



**Connecting the dots: Local actions for women
political and economic empowerment project**

October 2019-September 2021

Request for Proposals for End of Term Project Evaluation

Assignment Period: October to December 2021

Date of publication: 22 September 2021

Closing date: 6 October 2021



1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1.1 Southern Regional Context

The Southern African region has made progress towards enacting constitutional and legislative frameworks that promote gender equality. Despite these advances, women in Southern Africa remain the majority of the poor, the unemployed, the dispossessed and most affected by Gender-Based Violence (GBV), HIV and AIDS and COVID 19 pandemic. According to the Southern African Community, women constitute more than 50% of the poor and are still excluded from the mainstream economy. Further, women's work in the home and the workplace tend to be undervalued; they are expected to work longer hours than men in low-wage jobs under poor conditions. Further, women suffer under patriarchal traditions, and customs and their prospects for improving their quality of life remain poor because of limited access to services and resources, such as education, skills, facilities, land and markets and finance. The COVID 19 pandemic, which is expected to erase Southern Africa's economic and income gains over the past ten years, has further aggravated the inequalities between men and women. The pandemic has affected women more than men due to existing structural inequalities such as the wage gap, women being in the frontline of COVID support, women bearing the brunt of unpaid work, lack of access to technology, financial resources and markets, among other things.

According to the 2021 Southern African Gender Protocol Barometer (2021), the average proportion of women in local government has dropped from 24% in 2015 to 20% in 2021, well below the 50% target. Women's representation in local government has fallen from 58% in 2009 to 40% in 2019 in Lesotho; from 16% in 2013 to 16% in 2018 in Zimbabwe, from 18% in 2009 to 14% in 2019 in Eswatini and remained the same at 8 % in 2016 and 2021 in Zambia. Lesotho has a quota for women in local government and modified its electoral system to a mixed one to facilitate this quota. Zimbabwe has a quota at the national level and recently enacted a quota at the local level; Swaziland has law enforcing a constitutional quota, and Zambia has no quota. These variations show that a higher representation of women can be achieved with the requisite combination of quotas and electoral systems. However, the decline in women's representation in Lesotho points to the fragility of these gains and the need for constant vigilance of the kind that the project aims to provide through the Women in Local Government Forums.

Beyond political representation, women in Southern Africa are adversely affected by the scourge of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). At least one in three women in the region experiences Gender-Based Violence in their lifetime. Despite the existence of GBV and Domestic Violence legislation in most SADC countries, a study undertaken by Gender Links on the prevalence and perpetration of GBV in seven SADC countries funded by DFID has found that 86% of women in Lesotho, 77% of women in selected provinces Zambia and 68% of women in Zimbabwe have experienced some form of GBV in their lifetime. The evidence shows that the highest proportion of violence is the least reported to the police - emotional, economic and psychological abuse - which reduces women's confidence, agency, and ability to exercise their rights as citizens fully. The COVID 19 pandemic has exacerbated the problem of GBV against women and girls. According to Amnesty International (2021), COVID 19 has prompted an escalation in GBV against women and girls in Southern Africa. This is because lockdown measures meant that women could not escape abusive partners or leave their homes to seek help. Against this background, the *"Connecting the dots: Local actions for women political and economic empowerment"* Project is being implemented in Eswatini, Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

1.2 Summary of the Project

The Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), in partnership with Gender Links (GL), is implementing the Connecting the dots: Local actions for women political and economic empowerment project (October 2019-September 2021), with funding from the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). The project is contributing to strengthening the political and economic empowerment of women and girls in Southern Africa by increasing the participation of women in local politics and economic development in the four countries in Southern Africa. The target is increasing the number of women holding senior positions in local government in the target countries by 15% and the individual monthly incomes of targeted women entrepreneurs by 30%, against the baseline. The project is being implemented in Eswatini, Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe, where networks of women have been established and supported. The project budget is £ 1000,000,00; the project period is 2 years (1 October 2019 to 30 September 2021)

Project Intervention Logic

Impact: The Project is contributing to strengthening the political and economic empowerment of women and girls in Southern Africa through interlocking on the ground networks linked to centres of Excellence for Gender in Local Government.

Outcome: The project aims to increase the participation of women in local politics and economic development in four countries in Southern Africa

Outputs: To achieve the project's outcome, the sought to deliver five outputs are as follows:

Output 1: Four Women in Local Government networks formed and supported in four countries

To achieve output 1, the project planned to strengthen the Women in Local Government Forum (WLGf) in Zimbabwe and introduce these in three SADC countries (Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia). These forums would provide an institutional base for women councillors and administrators to advocate for equal representation and participation at the local level. Moreover, the WLGf's would develop and implement strategies for women's effective participation in local government. Gender audits of recent and upcoming elections would be used to inform strategies for increasing women's representation and participation in local government.

