatives.

ii. Success criteria understood in the narrowest sense

Talking to local leaders in Nyagatare, Karong, Nyaruguru among others, the study team found out that partners understand and have managed to put GBV on the radar of local officials. This achievement cannot indeed be ignored. When asked to mention some of their achievements, PFTH mentioned that they were proud to have brought together women leaders and their spouses and encouraged the latter to support the former in their leadership journey that there is anecdotal information to suggest that this was well received. From RWAMREC's perspective, training security organs and district leadership in gender mainstreaming stood out among the achievements. The rest of the partners also had stories to tell which are explained later in the impact question. Overall the project ambition is in a way understood in a very narrow sense. Without having the big picture of what counts as success, there is a danger that the means to an end may well turn out to be the end in itself. For example getting women in leadership position should be seen in the context of empowering all women. The project may want to concern itself with what women do once they are in leadership positions.

The evaluation noted strong collaboration with local leaders with whom a lot has been accomplished in terms of following up issues raised in PEF and advocacy meetings. There is a sense in which being accepted by government is seen by partners and CSOs in Rwanda generally as a big achievement. Partly, this may be down to the history of frosty relationship between mainly INGOs and GoR. The latter often works well with CSOs that do not ask hard questions about

democracy, human rights and are willing to do 'heavy lifting' in terms of service delivery. In effect, the legitimacy of CSOs stem from their willingness to help in the implementation of government agenda. This approach of combining service delivery with advocacy has helped partners to achieve a modicum of success and is a huge motivation for CSOs generally to continue doing service delivery. To influence government position, CSOs in Rwanda are aware that they have to earn government trust through doing service delivery or depicting government in good light. For NPA, having such partners (PFTH for example) is a double-edged sword. One hand, such partners are more likely to be successful in terms of influencing policy positions –which they have to a certain extent. On the other hand they are less likely to extricate themselves easily from direct implementation later alone pushing for controversial issues. This is a trade-off NPA will need to contend with in the meantime.

Even though the project documents imply that the project it was never about raising GBV awareness alone, the issue (GBV) seem to have taken precedence over strengthening democratisation process in Rwanda. The need to gradually transfer ownership of anti-GBV activities to local government activities appear to be less understood by partners. For example one of the achievements RWAMREC is happy to report is the inclusion of GBV activities in Rulindo district performance contracts. This is however belied by the fact that the district itself did not allocate budget to anti-GBV activities.

iii. Advocacy stratagem work in progress

Having won the trust of government leaders, it is imperative that CSOs use this opportunity to respectfully challenge issues that they care most about such as budget allocation, gender budget statements, and inclusion of GBV in district development plans among others. Leveraging this opportunity would require stratagem, pragmatism as well as awareness of what is possible in the Rwandan context. Having advocacy plan is naturally the best recourse but from experience this is not sufficient without taking other steps such as mapping of key power brokers and packaging for them information/factsheets with clear action points which again relates to knowledge management.

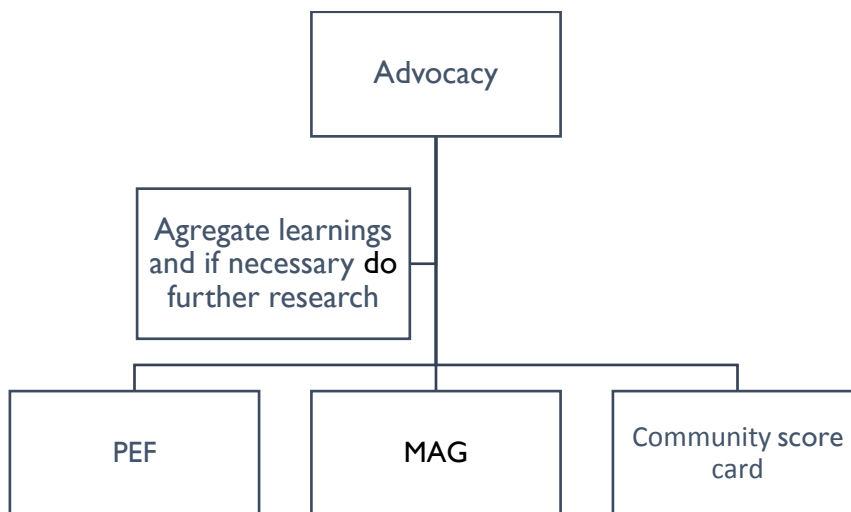
The indicative process could for example entail listing all issues that require advocacy. These could come from basic research, project M&E data (for example parents evening forum, gender focal person's reports) among others. With this advocacy agenda in place, partners could then do research if more information is needed, identify relevant parties crucial to the resolution of issues and present to them advocacy position papers. PFTH already developed a position paper on teenage pregnancy. This is something to be applauded.

A plan to formulate advocacy plans is under discussion between NPA and partners. When this materialises, it is important that this does not become another high level document that does not guide partners in their daily work. Partners will need to own these plans by developing tools and tactics (flyers, fact sheets, lobbying, and negotiation etc.) to operationalise them. Getting the citizenry along in the advocacy process could yield better results. Partners to explore opportunities to engage the populace in a bid to strengthen their credibility. The study found out instances where it was not clear whether some of the positions vouched for by partners such as

the family law which defines both husband and wife as the head of the household was a result of popular demand from the grassroots. Partners ought to embrace citizen centred advocacy for better results.

The strategy will need to be backed by an operational plan linked to the partner work plans and should be updated regularly. It is worth noting that partners are already doing and have succeeded in influencing certain policies and laws (family law and maternity leave for example) but they could achieve more if they had a documented blueprint on how to do advocacy in a sensitive environment like Rwanda. It is possible that partners are already utilising the little space there is to nudge government to take certain policy decisions. It's hard to tell from a neutral/evaluation perspective in the absence of any written outline or articulation of how advocacy positions are taken.

Figure 1: Envisioned advocacy process



Source: Research Hub (2017)

iv. Mobilisation of constituencies

One of the project outcomes is to help partners mobilise people who have common cause and increase their membership base. The assumption underpinning this approach is that naturally bigger constituencies would be hard to ignore if they collectively presented their voice(s). The right based approach holds that right holders ought to be empowered so that they can hold duty bearers to account. If this principle were to hold, partners would have to mobilise and swell their membership. The study team sought to identify ways in which six partners connect with their bases/constituencies and what makes them believe that they are bona fide interlocutors for various groups they represent. None of them appeared to have a clear feedback loop with their constituencies and a strategy to increase membership.

