

Project number	39911026
Title	Jämställdhet

Countries Benin, Tanzania

Summary The subject of gender equality has gained momentum in recent years and the UN conventions including the Human Rights Declaration of 10948 has propelled the debate especially after the UN Beijing conference of 1995. In spite of this global, regional and national policy provisions gender inequality remains a key challenge for social development. Gender equity is a key building stone for development as genuine and sustainable human relation, human security and socio-economic prosperity can only occur when the marginalized and vulnerable groups such as women participate in decision making and for this to be realized literacy if fundamental.

PMU Inter-Life and Gender Equality - It is only a few years ago that PMU Inter-Life and the Pentecostal Churches of Sweden begun to seriously reflect on the issues of gender equality. To-day PMU Inter-Life has a gender policy in place that guides its work and partnership with FBOs and CSOs. After a number of years of supporting partner organizations with forwarding gender equality projects, PMU Inter-Life purposed to undertake an evaluation of a sample of projects in Tanzania, Benin and Egypt.

Structure of the evaluation report – This evaluation report is arranged around five sections. The first one is brief background information on the PMU Inter-Life, partner organizations namely FPTC, BUBDOS and DELTA ministries including a summary of the prevailing state of gender equality globally and regionally in Africa. Under section two which is an introduction, the report captures the purpose of the evaluation, specific objectives and the methodology used. In section three findings of the various projects are documented in terms of type of promoting gender equality activities, outcome/results, challenges and strategies and approaches used. Analysis of findings in terms of strategies, performance and outcome is analyzed and finally the last section five presents conclusion, recommendations and way forward.

According to the **Findings of the evaluation**, the various partner organizations have intervened through critical projects such as popular education and literacy, skills training, economic empowerment of women through micro-finance/Income Generating Activities (IGAs), mainstreaming gender in HIV/AIDS through awareness creation and capacity building. Capacities of women and some men have been enhanced and livelihoods improved. Women in urban areas are more emancipated for instance in Benin than their counterparts in the rural areas. Many women associations and women groups have been formed and capacity and skills development in leadership and administration undertaken. This has resulted in a number assuming leadership roles at community and municipal levels; Women have gained capacity and skills to read and write; they also have ability to document their economic activities; improved incomes through IGAs make it possible for women to educate their children and to gain a level of independence thus also making it possible for them to dialogue in the homes with children and husbands.

Stories of change were narrated where the self esteem of and respect for women has gone up, there are men wanting to join associations in order to get training and some are supportive of women by assisting them with start-up capital. In Tanzania the Training of Trainers (ToTs) has facilitated a wide coverage through multi-plier effect. Awareness on HIV and AIDS has reached many and men, women, opinion leaders and elders accept that their Female children should not be circumcised a process supported also by the government policy that has decreed against FGM and providing universal free primary education for boys and girls. Inter-religious dialogue in Egypt has contributed to developing many volunteers and capacity to share and learn to imbibe a democratic culture and values.

However many challenges were raised including harmful traditional practices and cultures; social structures that remain exclusive such as those of FBOs; limited understanding of gender equality; high levels of illiteracy among women; poor knowledge of government policies and few spaces for men to interact and be made aware of gender equality still inhibit effective participation.

Analysis of findings – The evaluation findings illustrate that FBOs and partners of PMU have contributed to the empowerment of women and begun to forward gender equality in respective countries. A number of activities that form the basis for this contribution are the mobilization, organization and capacity building of women organizations and through micro-finance and entrepreneur training. Women now have gained self esteem, increased their economic independence, improved relations between men and women and children in the family, a number can now read and write improving their management of business enterprises and their potential to assume leadership at community and municipal levels.

Evaluation results indicate that FBOs should take into account factors such as the doctrinal standing of the FBO and community, capacity levels, tradition and practice, and the status of resources both human and financial when moving gender equality. While key contributions that FBOs make revolve around knowledge sharing, advocacy, building and fostering partnerships, developing linkages between strategic gender needs and practical gender needs

Moreover, FBOs have many chances and opportunities to mobilize people for gender equality because they have the strength of numbers and religious leaders have power which influences people's attitudes, opinions and behaviour; they are critical agents of change and have social capital. And in so far as relevant quality levels in mainstreaming three key ones were noted namely; policy level, program level and technical level. At program level it is essential to consider planning, decision making, implementation and assessment.