Output 2: Four Young Women in Local Government networks formed and supported in four countries

To achieve output 2, the project aimed to create Young Women in Local Government Network (YWLGN) networks, providing a platform for 200 young women (an average of 50 in each country) to be paired with and mentored by women councillors. This would facilitate an inter-generational leadership dialogue for youth involvement in local-level decision-making. Further, the initiative would popularise the practice of junior councils. The YWLG was also expected to drive youth-led campaigns on gender-responsive service delivery, given that councils play a vital role in providing recreational facilities, family planning and health services, life skills education in schools. As such, they are strategically positioned in the delivery of gender-responsive and youth-friendly services.

Output 3: Four Women in Local Economic Development Network established and supported in four countries

To achieve output 3, the project planned to tackle the twin challenges of high levels of violence against women and girls and women's exclusion from mainstream economics through the Women in Local Economic Development Networks (WLED). The WLED networks would bring together the women beneficiaries of the CLGF local economic development programme and the survivors of GBV trained through GL's Sunrise Campaign. 200 women entrepreneurs (an average of 50 in each country) would be mentored and linked to at least 8 (one each year x 4 countries x 2 years) side events of women traders at local trade shows. This would open doors to local markets for the network and facilitate business to business peer learning.

Output 4: CLGF/ GL Gender Community of Practice, to track service delivery targeting 1000 people established

To achieve output 4, the project sought to mobilise 1000 network members to join the CLGF/GL Community of Practice (CoP) that tracks service delivery and provides valuable data and information and a platform for network members to learn from each other. This platform which was already in existence on the GL website, needed to be amplified through the following: a) establishing web links to a low data usage mobile application b) enhanced use of social media such as Whats App and Facebook for drawing members to the community, and c) an online application for tracking service delivery. This would facilitate peer to peer learning between the networks.

Output 5: Women in local government, young women entrepreneurs, and youth report instances of positive change through stories of change as a result of the project share their stories of change reporting

The project would facilitate sharing experiences and peer learning between network members through stories of change during the Gender Links, SADC at Work Protocol Summits and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum Conference. Network members' stories and profiles would be shared on the CLGF and Gender Links web and Facebook platforms.

Assumptions

At the time of designing, the project's key assumptions were as follows:

- Women councillors and elected officials, entrepreneurs and youth are willing to form networks
- Enabling environment for women and girls to form and maintain political and economic networks
- Men and boys support women and girls to participate in politics and the economy meaningfully
- Network members are willing to undergo training and mentorship
- Local governments and local government associations are eager to support and institutionalise the networks

1.3 Stakeholders of the Project

- 1) **Primary beneficiaries:** The primary project beneficiaries are women councillors, local government administrators, young women aspiring to take local leadership positions, youth in target local authorities and entrepreneurs in the selected councils in the four countries.

2) Local government authorities: increasing the participation of women in political leadership and economic development requires support from local governments and associations of local governments. Local governments and local government associations provide resources and services critical to women's participation in politics and the economy. The project was implemented in partnership with local government associations and governments, who played a role in institutionalising the networks in their organisation and work.

3) Ministries responsible for local government: To institutionalise and support the networks CLGF and GL worked with the Ministries responsible for Local Government in the four target countries. The ministries responsible for local government played a role in facilitating the WLGf advocacy initiatives and supporting the network activities in the target countries

4) Civil Society organisations and NGOs: The project would work with civil society organisations already working with youth and young women to facilitate the mobilisation of the Young Women in Local Government Network. The project has worked with Junior Achievement, Women's Lobby Group, Zambia, National Association of Junior Councillors (Zimbabwe)

5) Youth, men and boys- The project also worked with youth, male councillors in building a coalition with networks to advocate for gender and youth service delivery.

1.4 Available information

The following documents can be accessed

- [Project Proposal](#)
- [Project Logframe](#)

2 OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION ASSIGNMENT

2.1 Evaluation Objectives

The main objectives of this Evaluation are to provide:

- An overall assessment of the past performance of the *Connecting the dots: Local actions for women political and economic empowerment project*, paying particular attention to its results measured against its expected outcome; and the reasons underpinning such results;
- Key lessons learned, conclusions and related recommendations to improve current and future interventions

The Evaluation will assess the Intervention using the six standard DAC evaluation criteria

- Relevance: the “extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries’, global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies, and priorities, and continue if circumstances change.”
- Coherence: the “compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.”
- Effectiveness: the “extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives, and its results, including any differential results across groups.”
- Efficiency: the “extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.”
- Impact: the “extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.”

- Sustainability: the “extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue.”
- Additionally, the evaluation team shall consider whether gender and disability inclusion and other mainstream development issues as outlined in the project proposal.

