

**FIELD PROGRAMME  
MID-TERM  
EVALUATION  
AUGUST 2020**

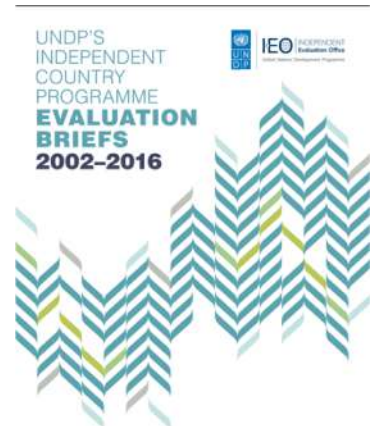




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# EVALUATION AT UNCDF



## UNDP EVALUATION POLICY

UNCDF is formally a party to UNDP's Evaluation Policy, which sets out the guiding principles, norms and key concepts for evaluation in UNDP, UNCDF and UNV.



## UN EVALUATION

UNCDF is an active member of the UN Evaluation Group, which is the custodian of evaluation quality across the UN system.



## UNDP INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OFFICE

In line with provisions in the Evaluation Policy, UNCDF benefits from a strong partnership with the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office, which provides additional coverage of our work and quality assesses our evaluations.



## WITHIN UNCDF

The Evaluation Unit reports directly to UNCDF's Executive Secretary in line with UNEG norms on independence for agencies of UNCDF's size.

**IELD** uses a **three-agency partnership** that builds on each agency's niche and comparative advantage in programming



UN Women is focusing on integrating gender into normative frameworks, national and local policies and programmes as well as working with women micro-entrepreneurs. This has included doing gender responsive budgeting and planning (GRBP) training with local officials to build capacity.

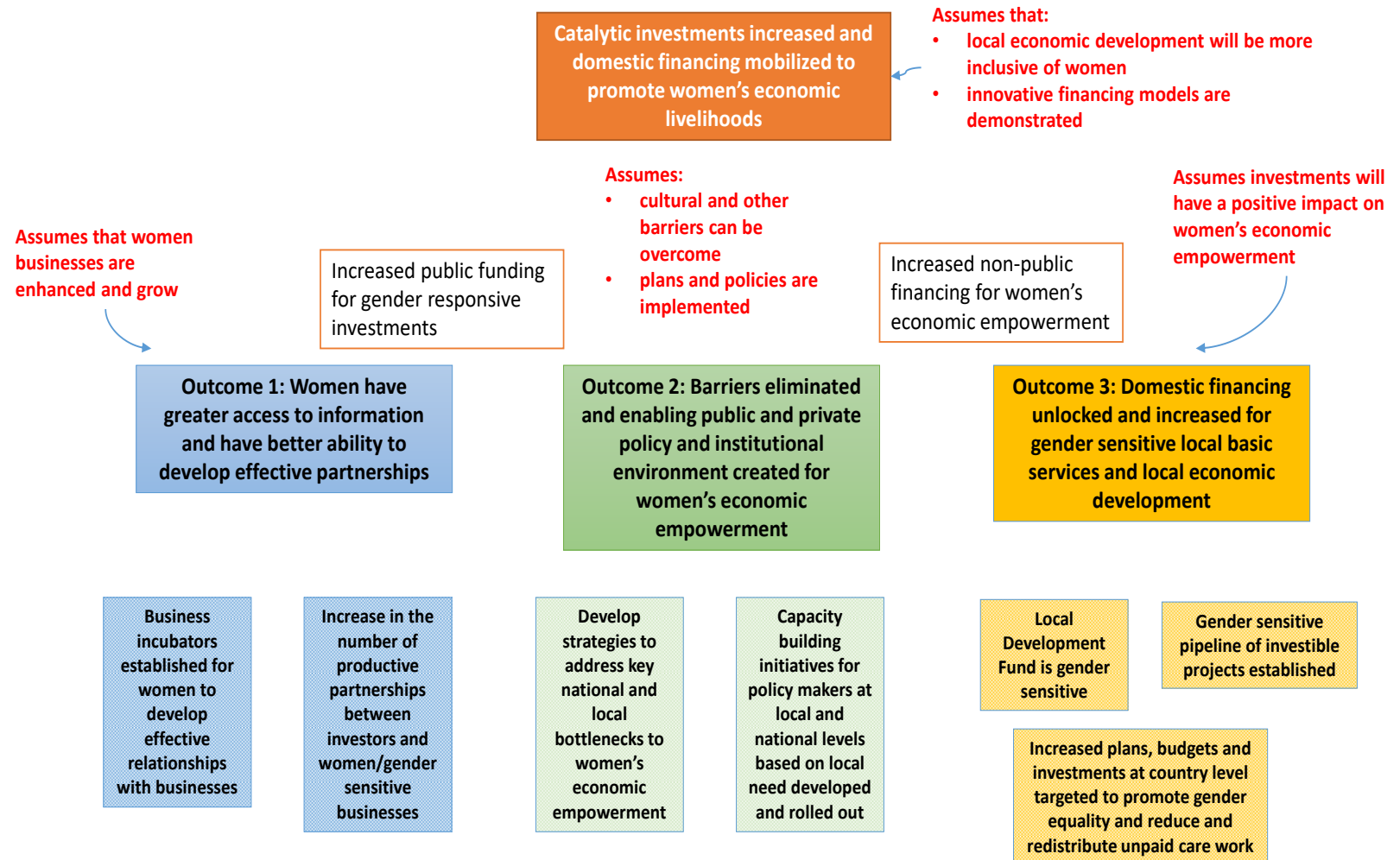
UNCDF's expertise in financial innovation at the local level is being leveraged to unlock local and public finance through funding of SMEs and PPPs as well as providing technical support to financial institutions.