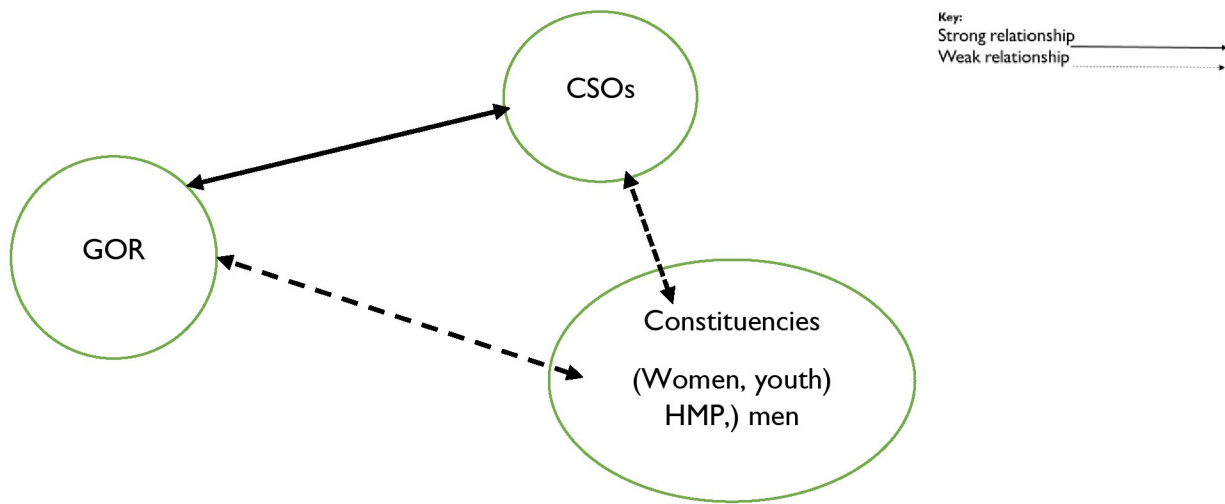
Part of the issue is that the six partners with exception of COPORWA do not represent particular constituencies in the strictest sense. AJPRODHO, PFTW, RWAMERC, RWN for example do not necessarily represent views of youth, women and men in a way that would be expected of for example a labour movement. Strengthening relationship with respective councils (youth's and women councils for example) could make a difference in terms of communication with partner's constituencies. The structures of partners often involve the board management and field volunteers. Some tend to have founder members who are more akin to chief executive officers (CEO) of family businesses. The accountability mechanism tends to be between management and the board of directors. Even though all partners and generally most local CSOs tend to have general assembly that brings together grassroots representatives, the latter's ability to influence decisions is limited. It is important to bear in mind that having emboldened CSOs is not always in the best interest of GoR who fear that the former could make the country less governable. There is a temptation to wonder if it matters at all that partners are not regularly consulting their bases which as explained is a general tendency for CSOs in Rwanda.

Firstly the support of NPA and other international organisations is not guaranteed to be permanent. Hence, at some point CSOs in future members may need to rely on their bases to run their activities. Secondly legitimacy and credibility matters a lot in advocacy work. Without consulting their constituencies and articulating their positions, CSOs risk being seen as extension of the state. This perception has historical origin. Because most CSOs were involved in service delivery in the aftermath of the genocide, citizens tended to view them as part of the officialdom. Rwanda generally still sees NGOs and CSOs as partners in service delivery. To avoid the cynicism and perception that NGOs/CSOs largely represent the interests of the elite, engaging the grassroots is essential.

As denoted by Figure one, the six partners have built strong rapport with government an advantage that has helped them achieve a modicum of success. There is however limited interface between government and grassroots members of CSOs in a way that can be linked to project efforts. In theory platforms exist for citizens to input into the planning process. In practice, they (citizens) are hardly empowered to influence decisions taken from 'above'. The general population is often called upon to rubberstamp decisions taken by their leaders even when the outcome is certain to be counterproductive (challenges associated with land consolidation a case in point).

The relationship between CSOs and their constituencies could be strengthened. Partners ought to focus on building the confidence of their members/population and mobilising popular support on issues that concern them. At the moment, partners are involved in advocacy but it's not clear if positions they are vouching for enjoy popular support. AJPRODHO for example is unconvinced that the aforementioned family law advocated for by PFTW enjoys support among Rwandans. While different organisations can have different opinions on an issue, it is important that the positions they promote be supported by their respective constituencies and there is prima facie evidence to that effect.

Figure 2: Strengths of relationship between GoR , CSOs and their constituencies



3.2 Implications for NPA

The issues pointed have potential implication that require NPA to reflect on for the better understanding of the project.

- i. In the long run NPA may need to associate more with CSOs that represent certain core constituencies that they are accountable to. COPORWA represents a bit of that.
- ii. It may as well be worthwhile for Partners to focus on activities aimed at empowering the grassroots to challenge the status quo. Rather than CSOs taking the mantle of engaging the local leadership on behalf of the citizens, they could build the confidence of the masses to use available opportunities such radio talk shows, national dialogues to pass their concerns to the powers that be.

2) Alignment between the project programme

The alignment question was looked into comparing the partner project proposals NPA/NORAD results framework. The office is yet to develop a country strategy opportunity to examine where the in the overall country office ambitions The nature of funding whereby all the country offices funded by NORAD proposal presented some limitation in obtaining useful contextual information Rwanda. The four years plan does not enough into strategic considerations underpinning the country programme. Undertaking political economy analysis exploration of different possibilities in terms of strengthening democratic dispensation is essential.

Key highlights

- Strengthening democratic processes goes beyond fighting GBV
- Little being done to address democratic deficits alluded to in the context analysis
- Promoting democratic dispensation carries significant risks in Rwanda
- Voice and accountability indicators at goal level required
- Caution needed when using quantitative indicators