2.2 Issues to be addressed

The evaluators will propose Evaluation questions with specific value judgment criteria and indicators and the relevant data collection sources and tools in their inception report, which will be contractually binding. The following are the proposed indicative issues to be addressed by the Evaluation:

- The effectiveness of the proposed activities and outputs in increasing the participation of women in politics and economic development
- The extent to which capacity building initiatives (training and mentorship) have a measurable impact on increased self-esteem and confidence of YWLGN, WLGf and WLED members. What has changed in the lives of the network members?
- The extent to which the establishment and support for WLGf's and YWLGN networks helped bolster women's empowerment and advocacy for increased women's participation in local government. What has changed at the institutional level?
- The extent to which the project provided the WLED members with access to skills, services and markets. What has been the effect on women's incomes?
- The key lessons to be learned from the project approach regarding the partnership approach to implementing the project, changes in project design and implementation, problems encountered, and adaptation to change.
- The extent to which the project design is replicable nationally and regionally.
- How the project has enhanced gender equality, disability inclusion and other development issues.
- How the project benefits can be sustained after project completion.
- Innovations and lessons that can be learnt from the project.
- Any unintended outcomes both positive and negative.

2.3 Expected outputs

The evaluation process will be carried out in three phases as follows: (a) Inception, (b) Desk and Field, and (d) Synthesis. The evaluator is expected to implement the activities and deliver the outputs outlined in the table below.

Phases of the Evaluation	Key activities	Outputs
<u>Inception Phase</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial document/data collection • Background analysis • Inception interviews • Stakeholder analysis • Reconstruction (or as necessary, construction) of the Intervention Logic, and description of the Theory of Change • Methodological design of the evaluation and evaluation matrix (Evaluation Questions with judgement criteria, indicators and methods of data collection and analysis) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kick-off meeting with the Project Executive Team via remote conference • Inception report • Slide presentation of the inception report
<u>Desk and field phase</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth document analysis • Interviews with stakeholders • Identification of information gaps and of hypotheses to be tested in the field phase • Methodological design of the Field Phase • Gathering of primary evidence with the use of tools such as interviews, focus groups, among others • Data collection and analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual meetings with project stakeholders, indicatively with the Local Government Associations in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Eswatini, Ministries responsible for local government in all four countries, representatives of participating local authorities and project beneficiaries • Slide presentation of the critical findings of the desk and field phase • A 2 pager of intermediary note” (content described in section 4) • Debriefing with the Project Evaluation Management Team
<u>Synthesis phase</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final analysis of findings • Formulation of the overall assessment, conclusions, and recommendations • Reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Final Report • Executive Summary • Final Report • Slide presentation • Meeting with Project Evaluation Management Team via remote conference.
<u>Dissemination</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of 3 Evaluation Briefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slide Presentation of evaluation briefs

The product of the Evaluation, The Final Evaluation Report, in English with the following structure:

Executive Summary (5 pages)

The Executive Summary should be short, tightly drafted, to-the-point and free-standing. It should focus on the primary purpose of the Evaluation, outline the main analytical points, and indicate the main conclusions, lessons to be learned and specific recommendations.

The Final Report (Maximum 25 pages)

- Introduction- containing a description of the country and sector background and the methodology adopted for the Evaluation
- Findings- organised by evaluation question answered according to the judgment criteria in the evaluation matrix validated in the inception report supported by evidence and reasoning.
- Lessons Learnt and Good practice- case studies, and to be disseminated to different stakeholders at national and regional stakeholders.
- Conclusions and Recommendations - with suggestions organised per evaluation criterion and recommendations clustered, prioritised and targeted to appropriate audiences.

Annexes

- Detailed evaluation methodology including options taken, difficulties encountered and limitations, detail of tools and analyses.
- Literature and documentation consulted.
- List of persons/organisations consulted.
- Detailed answer to the Evaluation Questions, judgement criteria and indicators
- 3 Evaluation Briefs (2-4 pages)

2.4 Management and Steering of the Evaluation

The Evaluation will be managed by the Project Evaluation Management Team comprising the CLGF Secretary-General, the Chief Executive Officer -Gender Links, CLGF Regional Programme Manager, Gender Links Regional Networks Manager, CLGF Project Officer Eswatini; Gender Links Country Manager and CLGF Project Technical Officer Zambia.