UNDP is providing expertise on building government systems, policies and programming frameworks, support to building the capacity of government officials and support to BDS providers.

# FIELD THEORY OF CHANGE

Investments in infrastructure can make a significant contribution to enabling women to participate in the economy. However, ensuring that public policy and investments are gender sensitive requires building government capacity at the local level to mobilize, plan and manage resources to meet women's needs. As local governments have limited resources there is also a need to invest in the provision of public goods, services and gender-responsive infrastructure that can "crowd in" private sector investment.

Policymakers need to help end discriminatory social norms through gender sensitive policies programmes that provide women entrepreneurs with role models, networks and mentoring opportunities as well as enhancing women's business, leadership, management, information technology and financial skills are also needed. Supporting greater access to finance for women entrepreneurs requires facilitating partnerships with investors and financial institutions, and providing assistance to financial institutions to improve their ability to identify and serve gender sensitive investable projects.



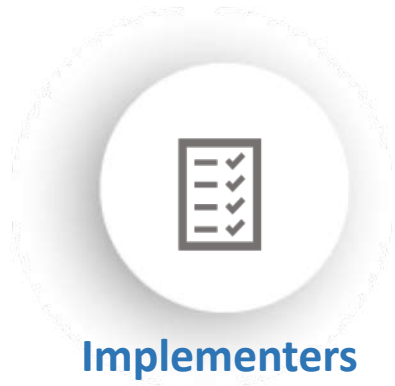
# EVALUATION METHODOLOGY



# EVALUATION APPROACH

The Evaluation Matrix was structured according to the OECD/UN criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, likely impact and sustainability. In the development of the evaluation matrix, the UN Evaluation Group's *Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation* has been taken into account and embedded in evaluation questions, and data collection methods, sources and instruments. The issues of human rights and gender have been considered throughout the evaluation.

**Semi-structured interviews, small group discussions and FGDs have been held with a total of 128 people.**



**Implementers**

UNCDF, UNDP and UN Women staff at the country or HQ levels that were involved in IELD including staff, Steering Committees and Technical Committee members, Investment Committee members and IELD donors.



**Partner Organizations**

Organizations benefitting directly or indirectly from IELD support including national and local government authorities, SMEs, women micro-entrepreneurs, financial institutions, workers, business service providers and other local groups .



**Other Stakeholders**

Groups that may have an opinion on the project design or implementation such as donors, government agencies or international experts.

# EVALUATION DATA COLLECTION METHODS



**These multiple lines of evidence have been triangulated in order to provide a user focused, evidence-based narrative that connects analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations.**



**300 Documents Have  
Been Reviewed**



**Site Visits Were Made to  
Bangladesh & Tanzania**



**Five Detailed Case Studies  
Have Been Produced**



**A survey has been sent to  
IELD designated personnel  
in Uganda, Senegal, Mali  
and Palestine**



# LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES OF THE EVALUATION



COMPRESSED  
TIMELINES TO ALLOW  
THE EVALUATION TO  
FEED INTO THE  
PLANNING FOR THE  
NEXT YEAR



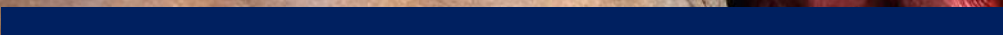
EARLY STAGE OF  
IMPLEMENTATION  
OF ALL  
INTERVENTIONS