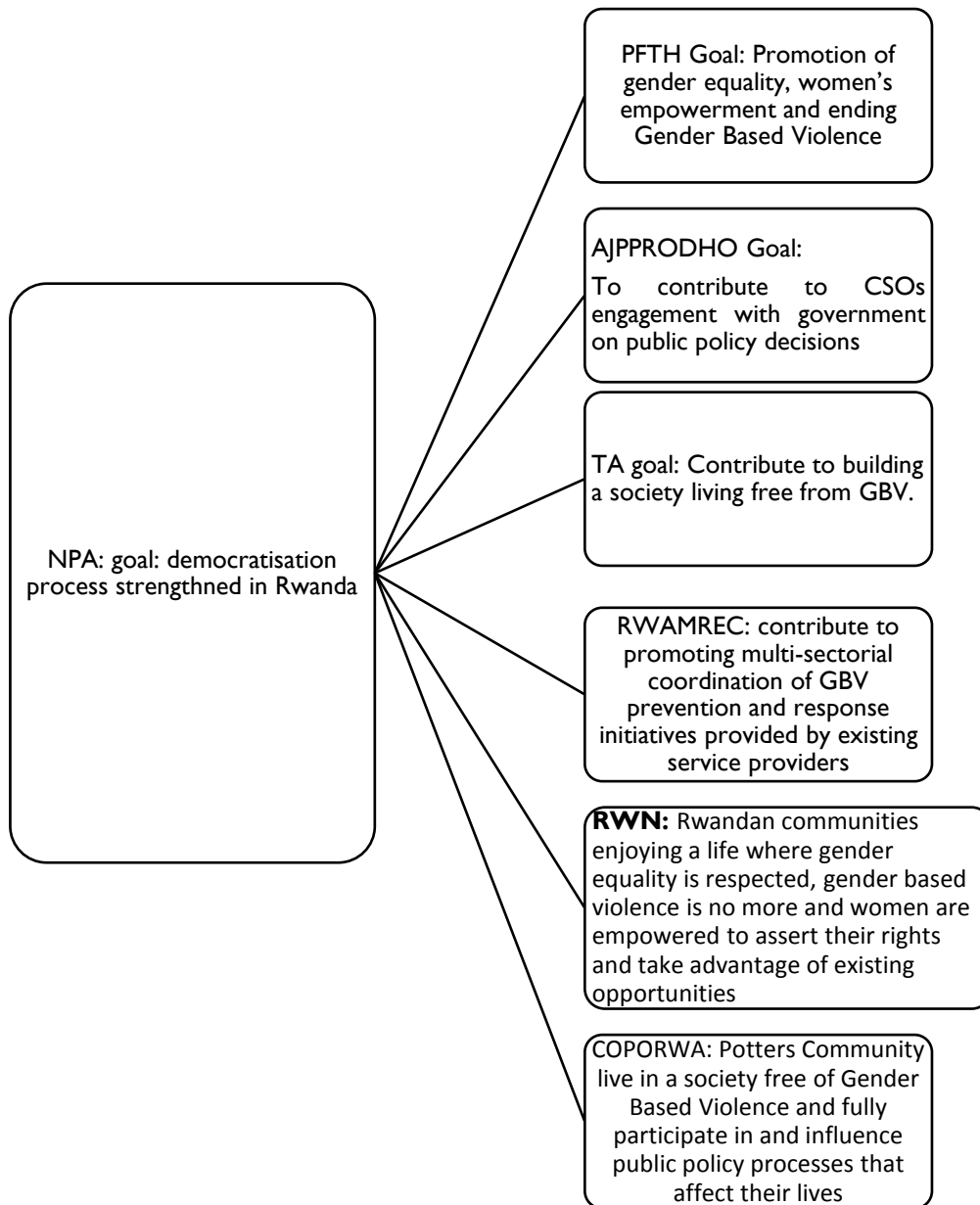
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As figure two shows, the alignment between partner projects impliedly exists in terms of focus area/goal level. There is however a sense of disconnect between the goal “democratic processes strengthened” and the subsequent interventions of partners. The project nomenclature further demonstrates how disconnected the project is from the official goal. Across all the six partners, the project is known as “ending domestic violence (EDV). The goals of all the projects prepared by partners all allude to the direction of ending gender based violence. There is little mention of supporting democratisation process. It would appear to a neutral that not much is being done to address Rwanda’s democratic deficits –the subject of the context analysis in the proposal. This of course would carry risks that organisations such as HRW face in trying to bring to the fore rights issues.

Figure 3: alignment of partner projects and programme



As figure 3 shows, gender appears to be a crosscutting theme in all the projects of partner's at least as per their overarching goals. This is in contrast to NPA's envisioned goal of strengthening democratisation process in Rwanda. The evaluation team was unable to find any documentation that provides a rationale for why GBV rather than governance for example came to be a major focus of the programme. It is however understood that it has been a major focus area in the last two strategic plans of NPA. There may be a need to further redefine what was meant by strengthening democratisation process to give it contextual meaning. Alternatively, partners may be asked to include elements of strengthening democratisation in their projects. There is a

counterargument that NPA is not seeking to have a homogeneous programme to which all partners are implementing. This is not necessarily the view point of partners. While there is acknowledgement of the nuances of the NPA programming approach vis-à-vis other entities, the perception among some is that NPA is playing with semantics. After all, the argument is that the programme has one goal to which all partners are contributing, it has common outcomes and indicators and targets that all the six partners are helping to achieve.

Indicators

As mentioned earlier, the nature of funding leaves limited room to customise the results statements and indicators to each country. For example output two and three are less likely to be useful in the Rwandan context given the governance structures of local CSOs as pointed out in question four. Increasing membership does not seem to be relevant as it would be for a trade union or interest groups that are known to influence public policies in other geographies. However, the country offices must still find a way of reporting against them even if not much is being done in regard to what the indicators imply. A review of partners' M&E matrix and the results framework revealed that;

- i. Some partners have indicators that are clearly aligned to the NPA/NORAD results framework others are not (see comment in Annex 1).
- ii. There is a preference for numerical indicators even when partners and NPA have not set targets to which they can be held accountable.
- iii. Source of, method and frequency of data collection on key KAP indicators hardly indicated in partner M&E matrices raising a question about the authenticity of data presented in the reports. (See table two

Table 2: Example of an M&E matrix of one of the partner

Goal: To contribute to CSOs engagement with government on public policy decisions				
Specific Objective: To increase CSOs dialogue and collaboration on public policy decisions				
Project Results	Indicators (How do you Know whether the Result is achieved)	Activities	Baseline information	Risk / Assumptions
RI. CSOs cooperation to inform public policy decisions strengthened	<p># of CSOs working together to inform public policy decisions</p> <p># of advocacy positions jointly worked on by CSO members</p>	<p>I.1 Facilitate a CSOs Cooperation Assessment</p> <p>I.2 Set up a CSOs cooperation Engagement and Advocacy Strategy</p> <p>I.3 Facilitate a</p>	<p>- There is no cooperation assessment in place</p> <p>- The Legal Aid Forum and AJPRODHO among others were involved in the revision of the penal code.</p>	<p>CSO are reluctant to work together on advocacy projects</p> <p>✓ AJPRODHO developed a criteria for engaging CSOs and held initial discussion to enlist to their support &</p>

Reflections/Implications

- i. Reflect on the need to align the programme to the goal by adding more governance related activities. Some bits of that are implied in the work partners are doing but not sufficiently enough. NPA can explore the cons and pros of this during the strategic planning process.
- ii. Consider adopting WB's voice and accountability index as proxy measure of strengthening "democratisation process in Rwanda". This wouldn't necessarily mean that NPA would take credit for any change but it would give an indication of what it is the organisation is contributing to.
- iii. Finding the right balance between qualitative and quantitative indicators may be necessary especially where outcome is uncertain and there are no set targets to be achieved.
- iv. Inclusion of data sources, frequency and method of data collection into the M&E matrix should be considered by partners especially for KAPs indicators

- v. Having one program goal to which all the proposals from six partners reference in their proposals may be worth exploring
- vi. Comprehensive M&E plan that clearly captures the project context, expected results (goal, outcomes, and outputs) indicators, method of collecting data collection plan and dissemination should be given strong consideration by NPA.

