

Program Evaluation : Women’s Economic Empowerment through Affirmative Procurement Reform in West Africa

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Type of Evaluation	Final Project Evaluation
Project Locations	Nigeria, Mali, Senegal, and Côte d’Ivoire
Type of Contract	1 Senior consultant (60 days) SSA contract
Duty Station	homebased
Languages Required	English, French
Starting Date	25 th August 2024
Ending Date	25 March 2025

1. Background

UN Women, grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, works for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.

UN Women support women’s economic empowerment through enhanced opportunities of women-led businesses in West Africa to access public and private procurement.

The Project Affirmative Procurement Reform in West Africa supports women economic empowerment through policy reforms, institutional strengthening of public sector institutions and capacity building of women-owned/-led businesses to access procurement opportunities in West Africa. The project budget is USD 4 million funded by the African Development Bank through the Women entrepreneurs Finance

initiative trust fund (We-fi) and is being implemented by UN Women Regional office for West and Central Africa and UN Women's Country Offices in Nigeria, Mali, Senegal, and Cote d'Ivoire.

The project aims to achieve the key following outcomes:

- Enhance the capacity of 1360 women-led SMEs in Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, and Cote d'Ivoire to access procurement opportunities.
- Ensure that at least 400 women-led SMEs can access new procurement opportunities in the four countries.
- Improve the understanding of 270 government officials on how to implement affirmative procurement reform.
- Adopt four legal/regulatory reforms that facilitate women-led businesses' access to procurement opportunities.

Following on Through this initiative, UN Women is undertaking a comprehensive evaluation of its project on women's economic empowerment in West Africa. This evaluation taking place **from June to December 2024** aims to assess the project's impact and effectiveness in achieving its key outcomes. By focusing on lessons learned and programmatic insights, the evaluation seeks to refine UN Women's approaches to integrating gender perspectives into program development and policy formulation. Additionally, the evaluation will contribute valuable insights to UN Women's knowledge management efforts, enhancing its ability to promote Affirmative procurement and women's empowerment in West Africa.

Furthermore, the evaluation will provide specific recommendations for prioritizing interventions in future project phases. These recommendations will identify areas requiring ongoing support, successful interventions for capitalization, and strategies to maximize impact. By incorporating these recommendations, UN Women aims to improve project management practices and enhance the engagement of key stakeholders.

2. Description of the thematic area

In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly established the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN Women). The mandate of UN Women is guided by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); UN Security Council resolutions; the recommendations and resolutions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW); and other applicable United Nations instruments, standards and resolutions.

UN Women's work is focused on responding to its integrated mandate:

- Normative work: to support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women and the General Assembly, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms ;
- Operational work: to help Member States to implement international standards and to forge effective partnerships with civil society; and

- Coordination work: to hold the UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring of system-wide progress, and also the broader role of the entity in mobilizing and convening key stakeholders and partnerships

The **UN Women's Strategic Plan 2022-2025** outlines strategic direction, objectives, and approaches to support efforts to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. The Strategic Plan outlines five strategic priorities for UN Women in 2022–2025:

- A comprehensive and dynamic set of global norms, policies, and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women is strengthened and implemented.
- Women lead, participate in, and benefit equally from governance systems.
- Women have income security, decent work, and economic autonomy.
- All women and girls live a life free from all forms of violence.
- Women and girls contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience and benefit equally from the prevention of natural disasters and conflicts and humanitarian action.

The project will **contribute to women's economic empowerment** by strengthening equal opportunities to access procurement and strengthening the capacity of women led businesses. This is in alignment with the strategic priorities of UN Women and will directly contribute to the achievement of SDG 5 : Gender Equality.

Gender and social effects : this project addresses critical gender gaps in entrepreneurship and private sector development in Africa by promoting women's economic empowerment through capacity building, institutional strengthening and reform in the area of affirmative procurement. UN Women's project's vision is to promote equal opportunities for women entrepreneurs through the creation of an enabling environment for WSMEs to participate and contribute to public procurement, the promotion of gender responsive procurement practices among the private sector, and through strengthening the capacities of WSMEs and women business associations. The project will also contribute to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on SMEs, and on smaller SMEs in particular among which women-led businesses are overrepresented.