DELAY IN FINANCIAL  
INFORMATION



ABSENCE OF  
QUANTITATIVE AND  
CAPACITY INDICATORS IN  
FIELD RESULTS  
FRAMEWORK



**EVALUATION  
FINDINGS  
RELEVANCE**



# RELEVANCE AND QUALITY OF DESIGN

- The systems approach underlying IELD is seen to be highly relevant.
- The programming is considered important by stakeholders for improving the enabling environment for WEE.
- IELD aligns well with the Strategic Plans and the country level UN Development Cooperation Frameworks.
- Specific tools have been developed that could be broadly used and replicated by the three agencies.
- IELD should be considered more of an approach to WEE than a programme, which allows it to be integrated into a variety of UN settings across countries.



# COUNTRY LEVEL PROGRAMMING WELL ALIGNED

There is increasing recognition of the importance of supporting WEE and areas such as gender-lens investing and this is being reflected at the country level.



**Bangladesh** has a series of policies promoting gender equality including the National Women Development Policy of Bangladesh that pledges economic, social and political empowerment of women along with interventions to help women overcome structural barriers.



Women's economic empowerment and enhancing SME growth through better access to financing are key priorities for the Government of **Tanzania**.

# UNIQUE IN COMBINING LOCAL INVESTMENTS & CAPACITY



The feedback from beneficiaries in Tanzania indicated that while many of the initiatives implemented are not new, what is unique is combining local investments with capacity development programming for officials and women micro-entrepreneurs.



Bangladesh beneficiaries have particularly appreciated the combination of technical assistance and financing for women owned and focused enterprises seeking to grow. While multiple sources of support for women's income generation and micro-enterprises exist, little technical support is available to help early-stage micro to small enterprises grow.

# IELD APPROACH ALIGNS WELL WITH THREE AGENCIES



The IELD approach aligns well with both the strategic plans of the three UN agencies and the UN Cooperation Development Frameworks in Tanzania and Bangladesh. The joint agency approach supports the UN reform efforts for delivering as one—encouraging greater cooperation and coherence across programming at the country and HQ levels.



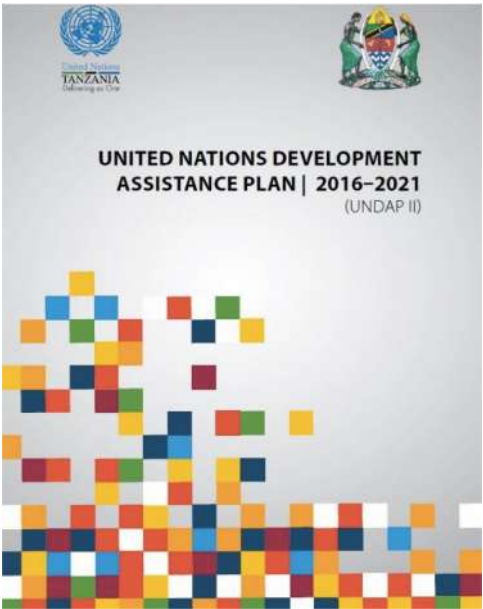
UN Women has a strong focus on ensuring that women have income security, decent work and economic autonomy.



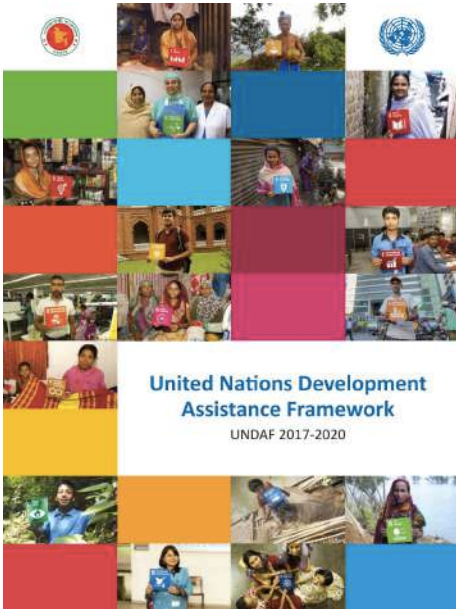
UNCDF’s expertise in financial innovation at the local level is being leveraged to unlock local and public finance through funding of SMEs and PPPs as well as providing technical support to financial institutions.