3) Extent of learning and reflection within the programme

Learning and reflection are essential attributes of growing organisations more so in the development space. The non-linearity of development spaces makes it absolutely important to invest in learning. Knowing what works and what does not is essential for proper planning and resource allocation. This study focused on exploring learning opportunities within the programme and how members have gone about utilising information advance the programme objectives.

The findings show that the programme has various avenues to share insights from the field. These include; Quarterly meetings and joint partnership assessments. Generally this is one area where a lot of improvements could be made.

i. A lot of information collected but not sufficiently used.

The study team noticed that a lot of good work is being done by partners but amazingly there is less documentation of innovations and best practices initiated. Furthermore the data collected is seldom linked to advocacy activities and fundraising strategies of partners. AJPRODHO's monitoring advocacy group for example is an important avenue through which issues raised by community change agents/gender focal persons are channelled. Through this channel, health centres were made to stop medical fees charged to GBV. TA uses a score card to rank GBV issues that are then addressed appropriate authorities. All the partners have parents evening forums – a primary source of information on pertinent issues including GBV. Consolidation of learnings from this platform is quite weak. PFTH has been equipping girls from higher learning institutions with leadership skills since 2012. But there is hardly a track record of the whereabouts of the pioneers, what they are doing or any narrative as to why this activity should be continued. The study requested for a single case story of girl who started the training in 2012 and their current whereabouts to no avail. Part of the problem is limited time and capacity to document issues. The study team is cognizant of the pressure partners face to deliver activities within the calendar year.

But there is limited recognition of the value of documentation and learning within the organisations. By consolidating learnings from PEF, MAG, community score card, partners could actually do a number of things to further their organisations objectives. They could for example design new proposals showing gaps in the ongoing interventions and pitch ideas to other funding partners. They could as well develop advocacy position papers based on issues raised in these platforms. There is also an opportunity to replicate best practices elsewhere if partners could share their learnings to other likeminded organisations. Joint action forum for development (JADF) is one such forum that partners could leverage to disseminate best practices with a view to vouching for replication and scale up (see figure one). The study found out that partners have

fantastic relationship with authorities at the grassroots. They could leverage this relationship to strategically make a case for PEF and other initiatives.

ii. The question of who should spearhead learning?

There is a question of who should be take responsibility for ensuring that there is a learning across. Given that each partner have their own set of activities that are not necessarily linked, a question that arises is who should play a convening role. Naturally NPA would be best placed to do this but her view is that partners should find reasons to work together with or without NPA. The latter contend that they are often too busy with limited headspace to organise cross learning. The programme (both NPA and partners) may need to reflect on the necessity of having a knowledge management specialist either sitting at NPA or one of the partners to facilitate cross learning. This role could also be outsourced to an external entity. Either way there is a need to have knowledge management plan especially given that the programme is implemented in phases. Subsequent phases should build on strong lessons from the past rather than doing more of the same. It is possible that this is happening already but there is no evidence proof to that effect.

iii. Structure of learning forums

When meetings happen, there is an issue with how they are structured. Interviews with key players revealed that quite often the agenda is general and not very structured with clear action points and continuous tracking of recommendations agreed at previous quarterly meetings that bring partners together. At partner level, most 'learning' meetings are no more than normal human resource staff meetings where issues to discuss can range from mundane office stuff to update on the situation in the field. For learning to be effective, strong M&E is required. The person in charge of M&E should ideally convene and focus the discussion to emerging issues from M&E reports. This could reduce the likelihood that meetings turn into 'talk shops' where random issues are discussed. It is true that adhoc and unstructured meetings can be a source of learning if proceedings are documented and available for review.

4) Suitability of the project

i. Gender based violence situation.

Although Rwanda has made significant strides in terms of gender equality, significant bottlenecks still persist at household level in terms of gender relations. Studies done by various stakeholders reveal a depressing situation. NISR (2016) reports that there were 12,439 cases of GBV in 2013 with females accounting for 96% (11,951) of all officially reported cases. In 2014, the number of GBV victims dramatically increased to 14,421 (a 14% increment). Earlier (2013) a study done by RWAMREC had revealed that nearly 73% of respondents self-reported that GBV existed in their communities. Compounding the situation are retrogressive social norms that normalises violence against women in Rwandan households. About 56% of Rwandan women interviewed reported that wife beating could be justified under certain circumstances. {DHS 2010}

Clearly GBV remains a major problem in Rwandan society. Through Isange one stop centre, the GoR has made an effort to prioritise the issue but progress remains far from ideal. A number of CSO organisations have since joined efforts to reverse the trend that is threatening to

overshadow Rwanda's otherwise progressive gender policies. NPA along with other likeminded organisations such as Care have done a great deal to champion the issue.

The GoR through the Ministry of gender and family promotion along with Rwanda national police are some of the players doing work on GBV. Through Rwanda national Police, the Ministries of; justice, (through MAJ) gender family promotion through Isange one stop centre (Multi-sectoral and interdisciplinary initiative of various ministries) the GoR has created an institutional approach to address GBV in a holistic manner. In 2011, a national strategic plan for fighting GBV was formulated reflecting further government commitment to address a deep-rooted the problem. This however has remained on paper with very limited implementation on the ground. Few partners are addressing the problem in a comprehensive manner as NPA partners.

Main points

- Strong government will not backed by resources to implement anti GBV strategic plan
- Framework created but limited coordination at national and local level –NPA partners filling the void
- The expiry of MIGEPROF GBV strategic plan is an opportunity for NPA and her partners to influence the contents of the next one
- Need to reflect at the long term

Programme relevance

Rwanda's checkered history characterised by violence, civil strife political intolerance and some semblance of stability achieved in the last two decades provides useful food for thoughts in terms of whether to support democratisation process in the country. While the country has made headlines –on economic front for all the right reasons -strong growth (which -critics argue is not unusual for a country emerging from conflict) in the last two decades, there is scepticism among analysts as to whether economic growth alone is sufficient to prevent the country from sliding back into anarchy without strong institutions to act as counterweight to the powerful state.

For starters, Rwanda is considered a beacon of hope when it comes to economic management of state affairs. Corruption is perceived to be relatively low –third least corrupt country in Africa and 50th in the world according to transparency's corruption perception index (2016¹). The country has also consistently performed well in terms of ease of doing business. The latest World Bank report of (2016) ²ranks her in the third position in Africa behind South Africa and Mauritius. In terms of governance, the accolades are few or non-existent. Since independence, successive governments have been accused of restricting political space and disdain for human rights. The latest human rights watch (HRW) report (2017) blames the current government of hounding journalists, unlawful detentions, inability of the judiciary to follow up on claims of torture limiting space for opposition and civil society to function freely among others. Rwanda scores poorly (33.6%) in rights despite doing well (87.3%) according to Ibrahim index on governance in Africa

¹ <https://www.transparency.org/country/RWA#>

² <http://www.doingbusiness.org/data/exploreeconomies/rwanda>

(2017)³. There Underlying GoRs approach is the fear that opening up the political space could open old wounds with political parties jostling for power using ethnic card as key mobilisation tool. But twenty four years after the genocide, a case can be made that the gradual opening up of democratic space should be happening.