The main components considered relevant for mainstreaming are: Understanding the different needs of each gender; the relationship of males and females in accessing and control of resources; the roles and responsibilities each gender has in the context that we could be looking at and opportunities available for either gender (access, control and benefits). While vital managerial aspects for efficiency are for instance; leadership which understands and is sensitive to gender concerns; gender experts as part of the managerial teams; and development of organisational policies and guidelines/frameworks.

Popular education, mainstreaming of gender equality in existing interventions such as HIV and AIDS including dialogue platforms for diverse people to create resilient communities points to the need to a number of forces to consider. One is the cultural, religious, economic and political structures and especially cultural convenience, relevance and application of religious values and doctrine. The policy and legislative dispensation and any gaps in the FBO and government have to be addressed; women organizations and movement has proved to be a critical dimension of empowerment; leaders at all levels and especially men are essential in change of attitude and finally, the engagement of men and boys as partners with a view to change unequal power relations is essential.

Increasingly FBOs are appreciated as legitimate actors and their contribution is in capacity building and awareness creation, undertaking advocacy due to their proximity to communities and hence better knowledge of the gender relations; provision of human, material and financial resources and more important infusion of values of human dignity that are faith inspired. The local partners are better placed to influence the processes of reconstructing new gender relations because of the constituencies that are composed of men and women, boys and girls; and their commitment to change and the sanctity of life.

For the partner organizations to influence duty bearers they need to be grounded in the understanding of gender equality; utilize their mutual respect between and within FBOs and with various duty bearers at different levels as well as ability and capacity to create space for dialogue. Regarding management aspects, there are basic resources needed with requisite competencies and commitment to gender equality. Such components include planning, monitoring and evaluation as well as management systems and policies. Approaches and strategies should integrate lessons learnt and most significant changes and also consider multi-dimensional accountability to different stakeholders.

Recommendations Recommendations revolve around three main areas these are: Strategies, performance indicators and outcomes three main areas for gender equality application were looked at namely, strategy, performance and actions and outcomes. First on a gender equality application, the contextual analysis should be robust to inquire into all dimensions of gender and power relations. Second long term planning perspectives should be employed and transition plans developed to bridge the gaps. Such plans should focus on gender perspectives and poverty reduction. Consideration of gender equality in training and awareness is a critical component of FBO and community leadership attitudinal and behavioral shift vis-vis women and men roles.

Concerning performance and actions - Expand and develop gender networks, women organizations and groups; establish clear Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks that can capture gender disaggregated data; Capacity building and awareness on gender equality for better understanding and demystifying false notions. Ensure activities that engage men supportive of women empowerment. Mainstreaming should go beyond numbers to role models and ownership of ideas and activities by the constituencies. Approaches and tools should continue to be participatory, inclusive and context and conflict sensitive. A gender responsive policy and allocation of human resource is vital.

At the level of strategies any application should create opportunities for women to be aware of their rights; Build women networks; Share success case studies where the rights of women have been upheld; Duty bearers enabled to be part of activities that are done to articulate rights of women; and Male champions for gender equality are developed. In terms of organizational behavior, structures and relations needed it is recommended that: there be a gender policy in the organization, a Human Resource policy that addresses gender issues, Political will and support by the leadership, provide common and specific spaces for different sexes to dialogue on gender relations, and develop a Gender aware organisation.

The type of activities that can mobilize and gain support of men should include; capacity building and skills development in business/enterprise, Small Micro-Finance, IGAs, Literacy and establishment of women associations. In mobilizing men for gender equality masculinity should be considered, understanding of gender and the faith of communities including activities that have direct benefit to families. Empowerment of women should be coherent and approaches non-threatening but ones that bring positive change. We recommend that three key intervention components be included in all projects i.e., policy, technical competence and program design (planning, monitoring and evaluation).

Performance Indicators should consider quantitative indicators which could include among others; the percentage of males and females participation and policies developed and implemented. It is recommended that FBOs can add to training of gender sensitive leadership by using theological institutions and Bible schools and different ministries of women, youth and men in FBOs.

Regarding outcomes some of the critical ones include conducting gender analysis and awareness so as to assess the gender roles, access and control in leadership positions; community understanding increased on the importance of female engagement; Women who are actively engaged in leadership or decision making positions and FBO leaders recognised as champions for Gender Justice.