UNDP has priorities such as strengthening capacities to raise awareness on and undertake legal, policy and institutional reforms to fight barriers to women’s empowerment.




Tanzania, the IELD programming directly supports priorities in the UN Development Assistance Plan 2016-20

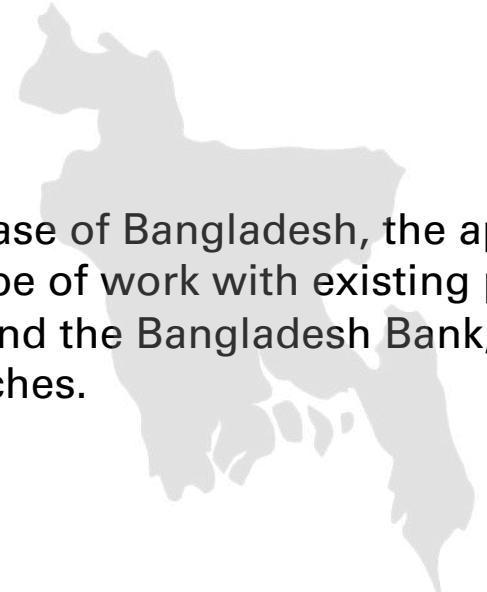


In Bangladesh, IELD is supporting outcome 3 of the UN Development Assistance Framework 2017-20

# EACH COUNTRY IS IMPLEMENTING IELD IN ITS OWN WAY



In Tanzania, work is primarily focusing on one region with coordination across sixteen different UN agencies in a One UN approach.



In the case of Bangladesh, the approach is to expand the scope of work with existing partners such as the WDFs and the Bangladesh Bank, testing new ideas and approaches.

# PROGRAMME DESIGN AND SPECIFIC TOOLS



The specific tools that have been developed have strong potential for being broadly used globally. The tools developed under IELD have broad applicability across a wide range of countries. These include the WEEI for assessing investments, gender responsive LEA for supporting local decision making and the training course for local officials.



The original design is seen to be innovative and having potential for replication and scaling. The systems-based approach is seen to be the value added in the IELD design. While many of the individual initiatives being implemented under the model are not new in themselves, the innovation is in the bundling of a critical mass of programming across the three areas that can work together and trigger systemic change.



# SPECIFIC TOOLS & DESIGN VERSUS OVERALL PROGRAMME



## Potential of Specific Tools and Original Design for Replication and Scale:

The original design is seen to be innovative and having potential for replication and scaling. The specific tools that have been developed have strong potential for being broadly used globally.



## Potential of Country Level Programmes for Replication and Scale:

The combination of the fact that none of the country level programmes are implementing the full IELD model and the disjointed nature of programming across countries, means there is now a lack of clarity on what the IELD model actually is that could be replicated and scaled. The variations across the countries made it difficult to discern a distinct “IELD” model.

# SOME REPLICATION POSSIBLE AT THE COUNTRY LEVEL



**Bangladesh** has received new funding from the **Netherlands** to expand its programming and will continue some of the previous work.



In **Tanzania**, the KJP will continue to be funded by **Norway** in 2020 with work being done within one region.

The background image shows a woman in profile, wearing a black headwrap with blue beads and a yellow flower. She is wearing a vibrant red and white patterned shawl. She is looking down at an open book held by another person whose hands are visible. The setting appears to be a library or a community center with green plastic chairs in the background.

# EVALUATION FINDINGS EFFICIENCY

# RESOURCE MOBILIZATION THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE



UN SHAPING INCLUSIVE FINANCE TRANSFORMATIONS  
CDF

Resource mobilization has been the biggest challenge for IELD. Of the original ProDoc budget of \$24.8 million, 51% has been mobilized since 2016.



Fundraising efforts have been ongoing at the global level since 2015 but it has proven difficult to generate interest from donors even as WEE issues increase in importance globally. With the competition increasing for funds, this will make it harder to attract donors.



From the start, it has been recognized that the mobilization strategy would have to rely on country level funding. However, this has produced mixed results.

# MEASURING PROGRESS AT DIFFERENT LEVELS



The IELD RRF targets only quantitative indicators making it difficult to capture the behavioural change process at the outcome level. It is difficult to roll up into IELD programme wide progress since most evidence is anecdotal and country specific.

## Quantitative v. Qualitative



The staff in both Tanzania and Bangladesh see two issues in their ability to actively monitor the investments: most of the monitoring is based on self-reporting, and limited funds are available for monitoring.