Civil society can play a significant role moderating the powers of the state during this transition period (from tight to liberal political liberalism). The question for NPA and CSOs in general is how best to play this role in a very restrictive environment where the threat of deregistration looms large over 'noncompliant' nongovernmental organisations. Hence, whilst the programme is relevant, finding the right approaches, implementation model that has potential to change the behaviour of the state in a constructive manner remains a daunting task.

The option available to the NPA programme and CSOs in the same space generally is to try to engineer change from below by working with locals CSOs to build the confidence of the masses to speak up rather than CSOs acting as citizens' voice even though this approach may be necessary in the short term. This can be done by empowering the masses to for example call-in to local radios, write petitions to local mayors and executive secretaries, strategically present issues during national dialogue (Umushyikirano) among others. GoR is less sensitive to criticism directed at local authorities but would be incensed if the complaints were against the Executive, the President or the ruling party. At the national level, NPA partners can be part of the CSO network trying to do national policy advocacy under the auspices of Care international and other local and international organisations.

NPA partners need to be strategic about utilising the limited space that exists to the maximum. This again requires strong knowledge management, having facts on finger tips, modicum on research skills to investigate the magnitude of issues raised for example raised in the parent's evening forums, MAG among others. Rwanda's progress has largely been due to the strengths of individual characters (such as the president's militaristic approach to service delivery) rather than the strengths of state institutions. It is important that the fight against corruption, bad governance, human rights be institutionalised. NPA and partners can play a meaningful role in this process.

5) Impact of the project.

While assessing the impact of the project, the team is fully aware of the short time span the project has been in existence. The findings are therefore anecdotal and largely reflects what assessors saw as early signs of effects of the programme on target beneficiaries. This section is divided into two sections; perceived impact at individual and at policy influence levels.

³ <http://iiag.online/>

a) Impact at community level

Insights gathered from qualitative interviews with project beneficiaries show that the project is having remarkable effect in communities where the project is implemented. Testimonies gathered through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews revealed that the various forums set up by the projects have increased knowledge about different forms of violence. The respondents interviewed seemed to be aware of the perils of unequal relationships between men and women and how this these can be a precursor for violence in homes and between couples.

“Gender Based Violence occurs when for example your husband forces you to have sex with him when you are not ready”. **Female respondent, Nyaruguru**

Tales of peace returning in some households that were previously source of violence were heard with respondents attributing this behaviour change to the project through parents evening forum. Couples that used to fight regularly much to the chagrin of community members but are now living happily were reported. In some cases, the project interventions have had effects on economic wellbeing of households. From drunkard husbands that were previously violent to their wives but are now reformed, to parents now using money they previously spent on alcohol on school fees for their children, there is a sense of feeling among gender focal persons that the things are on the right trajectory.

The available forums have emboldened the community members and community mobilizers to make emerging issues known to the local leadership Tubibe Amahoro has successfully used the “GBV Community Scorecard” information to advocate for couples who could not afford mandatory fees for civil marriages at the Sector level. Attention has also been drawn to the issue of teenage pregnancy which the district authorities are now prioritizing. In Nyagatare AJPRODHO’s convening capabilities through MAG have helped in coordination of GBV activities an appreciation that was not lost out to officials interviewed in the evaluation process. Hitherto, the police, the district, health centers, NWC representatives tended to operate in silos.

‘If it wasn’t for AJPRODHO the problem of identifying and addressing the issue of GBV in Nyagatare would still be a challenge because stakeholders were working individually – and now we have a platform where information is shared instantly and support is also provided immediately without duplicating efforts’. **Staff at One Stop Center, Nyagatare**

Most GBV issues appear to be resolved at community level. Cell and sector leaders only come in when community level counselling has not worked and matters referred to them by GFPs. Parents Evening Forum have been the main channel through which all conflicts are resolved. Whenever a serious issue is discovered in the community and it cannot be resolved during the Parents Evening Forum, the Gender Focal Persons provide information to the local leader at sector level.

The knowledge acquired during the training is not only applied when either preventing or fighting against Gender Based Violence but it has been also used to prevent other existing issues in the community such as theft, encouraging people to participate in government initiatives such as community service (Umuganda), saving groups, community meetings and VUP.

“As a local leader I have a responsibility to work hand-in-hand with our partners in addressing GBV issues because if my community members live in harmony, development happens without a problem. And again, our partners help us achieve our plans – performance Contracts”. In-charge of Social Affairs, Nyaruguru

i. What has worked at community and why?

- **Parents evening forums:** Parents Evening Forum is now popular and quite making changes in the community because community members are open to share their ideas. There is a need for more men to get involved.
- **TA’s Community score card:** this has helped the organisation to rank GBV issues and to identify what needs to be done by whom among others
- **Drama and skit:** Rwanda is a country that loves drama and this approach seems to be working well especially when important messages need to be passed on in a way that is not seen as a directive from authorities
- **Monitoring Advocacy group:** AJPRODHO’s has created a platform where information is shared instantly and support provided in a manner that is devoid of duplication of efforts

ii. The reasons that account for the registered successes at community level;

- Community and leadership acceptance of partners and the former’s efforts to build rapport with the latter.
- Strong cadre of volunteers (GFPs) that are skilled in what they do and embedded in the community. The non-confrontational approach appear to be cherished by local leaders.
- Local leaders’ self interest in making CSOs do the ‘heavy lifting’ for them. For as long as CSOs have budget to spend, local leaders are happy to lend any support required. While partners should be credited for building rapport with local leaders –something not all NGOs do, ownership of activities by the local authorities should be the ultimate goal.

iii. What has not worked so well?

- The involvement of men in PEFs appear to be a main challenge across all partners. There is a general perception that PEF is meant for women and that men attending are those facing challenges in their homes.