- Other social effects : To the extent possible, the project will target women-led businesses led by young women as well as women with disabilities.

3. **Purpose, objectives and use of the evaluation**

The **main purpose** of this regional evaluation is to contribute to enhancing UN Women's approach to women's economic empowerment through affirmative procurement in West Africa.

The **specific objectives** of this evaluation are:

1. To provide evidence-based analysis of the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability of UN Women work to economically empower women of West Africa through Affirmative Procurement Reform in West Africa;

2. To identify what can be enhanced in the way the project interventions are designed and implemented in the region of West Africa.
3. To identify lessons learned, strengths and current trends of the project initiatives that have implications for future managerial and programmatic decisions;
4. To provide forward-looking recommendations and a potential Theory of Change to strengthen programming in the area of WEE in the region.

Findings will be used by the Regional Office West and Central Africa and Country Offices to refine its focus and approaches to women economic empowerment. Knowledge generated by the evaluation will be used for strategic policy and programmatic decisions, organizational learning and accountability as well as for the identification of good practices addressing the structural impediments to gender equality and the women's economic empowerment. Findings will also feed into UN Women's efforts to promote 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the agenda 2063 of the African Union.

Targeted users of the evaluation are the UN Women WCARO Senior Management, and key stakeholders. Ultimately, the results of the evaluation will be publicly accessible through the Global Accountability and Tracking of Evaluation Use (or GATE) system for global learning.

4. Scope of the evaluation and Timeline

The scope of the evaluation will include the West and Central Regional Office and the implementing country offices : Nigeria, Mali, Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire.

The timeline for this evaluation extends from August 2024 to March 2025.

5. Methodology

The evaluation methodology will use mixed methods, including quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and analytical approaches to account for complexity of gender relations and to ensure participatory and inclusive processes that are culturally appropriate. The detailed methodology for the evaluation will be developed and presented at the inception of the evaluation. Participatory and gender sensitive evaluation methodologies will support active participation of the beneficiaries of the project interventions. The Evaluation Team will undertake the following tasks: review of documents, key informant Interviews, country visits, online surveys, preliminary finding presentation and report writing.

The Inception Report will include details on how the evaluation team will guarantee protection of subjects and respect for confidentiality. During the inception stage, the evaluation team will also develop a sampling frame of interventions in the region and specify how it will engage with respondents.

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with UN Women evaluation Policy, the Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS evaluation report quality checklist), the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan Evaluation Performance Indicators (UN-SWAP EP) and UN Women Evaluation handbook. All the documents will be provided by UN Women at the onset of the evaluation.

6. Indicative evaluation questions and criteria

The evaluation should be guided but not limited to the evaluation questions listed below. During the inception phase, the Evaluation Team, members of the Evaluation Management Group and the Evaluation Reference Group will have the opportunity to raise any other relevant issues.

Relevance:

- To what extent has UN Women established a relevant, realistic, strategic, innovative and clear approach for its work in support of women's economic empowerment through Affirmative Procurement Reform in West Africa?
- To what extent is UN Women strategically positioned to enhance WEE through Affirmative Procurement Reform in West Africa?

Coherence:

- How are project interventions at country level aligned with approaches recommended by UN Women?
- To what extent are country level project interventions strategically consistent with similar interventions by other key players, including United Nations agencies?

Effectiveness:

- To what extent have implementation and partnership strategies been most effective in helping to achieve results? Have satisfactory results been achieved in relation to the objectives set? What are the causes of the achievement and non-achievement of expected results?
- To what extent have the project's expected results been achieved, in terms of both outcomes and outputs?
- What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of project results? Did the project produce any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? And for whom? What are the best practices and obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How were they overcome?
- How effective were the strategies and approaches selected to achieve the project's results?
- To what extent were the products of behavior change in line with the real needs of the communities?
- To what extent was the project implemented in a coordinated manner with the various stakeholders? How did coordination positively or negatively influence project implementation?
- To what extent have monitoring mechanisms been effective in measuring and reporting project performance and progress towards project objectives?
- To what extent have monitoring data been used objectively for management action and decision-making?