## Challenges in Monitoring Progress



While a guide has been prepared by IELD on how to collect the monitoring information, issues are seen with how some information is being collected and reported. During the field visits, some issues have been identified with the data collection techniques.

## Information Collection

# GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS



Overall, the **approval process** for investments appears to be **functioning well** for the IELD investments in terms of balancing development and financial criteria.

The UNCDF eight stage investment cycle and dual key approach are used for the IELD programme investments. The **dual key approach works well** for ensuring that both the financial and gender impacts are taken into account.

The use of the **WEEI as a filter** for the investments has resulted in solid potential for development impacts for women.

The level of **funding to SMEs under IELD is small** and raises issues about whether some processes need to be streamlined for smaller investments. While this process may work for larger SMEs, it represents a greater burden for small SMEs.



**EVALUATION  
FINDINGS  
EFFECTIVENESS**

# CHANGE AROUND WEE IS A LONG-TERM PROCESS

In both Bangladesh and Tanzania, WEE is limited by a complex set of factors that mean change is a long-term process. In both countries, the programming is operating in some of the poorest regions where **few economic opportunities exist and women face more constraints.**

Women lack equal opportunities in **education, skills development, access to health care** or **opportunities in business, employment** and access to financial resources for self-employment and business. This is exacerbated in the rural areas where IELD is working.





# EFFECTIVE IN DEVELOPING UNDERSTANDING OF NEEDS



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There is emerging evidence of increased capacity of the local governments in both Bangladesh and Tanzania on gender responsive budgeting and planning. Using existing approaches, training has been provided to local government officials who had never been exposed to these ideas before. In the three districts in Tanzania, the officials trained have developed Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEFs) that include priorities for women—an important first step.

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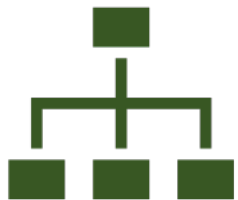
# PROGRESS AND FEEDBACK IN TANZANIA



Communities in Tanzania are responding very positively to the new market construction in Muhange, Mukarazi, Muyama and Kibaha, although none of the new work has been finished at the four sites at the time of the evaluation visit.



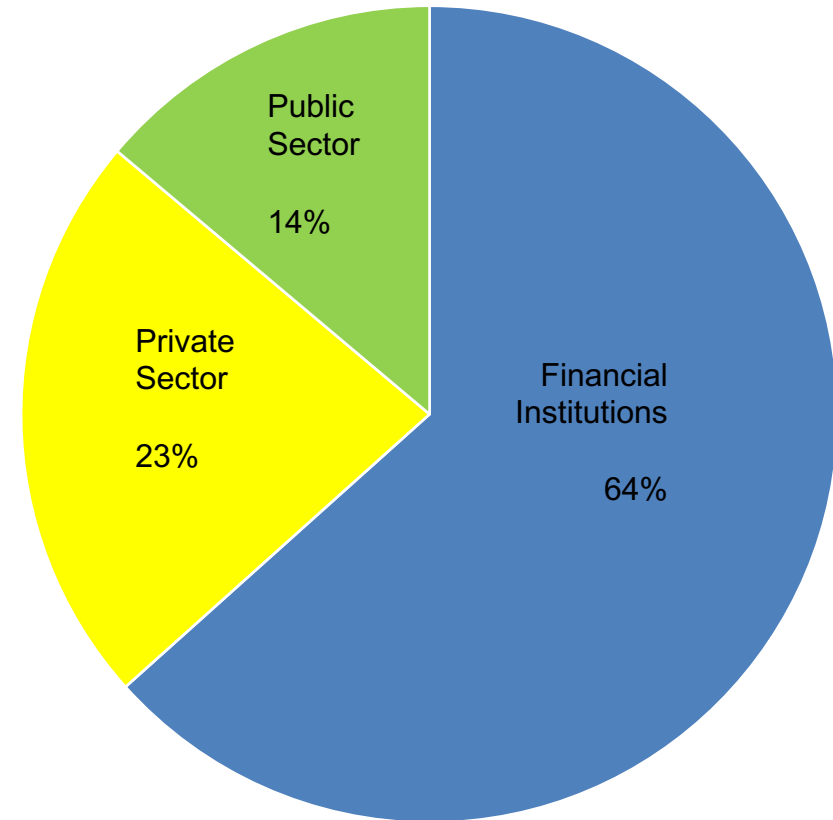
The combination of the initiatives by the three agencies in one district in Tanzania is beginning to raise the profile of women.