3 REQUIRED EXPERTISE

Qualifications and Competencies of the evaluator or evaluation team

The evaluation team is expected to possess the following qualifications and competencies:

- A minimum of a Master's Degree in Gender, Public Administration, Development Studies or any other relevant fields,
- At least 10 years' experience in gender equality, public administration and management and international development, particularly in local government,
- At least 10 years demonstrable experience in conducting external evaluations, particularly in gender equality and women's empowerment, including at the international level,
- Knowledge of contemporary, regional and international gender equality and women empowerment developments, including the UN, Southern Africa Development Community and national gender equality instruments in Eswatini, Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe

- Advanced knowledge in participatory appraisals and interviewing and reporting skills,
- Proven experience in capacity building (training and mentorship) for women, particularly women in politics and women entrepreneurs.
- Demonstrated understanding of gender equality, women empowerment, local government, and development in Eswatini, Lesotho, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- Strong communication and analytical skills, including communicating with various stakeholders, ensuring that the Evaluation is understood and fully utilised, and
- Commitment to delivering timely, high-quality results, ensuring the evaluation report is credible to all stakeholders.

4 DURATION & REPORTING

The Evaluation is expected to be undertaken within 45 days as follows:

Stage of Evaluation	Deliverable	Description of Expected Deliverables	Number of days	Time frame
Inception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kick-off meeting with the Project Executive Team via remote conference • Slide presentation of the inception report • Inception Report 	<p>Inception report must include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Background, 2) description of the project, 3) purpose of Evaluation, 4) evaluation criteria and questions, 5) evaluation design and methodology and 6) Work plan with specific timelines-up to the submission of the final report and deliverables by the evaluator, 	5 days	22 October 2021

Desk Phase & Field phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual meetings with project stakeholders, indicatively with the Local Government Associations in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Eswatini: Representatives of Ministries responsible for local government in all four countries and representatives of participating local authorities and project beneficiaries • Slide presentation of the key findings of the desk and field phase • Intermediary note <p>Debriefing with the Project Evaluation Management Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key preliminary findings (combining desk and field) • Activities conducted during the desk and field phase • Difficulties encountered during the field phase and mitigation measures adopted 	25 days (5 days per country)	26 November 2021
Synthesis Phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Final Report comprising • Executive Summary • Final Report • Slide presentation • Meeting with Project Evaluation Management Team via remote conference. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “refer to section 2.3” in the “Description of Expected Deliverables” column. 	14 Days	10 December 2021
Dissemination of Evaluation outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 x Evaluation Briefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation of the main findings and recommendations of the Evaluation in a reader-friendly and illustrated 2 to 4 pages format targeting the stakeholders mentioned in section 2.3. 	1 day	14 December 2021

5 FURTHER INFORMATION

Any request for clarification on the assignment must be sent in writing by standard electronic communication to nyasha.simbanegavi@clgf.org.uk.

6 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Interested consultants are requested to submit a technical and financial proposal in response to this RFP as follows:

A. Technical Proposal comprising:

- A technical proposal outlining: i) the consultant's understanding of the assignment, ii) proposed evaluation design and methodology, iii) evaluation work plan,
- A summary of recent experience on assignments of a similar nature demonstrates evidence of the experience and skills required.

B. Financial Proposal

- The daily consulting rate in GBP and the number of days required to complete the assignment

C. Curriculum Vitae

- CV(s) detailing past experience on similar assignments and at least two client references

Proposals are to be submitted by email (all documents in PDF form) to Project.evaluation@clgf.org.uk not later than 16:30hrs, on 6 October 2021. The submission should be referenced as, ***"Connecting the dots: Local actions for women political and economic empowerment project"***

TENDER EVALUATION CRITERIA

An offer is responsive/compliant/acceptable if it scores a minimum of 70% on the criteria outlined below and fully meets the qualifications and competency requirements.

Criteria	Maximum
A. A total score for Organisation and Methodology	45
• Understanding of ToR and the aim of the services to be provided	15
• Overall methodological approach, quality control approach, the appropriate mix of tools and estimate of difficulties and challenges	25
• The organisation of tasks, including timetable	5
B. The score for the expertise of the Evaluator	45
• Relevant Qualifications	10
• Experience in the Evaluation, including at the international level	20
• Experience in gender, women empowerment, public administration and development in Southern Africa	15
C. Financial Bid (only bids that score 67,5/90 (75%) on the technical bid will be evaluated)	10

• The lowest daily consulting rate for	10
Overall total score	100

7 PAYMENT SCHEDULE

All payments concerning this assignment shall be in GBP. Payment for the expected deliverables will be made upon the endorsement of work by the Evaluation Management Team.

The proposed payment schedule is as follows:

12.1 Inception Report - 20%

12.2 First draft of the evaluation policy - 40%

12.3 Final Evaluation report -40%

The winning bidder will receive all relevant background information of the project upon signature of the contract.

Note:

This RFP is only an invitation for Proposal, and no contractual obligation on behalf of CLGF whatsoever shall arise from the RFP process unless and until a formal contract is signed.

CLGF reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received, revise the RFP, request clarifications, or cancel the process in part or whole.