- Less obvious has been the impact of training girls from HLLs. The situation is compounded by absence of data on the pioneers of the programme. The programme has been training girls from higher institutions of learning since 2012. Five years down the road, PFTH should have been in a position to point out the whereabouts of first batch of beneficiaries, what they are doing, how they used the skills acquired from the training among others. This would justify the continuation of this activity in subsequent phases of the programme.

iv. **Issues for reflections**

1. NPA and her partners need to reflect on how long they can continue to do the 'heavy lifting' in terms of GBV intervention. Most partners reported that they were being urged by local leaders to expand the project to other sectors they don't operate in. This of course would come with financial implications. The irony is that partners seem intent on carrying the burden. The ideal situation would have been partners gradually transitioning out of this seemingly service delivery and handing over responsibilities to authorities.
2. NPA and partners also need to think of best ways to document what has worked in respect to key initiatives such as PEF, MAG, and community score card. Case studies or documentaries may be further amplify the work being done in a way that routine reports don't do. Whilst NPA has a fiduciary responsibility to demonstrate impact of her work in Rwanda, partners have an even bigger stake in this as they are the ones on the frontline and interfacing with the grassroots. They ought to find within themselves resources to make this happen not just for the programme but for their organisation's growth and development.
3. AJPRODHO and TA need to reflect on whether or not the project's interests are not best served if the MAG and community score cards are integrated in district planning process.
4. The added value of HLL also ought to be examined. Partners need to reflect on what the end game should be like before starting a new initiative. It was not clear to the evaluation team what a successful HLL would look like.
5. **What women do once in leadership position:** it may be in the best interest of the project to find out what women do once elected into leadership positions. Since 1994 Rwanda has not had an issue with shortage of women in leadership positions. It may now be prudent to focus more on the quality of representation. If there are issues that are preventing women leaders from performing their roles, then focus should be on addressing those bottlenecks. Performance yardstick should change from quantity (number of women in leadership) to quality (gender sensitive legislations passed for example).
6. **Advocacy work plan:** given that advocacy is a crosscutting issue, there may be a need to develop specific activities on advocacy at the beginning of each year.

b) Achievement at policy influence level

Given that funding to roll out programme in its current scope is not guaranteed to remain forever, there is case to be made that partners and NPA ought to give more attention to how they extricate themselves out of implementing current workload. Focusing on monitoring issues like budget allocation to GBV activities, analysis of gaps in policies that concern partner core area of focus could be plan B and there is a need to consider this option. Study revealed that achievement at this level remains scant. PFTH along with other CSOs has been successful in terms of overturning the maternity leave policy that had reduced the number of paid leave weeks mothers are entitled to from twelve to four. Beyond that there isn't much that has happened in the period under review.

Advocacy summary findings

- Partners have built strong rapport with authorities
- Good rapport with districts not leveraged to push through partners' agenda
- Rwanda's top-down approach makes it hard to achieve advocacy goals at lower levels.
- Limited analysis of gaps, opportunities in policies and programmes at partner level.
- Limited connection between PEF, MAG, M&E, research and advocacy.

TA for example pointed out that they lack capacity to influence performance contracts something they believe ought to be done at higher level. RWN too pointed out the difficulty of inputting into the performance work plans of sectors due to the speed with which the process is undertaken and the fact that the priorities are set from higher levels. (District and national level).

Whereas some partners (RWN, RWAMREC) revealed that they influenced performance contracts, the extent of achievement is limited to doing analysis on the implementation and for RWAMREC inclusion of her work plan in the district budget. Yet without accomplishing this goal, it is hard to see how systemic change can happen. Rwanda has different centres of power that in theory provides opportunities for CSOs to influence planning process. Through JADF in each district, councils at cell, sector and district levels, CSOs have an opportunity to leverage their good rapport with decentralised entities leadership to push through their agenda.

Part of the reason why influencing decentralised levels remains a challenge is Rwanda's top-down governance system. The national priorities are often set at national level and decisions cascaded down to districts for implementation. Even if district would want to budget GBV activities, they would be constrained to do so if the issue is not a national priority. It thus follows that advocacy ought to focus on line ministries (Local government), Ministry of gender and family as well as finance and economic planning which handles budget allocations.

The issue that arises then is how partners can influence ministries. Care international Rwanda has also identified this bottleneck and is trying work with civil society network to influence Ministry of local government. There is however lack of guidance on how best CSOs can engage the Ministry. A gender working group exists in the ministry of gender and family promotion but it has been dormant for a while.

Among the CS 2016 partners, there are conflicting opinions on how advocacy should be done. Some strongly feel that this should be done through PFTH-the only umbrella organisation among

the six partners. Others such as AJPRODHO feel that the current platforms are ineffective channels that cannot be counted upon to champion issues. A Forum for Dialogue on Public Policy (FDP) has been mooted with the idea of bringing together likeminded organisations to do advocacy on mutual issues. Acceptance of this forum has not been unanimous with some partners pointing out the multiplicity of advocacy channels.

The study also found issues with how partners are set up to advocate. There is limited use of data generated through PEF, MAG community score card among others to develop compelling advocacy cases. When asked what issues they would like to advocate for and how they determine them, there were no clear cut answers. Research and policy analysis was found to be weak. Whereas NPA has previously given them training on advocacy, it appears not to have been effective in helping partners achieve advocacy goals. Ideally advocacy issues should come from the M&E reports generated by GFPs and other field staff. Through these reports, issues (research problem) may arise necessitating further research or immediate advocacy.

The study team is not insinuating that partners should be conducting randomised control trials (RCT) but simply basic research to inform public policy. It may be a case of simply doing desk review and analysis of existing datasets from a host of partners in the same field. This can be done internally and information packaged in a way that clearly captures call to actions. There is a question as to whether data generated in such manner passes 'evidence' threshold test. Firstly, non-sensitive topics (topics that depict government in 'bad' light) do not often attract the wrath of government and this was confirmed by some partners. Secondly, the way information is packaged matters a lot. To make most out of otherwise routine data, partners can package information in form of recorded testimonies of beneficiaries narrating their experiences documentaries and present them during meetings with duty bearers (for example in MAG meetings). Such recordings ought to have clear call to actions. There is a chance of achieving breakthrough in terms of policy influence through appealing to the human emotions of leaders and stakeholders. This again requires a knowledge management plan at partners' level.

With exception of PFTW, none of the partners have an advocacy strategy but plans are underway to develop them courtesy of NPA. This study suggests that plans should be designed should be in such a way that they are not high level documents that are disconnected from the work partners are doing. The training will need to allude to tactics that can deliver best advocacy outcomes in a very fluid context like Rwanda. These may include having for example summarised fact sheets and "what we know about GBV". It should also be a living tool that helps partners to do power mapping and how to package messages to persuade them to back their view points. It may also be worth exploring the possibility of working with the network that Care is spearheading efforts to strengthen advocacy at national level rather than re-inventing the wheel through FDP.

Action points advocacy

- Mapping of actors and their influence
- Packaging of information
- Call to actions
- Fact sheets
- Care's civil society network initiative

6) Enthusiasm in the project and the partnership.

Partner representatives talked to are generally appreciative of the project given its relevance to the core issues of their focus. The partnership was generally perceived to be somewhat based on shared values. Almost all partners made a reference to the fact that unlike other funding partners, NPA does not micromanage them when asked to comment on the state of partnership. It was also reported that NPA consults partners on the choice of tools including programme and other financial reporting templates. Capacity building in M&E, financial management board management were greatly appreciated. What would be useful to partners is a capacity building plan that is anchored on needs assessment.