Efficiency:

- Have resources (financial, human, technical, etc.) been allocated and used as economically as possible to achieve objectives? Are they sufficient and available to achieve results over time? Have available resources been managed rationally to achieve results?
- Has the project improved the efficiency of resource management, and what has been the relationship between increased/decreased efficiency and (potential) environmental, economic and welfare outcomes?
- Were the activities and approaches/strategies cost-effective?

Sustainability:

- What is the likelihood of enduring results or program continuation over the long run after UN Women support?
- How have partnerships (with governments, NGOs, civil society organizations, UN agencies, regional institutions, etc.) been established to foster sustainability of results?

Gender Equality and Human Rights (GE&HR)

- To what extent has gender and human rights considerations been integrated into program design and implementation?
- Were the processes and activities implemented during the intervention free from discrimination to all stakeholders, including those living with disability?

The questions above are a suggestion and could be changed during the inception phase in consultation with members of the Reference Group. The evaluation will be gender sensitive focused.

7. Scope of work and tasks**Inception phase:**

- Support the scoping and design of the evaluations by supporting document collection, management and review.
- Conduct scoping interviews to inform the evaluation design.
- Contribute to the design of data collection instruments including the evaluation matrix and other gender analytical frameworks.

Conduct phase:

- Lead interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders.
- Lead assigned case study (to be determined) and summary reports.
- Work with team members to produce data visualization, data analysis, coding and synthesis of data.
- Support synthesis of findings from data coding and analysis for input into evaluations reports.

Reporting phase:

- Preliminary analysis of data collected, including providing inputs to the evidence map and other analyses.
- Lead the drafting of assigned sections of evaluation report.
- Support drafting of sections of the evaluation report and provide inputs to the annexes and for final evaluation report

8. Timing and duration of the assignment

The evaluation will take place during Q3 of 2024 and will require 45 working days over the span of six months. This includes both in- country and home-based assignments.

9. Stakeholder Participation

Ideally, rights holders who have directly participated in or are affected by UN Women programming efforts will be engaged in discussing the outcomes of the programming efforts from their perspective. However, the cost/benefits to the participation of rights holders as evaluation participants will be assessed during the inception phase, as the evaluation does not want to take time away from livelihoods activities and a do no harm approach will be applied. In case it would be too costly for rights holders to participate, a representative of the rights holders engaged by UN Women will be contacted for feedback and this may need to be done remotely. Limitations to the evaluation will be clearly explained in the final report.

An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) will be established representing UN Women RO, key government, civil society, donor and UN system partners. The ERG will be asked to engage and provide input at every stage of the evaluation process, from design to preliminary results and final draft report. The ERG plays a critical role through remote and in-person meetings in ensuring a high quality, transparent process, providing insights on the key questions and approach, ensuring factual accuracy, ensuring gaps and misinterpretation of information is avoided. They will also be key informants. The ERG also plays a key role in the dissemination of the evaluation findings and recommendations and ensuring the use of the information by UN Women and key partners.

10. Performance evaluation

Consultants' performance will be evaluated based on timeliness, responsibility, initiative, communication, accuracy, and quality of the products delivered.

11. Expected deliverables

The evaluation consultant will be key member of the evaluation team, engaged in all phases of the evaluation process and in each type of evaluation to produce concise and analytical evaluation reports. Deliverables for the evaluation consultant include the following: desk review, portfolio analysis, stakeholder analysis, interview notes, qualitative and quantitative data analyses, contributions to the inception report, presentations and final synthesis reports and annexes for evaluations. These deliverables must be high quality and in line with the criteria established in UN SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator and UN Women GERAAS evaluation criteria.