Summary of partnership findings

- Great appreciation of the nature partnership with NPA
- Capacity building noted with thanks
- Short term funding concern
- Limited coverage of overheads
- Relationship between partner to partner could be stronger

The otherwise good positive assessment of the partnership only gets dampened by perennial problem of short term funding. NPA is fully aware of the challenge but there is limited scope to find a quick fix due to the nature of funding from NORAD, the back donor. There are also concerns around NPA not covering overheads adequately and the meagre salaries paid to staff. The evaluation team makes no comment on these two.

Between the partners themselves, the enthusiasm and incentive to work together appears to be slim. Partly this may due to the question of who should convene pointed out earlier. To a neutral, the relationship among partners, can times look like it is based on competition for ideas rather than synergy and complementarity.

General reflection on NPA's partnership

Moving forward if the programme is to be more cohesive, NPA may need to reflect on number of issues including;

- i. NPA's own role in programme management beyond grant management. Whether or not it can take on things like documenting what is working and disseminating to other international NGOs, M&E among others.
- ii. Whether or not the partnership policy ought not to reflect the country realities. It might appear naive to expect partners to out of their own volition come together to share and document and do advocacy at national level.
- iii. Asking hard questions about how long NPA can continue to fund the roll out of government initiatives such as parents evening forum. Under the current situation, partners are less inclined to reduce the scope of their work given that it's what gives them government acceptance. The fact that the partnership can appear open ended also adds another disincentive towards developing an exit plans. Whereas partners appear to take pride in being

able to do work government is supposed to be doing, there is a need to for partners to appreciate the fact that they cannot replace government.

- iv. The need to think beyond GBV. Analysis of country context could reveal what is feasible in terms of strengthening democratic process in Rwanda. This could be the starting point.

4.0 Recommendations.

Based on the findings and aforementioned reflections, the study makes the following recommendations.

i. Partner understanding of the project

- Consider embracing rights based approach with a view to empowering citizens (beyond CSOs) to hold those in leadership to account. The current programme model seems to be banking on partners holding government accountable. Long term solution should be building the confidence of citizens to be in a position to hold government (especially local governments) to account. Hence during PEF, and other community outreach activities, partners should be churning messages on best recourse in the event that citizens are not happy with particular programmes or policies. They could for example provide flyers with contact details of ombudsman and other institutions that they can call to report corruption or GBV cases. A HRBA anchored on empowerment and participation of citizens in decision making has potential to promote accountability in a context like Rwanda where leaders account to fellow leaders above them and less to citizens.
- Use quarterly meetings and joint assessments as an opportunity to reflect together on big picture; what success should look like, sustainability, synergy among others. Reflect on what the situation should look like in the event that there is no more funding.
- Include operational tactics that can be leveraged to achieve advocacy outcomes in the advocacy planning scheduled. Care should be taken to avoid that the advocacy plans of partners end up being just other documents. They should clearly show how issues to advocate for arise and how the mapping of influencers is done. Issues like developing fact sheets, position papers, policy analysis should be integral.
- Encourage partners to start planning with clear endgame. Increasing women in leadership for example should be seen as a means towards giving voice to women. With many women in leadership these days, the focus should be on what women leaders do once in leadership. In other words focus should shift from quantity to quality.

ii. Alignment between the project and the programme

- During planning process, give consideration to more governance related issues at the same time be aware of the associated risks. Currently the project activities and the goal are not fully aligned.
- Include indicators at development goal level to give an idea of what counts as attainment of strengthened democratisation process in Rwanda –the project goal. Consider World Bank’s voice and accountability indicators as proxies
- Make NPA/NORAD results framework the reference document during partner planning to reduce misalignment issues. This might appear to contradict NPAs partnership policy of not wanting to dictate to partners what to do. It is important that key documents speak the same language to the extent possible.
- Partner M&E matrices should include data sources, frequency of collecting data on all indicators especially KAPs ones.

- Partner work plans should include targets to be reached. Where the outcome is uncertain qualitative indicators should be used.
- NPA should in addition to the results framework develop a comprehensive M&E plan/strategy clearly showing what data is needed, how it should be collected and used for decision making. The three page document seen by the evaluation team does not go far enough to explain data needs and use for decision making.

iii. Extent of learning and reflection within the programme

- Structure quarterly meetings into platforms for sharing what is working well what is not, what should be scaled up/down document these learnings for posterity and dissemination to other stakeholders. Focus on key initiatives such as MAG, PEF community scorecard inter alia
- Conduct quasi longitudinal tracking of HLI pioneers and document their journey from college to their adult life to get full extent of the impact of the training. Alternatively consider dropping this initiative.
- Aggregate all learnings from PEF, MAG and create lessons learned document ahead of the final evaluation in 2019. Learnings could also be shared with other stakeholders
- Work towards integrating MAG and community score card into district planning process
- Integrate policy analysis, research into the project. This might require equipping partners with skills to internally analyse government policies and programmes such as VUP, Girinka etc.
- Explore possibility of transferring cross-learning responsibility to one partner or get on-board neutral entity. This entity would on an ongoing basis, document best practises, and case studies and disseminate what is known to work to all partners.
- Include “L” into M&E and ensure that a strong connection with advocacy.
- Invest in knowledge management by strengthening Monitoring and evaluation use and uptake of generated knowledge. Consider hiring a knowledge management specialist to support cross learning across partners. This could be a staff sitting at NPA, or one of the partners. it could also be an independent firm.

iv. Suitability of the project

- Address the disconnect between the goal and the project activities by either integrating more governance issues into the programme (which would carry a risk tag) or tweak the goal (may not work given the international nature of the programme)
- Leverage good relationship between partners and decentralised entities to entice LGs to begin to gradually take ownership of MAG and other signature initiatives,

v. Deepening impact

- Strengthen advocacy efforts at national level in collaboration with other CSOs/INGOs given Rwanda’s top down governance system, influencing decentralised entities may not yield fruit.
- Develop practical advocacy tools to guide partners in the identification of issues, packaging of information developing position papers etc.