The consultant is responsible for the following deliverables:

1. **Inception Report**, outlining the refined scope of the work, a detailed outline of the evaluation design and methodology, evaluation questions, and criteria for the approach for in-depth desk review and field work to be conducted in the data collection phase. The report will include an evaluation matrix and a detailed work plan.
2. **Facilitate participatory meetings** with stakeholders, partners, and selected project beneficiaries at the national level and target states to collect relevant data, and report generated.
3. **Presentation of preliminary findings report** (conducted at the national level and target states). A presentation detailing the emerging findings of the review will be shared with UN Women and key partners for feedback. The revised presentation will be delivered to key stakeholders for comments and validation. The consultant will address the feedback received in the draft report.
4. **Draft evaluation report** which will be shared with UN Women for initial feedback.
5. **Final evaluation report** taking into consideration comments and feedback collected from UN Women. The report shall include the following chapters: executive summary, introduction and background, evaluation approach and methodology (including limitations), findings, conclusions, lessons learned, recommendations, and relevant annexes, including evaluation brief (3-4 pages). **The final evaluation report will be considered finalized when it has taken into account all comments received from the management group and the reference group, and is aligned with the GERAAS parameters.**

An **evaluation report template** will be provided to the consultant based on the below outline.

1. Title and opening pages
2. Executive summary
3. Background and purpose of the evaluation

4. Programme/object of evaluation description and context
5. Evaluation objectives and scope
6. Evaluation methodology and limitations
7. Findings: relevance, effectiveness (normative, coordination, operational), efficiency, sustainability, and gender and human rights
8. Conclusions
9. Recommendations
10. Lessons and innovations
11. Annexes:
 - Terms of reference
 - Literature - documents consulted.
 - Lists of institutions interviewed or consulted and sites visited (without direct reference to individuals)
 - Analytical results and methodology-related documentation, such as evaluation matrix,
 - List of findings and recommendations

All payments to the consultant will be made subject to the approval of deliverables by the evaluation management group, in line with conformity to GERAAS evaluation guidelines. Payments will be effected as follows:

S/N	Key Deliverables	Number of days	% to be paid
1.	Submission of an approved inception report and conduct of the inception workshop	10	30%
2.	Facilitate participatory meetings with stakeholders, partners, and selected Project beneficiaries at the national level and target states to collect relevant data, and report generated.	25	30%
3.	Submission and approval of the first draft of the evaluation report	15	
4.	Submission of the approved final evaluation report	10	40%
	Total	60	

12. Management of evaluation

The ultimate responsibility for this evaluation rests with UN Women. The evaluation is managed by UNW-WCARO Regional Evaluation Specialist in consultation with the Evaluation Management Group EMG, Evaluation Reference Group, External consultants.

The EMG, Evaluation Reference Group will be established to participate in the evaluation process and quality assure the evaluation report on the basis of UNEG standards and norms, [UN SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator](#).

To enhance the quality of this evaluation, the Evaluation Management Group and Evaluation Reference Group will be asked to provide:

1. Feedback to the draft inception and evaluation report;
2. Recommendations on how to improve the quality of the final inception/evaluation report.

The Evaluation Manager (EM) will review feedback and recommendations from EMG and ERG and share with the Evaluation Team leader, who is expected to use them to finalize the inception/ evaluation report.

The Evaluation Management Group (EMG) is comprised of the UN Women Regional Evaluation Specialist, and Project Focal Points and WEE WCARO Adviser. The EMG will be chaired by the UN Women Regional Evaluation Specialist who will provide approval of the deliverables in compliance with UN Women's Evaluation Policy.

The EMG provides oversight, makes key decisions and quality assurance of evaluation process and deliverables. Specific responsibilities will include the following: ensure oversight of the evaluation methodology, review draft reports; ensure that the deliverables are of quality; participate in meetings as key informant interviewees; manage the evaluation by requesting progress updates on the implementation of the evaluation workplan, approve deliverables, organize meetings with key stakeholders, and identify strategic opportunities for sharing and learning. EMG substantive inputs are expected throughout the evaluation process.

The Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) is an integral part of the evaluation management group and is established to facilitate the participation of relevant stakeholders in the evaluation process, with a view to increase the chances that the evaluation results will be used, enhance quality, clarify roles and responsibilities, and prevent void real conflict of interest. The ERG will be engaged throughout the whole evaluation process and will review the draft Inception report and evaluation report. The ERG will be chaired by the Evaluation Manager. The Consultant is expected to integrate comments from the ERG into the Final Report, with an audit trail of responses. To ensure transparency the process in line with the UNEG norms and standards, justification should be provided for any recommendations that the Evaluation team omits.

The evaluation is managed by UN Women WCARO Regional Evaluation Specialist in consultation with the EMG , Evaluation Reference Group, and External consultants in the following matrix:

Management Structure and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities are arranged in line with the Joint Evaluation modality

	Partner	Responsibilities
Evaluation Management Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WEE regional policy advisor• UN Women Monitoring & I Evaluation Analyst• Regional Program Coordinator• National program managers	Finalizes the TOR; contracts and manages the evaluation team; ensures deadlines and milestones are met; supports data collection activities; consolidates and solicits feedback that will feed into the key deliverables; provides the following lists: key informants, region offices, and country offices, sub grantees; provides key programme documents, and list of locations for site visits; accountable for its robustness; meticulously reviews all deliverables based on their role in the evaluation, provides substantive comments and approves on the context of the joint programme; ensures the quality and independence of the evaluation are in alignment with UNEG standards and principles; ensures evaluation questions, findings, and recommendations are in alignment with the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria; endorses the evaluation dissemination process; contributes to the management response; and provides logistical support for mission; provides logistical support for the presentation of the inception report and the final report; participates in meetings on: progress updates on the work plan, preliminary findings briefing, key informant interview, and final report presentation
Evaluation Reference Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sakinatou Balde_ Principal Enabling Environment Officer_ AFAWA_AfDB (donor)• Anna Gollub policy	Plays a key role based on their expertise providing their perspective as an external individual on the way the programme has rolled out; shares views on the feasibility of the recommendations; makes recommendations on the dissemination of the findings of the evaluation; makes recommendations on the implementation of the

	<p>analyst on Women's Economic Empowerment_ HQ UN Women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carey Kluttz_Head of partnerships at Open Contracting Partnerships (OCP) One government counterpart per country to be identified by COs 	management response; and participates in meetings as a key informant interviewee.
External consultants	Independent National consultant and International Senior Consultant	Carries out the external evaluation; prepares evaluation reports, including the inception report, work plan, bi-weekly progress updates, preliminary results briefing, final report, and holds a dissemination presentation. The independent national consultant(s) will report to the International Senior Consultant

13. Evaluation team composition, skills and experiences

The evaluation team will consist of two consultants: an international evaluation team leader and a national evaluation team member. The team leader will be responsible for the overall evaluation, including field visits, data analysis and report writing. Both consultants will report to and be managed by UN Women.

- Required competencies and qualifications for the senior consultants**

Education

Master's Degree in social sciences, Monitoring and evaluation, development studies, gender studies, international relations or related fields;

Experience and Skills

- The candidate should also have a minimum of ten (10) years of experience in conducting evaluation of projects and programmes in the development context, including in WEE.
- Demonstrated experience in evaluating interventions/thematic knowledge related to WEE.
- Strong understanding and experience in the areas of gender equality and women's empowerment, gender mainstreaming, gender analysis and the related mandates within UN Women, particularly in relation to women's leadership interventions preferred.
- Excellent analytical, facilitation and communications skills and the ability to engaged and negotiate amongst a wide range of stakeholders.
- Experience and knowledge on human rights issues, the human rights-based approach to programming and evaluation, human rights analysis, and related mandates within the UN system
- Experience in West and Central Africa Region context is an asset

Language and other skills:

- Fluency in English and French is required.

14. Ethical code of conduct

The United Nations Evaluations Group (UNEG) Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN system are available at: <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/100>; Norms for evaluation in the UN system: <http://unevaluation.org/document/detail/21> and UNEG Standards for evaluation (updated 2016): <http://unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>.

15. Selection of applicants

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to a competency-based interview. UN Women may ask shortlisted applicants to share a sample of a report they have recently authored.

16. Submission of application

Interested candidates are requested to submit electronic application to the link provided