- Develop advocacy work plan at the beginning of each fiscal year and ensure. This plan should be anchored on research findings/ gaps identified during policy analysis
- Analyse the effect of interventions on both men and women and adopt gender sensitive M&E

Annex I: indicator matrix with comments

Table 3: Indicator matrix with comments

Project results	Results framework Indicators	Partner project indicators	COMMENTS
Goal: Democratisation process in RWANDA strengthened	n/a May need to develop proxy indicators at goal level even if change wouldn't be attributed to the project		The World bank banking has been tracking data on voice and accountability index ⁴ . It might be good for NPA to use this data at the goal level.. The challenge though is that NPA wouldn't take credit for any change but it at least gives an idea of what the programme is contributing to.
Outcome: Civil Society Organisations influence political decision making	# of partners who have presented proposals	AJPRODHO 1. # of CSOs working together to inform public policy decisions	Ok. this speaks to FDP and intermediate outcome I
	# of partners whose proposals have been included in policies	2. # of advocacy positions jointly worked on by CSO members	Ok. this speaks to FDP and intermediate outcome I
	# of law proposals presented by partners to authorities	3. # of recommendations made in the sector and district level monitoring and advocacy group (MAG) implemented to improve service delivery	This speaks to main outcome even though it is somewhat a process indicator

^{4 4} <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/#doc>

	# of law initiatives that partners have worked to stop	4. # of steps taken to improve efficiency of anti GBV and gender equality mechanisms	Quite vague and unclear. The interest should not be about the number of steps but rather the substance. It could be rephrased like “examples of steps take to improve efficiency of anti GBV ...” nonetheless intended to speak to the main outcome.
Intermediate outcome I: Partners mobilise around common issues	# of partners who participate in alliances	5. # of GBV issues from the community documented and reported for redress and / or advocacy through CCAs or by	Again we would advise adopting qualitative indicators in instances where there are no targets
	# of partners who have organised campaigns	TA	
	# of partners who have initiated public debates in media	1. % of participant at the training who report increased skills through pre and post-test	This should not be at outcome level. Given that it is quantitative indicators, attention should be paid to how data is collected before generalisation can be done
	# of communities who have approached authorities with suggestions to change policies	2. Proportion of citizen exposed to the message of mobilization/sensitization activity 3. # of issues raised by individual and community in general, aggregated by sex and category.	Not clear how data on citizens is collected in the absence of survey in the work plan Again use numbers on activities with targets otherwise use qualitative proxies
	# of women in leadership positions	4. # of issues advocated by ACM supported by Project staffs	Example of issues rather than number would be better

	# of partners who have initiated public debates in media	5. % of GBV and women's land right cases solved	Need to indicate source of data
Outcome 2: Popular organisations are more effective in organising people who have a common cause	# of women in leadership positions		
	# of partners with more than 10% increase in membership	6. #of best practices and/or community initiatives documented and shared with other stakeholders	At outcome level, success should be measured in terms of on uptake rather than sharing.
	# of partners with political training programmes	PFTH	
	# of partners mobilize to prevent GBV in their communities	1. The number of women's forums with substantial plans	Having substantial plans should be seen as means to an end rather than end in itself. At outcome level, the indicator should be what come out of having plans
Output 1: Partners have capacity to challenge authorities	# of partners who have on-going advocacy cases to influence local/regional authorities	2. Proportion of trained women who implement developed personal development plans	Process indicator
	# of partners who have on-going advocacy cases internationally # of target groups that are able to	3. Instances of gender sensitive decisions resulting from women's participation	Speaks to the main outcome.
	conduct advocacy initiatives independently of partner CSOs	4. The increasing rate of the number of women in leadership positions through other forms of competition (non electoral positions)	This speaks to intermediate outcome I. The indicator should be neutral i.e. imply that there will be an increase
Output 2: Representative member	# of local groups in partner organisations	7) Instances of changes in publ policies and program implementation brought	Good and speaks to main outcome

base in partner organisations increased		about as result of engagement with power holders	
	% of female members in partner organisations	8) Number of young women participating in decision making bodies at HLLs	Without the denominator, the number does not tell much. Use percentage or proportion. Pay attention to the source of data.
	# of partners with internal elections in 2011 or later	9) Number of best practice documented	Avoid number unless there is an intention of setting targets. Could use example of best practises such that they are not missed in the report.
Output 3: Partners have democratic structures in their organisations	# of partners with policy documents approved by elected assemblies	10) Number of persons development improved effective implementation	Focus on community level indicators
		COPORWA 1. Number of Topics covered in 5 days on VUP in 21 villages.	Quite less ambitious for an outcome indicator
		2. Number of villages with action plan	Ok.
		3. Number of measures taken by Local authorities to solve presented issues	“Example of measures taken by local authorities to solve presented issues” would be preferable
		RWN 1. Number of CPs who have knowledge and skills on GBV policy, sector performance contract formulation process and the role of citizens	Indicator quite packed difficult to measure it due to many variables (knowledge of; GBV policy, sector performance contract formulation process & role of citizens)

		2. Number of plans developed by CPs to hold local leaders accountable for GBV policy and implemented	Not a very useful indicator.
		3. Number of local leaders with a systematic ⁵ plans to implement anti GBV actions	As mentioned, there is a need to avoid numerical indicators unless a partner is willing to be held accountable for not achieving the target. Otherwise if phrased properly could speak to the main outcome
		4. Number of GBV actions implemented by local leaders	
		5. Anti GBV Actions planned & implemented by local leaders	Aligned to the main outcome
	% of# of women occupying management positions in partner CSOs female board members	6. Budget allocation for anti GBV prevention and response activities	“examples of RVN initiatives documented systematically and shared with other stakeholders” would be better
		7. Number of RVN initiatives documented systematically and shared with other stakeholders	

⁵ Systematic plans that show actions/commitments to implement, track & document activities & GBV cases including period of implementation, responsible,.....

Annex 2: List of references:

1. Kagire E (2017) “Women make up more than half of Kagame’s new Cabinet” The East African <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/Rwanda-Kagame-cabinet-women/2558-4077764-71yr9z/index.html>
2. Human rights watch (2017) Rwanda <https://www.hrw.org/africa/rwanda>
3. Ibrahim index of African governance (2017) about Rwanda <http://iiag.online/>.
4. MIGEPROF (2015) National scale Up of Isange One Stop Center (IOSC) Joint Program <http://www.migeprof.gov.rw/index.php?id=169>
5. National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) [Rwanda], Ministry of Health (MOH) [Rwanda], and. ICF International. 2012. *Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2010*. Calverton, Maryland, USA: NISR, MOH, and ICF International.
6. National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), Statistical Yearbook, 2016 edition
7. (SYB2016), November 2016
8. NPA (2017) Development cooperation in Rwanda <https://www.npaid.org/Our-Work/Countries-we-work-in/Africa/Development-Cooperation-in-Rwanda>
9. One UN (2013) “Women secure 64 per cent of seats in Rwandan parliamentary elections”
10. <http://www.rw.one.un.org/press-center/news/women-secure-64-cent-seats-rwandan-parliamentary-elections>.
11. RWAMREC (2013) RWAMREC study on masculinity and GBV in Rwanda
12. WGI (2017) Voice and accountability <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/#home#>

List of Reviewed documents

- i. Partner proposals and contracts
- ii. National Strategic Plan for Fighting Against Gender-based Violence (2011-2016)
- iii. NPA partnership policy
- iv. M&E training report
- v. Partner annual reports
- vi. Rwanda Progress Report 2016 Norad Cooperation Agreement QZA-15/0443
- vii. PFTH advocacy strategy
- viii. NPA (2010) Observing Change Results based planning, monitoring and reporting (PMR)
- ix. M&E training report