The market construction funded by UNCDF, GRBP training by UN Women, training of women micro-entrepreneurs and training of BDS providers by UNDP and UN Women has raised awareness of the issues that women are facing in pursuing economic activities.

# IELD FINANCIAL LEVERAGE

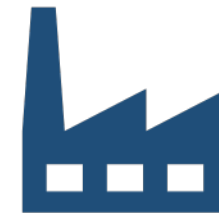
A total of **\$1.242 million** has been invested by the IELD programme and this is expected to leverage approximately **\$1.65 million**. The financial leverage from this early portfolio indicates that for every dollar invested, **\$1.33** has been or will be unlocked. SMEs who received financial support from UNCDF view the funding and technical assistance provided as critical for their growth and building a relationship with funding institutions.



■ Financial Institutions ■ Private Sector ■ Public Sector

# RESULTS FROM IELD INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO

**Some results are starting to emerge from the investment portfolio in Bangladesh and Tanzania. As more investments are completed, it is anticipated that the results from the investments will begin to accelerate.** These early-stage results are positive but it will require at least another year before the first batch of investments will be able to demonstrate substantial gains.



In Bangladesh, SMEs have increased their incomes. One SME (Glamour) now has formal employees rather than women working on piece work, and an enhanced relationship with its bankers.

The technical assistance provided to women micro-entrepreneurs by UN Women and UNDP is starting to show some results in terms of new products and improved income.

In Tanzania, one SME has given 30% ownership to a women's group and improved the working conditions within the factory. Another is working with a women's group to do training and technical support so they will be ready when the equipment is installed and the enterprise's production capacity expands.

# INNOVATIVE TOOLS AND APPROACHES DEVELOPED

Overall, some innovative tools and approaches have been developed for replication



**The UNCDF Women’s Economic Empowerment Index** is designed to evaluate and rank investment projects by public and private groups. The WEEI for SME investments is being used as a checklist to capture the extent to which the business’s structure and organization, practices and policies, and products promote gender equality and women’s empowerment.

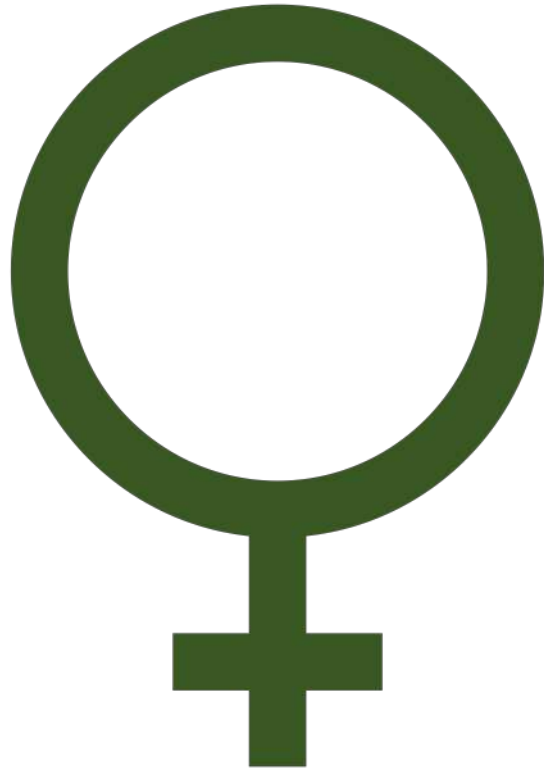


**The Gender Responsive Local Economic Assessment of UN Women** has potential to provide important information for planning and implementation of local economic development activities. LEAs have been implemented in select districts in Tanzania and Bangladesh by UN Women and one is being planned for Uganda.



**The capacity development training modules for the local authorities** being piloted by UNDP could provide a useful tool for improving the extent to which local economic development policies, programmes and projects are gender-responsive.

# GENDER SMART INFRASTRUCTURE



The gender adaptation of UNCDF's public market model is an innovative example of **engendering an infrastructure project**.

Prior to IELD, UNCDF in Tanzania has been working with local authorities to assist them in designing and developing markets where entrepreneurs can bring their products for sale to the public. Under IELD, this work now involves **adapting the existing market development model to take the needs of women into account**.

# EVALUATION FINDINGS LIKELY IMPACTS



# VALIDATING THE IELD THEORY OF CHANGE



The limited extent of the work done across the countries to date and the preliminary nature of the outcomes generated means it is not possible to validate the overall IELD theory of change at this point and define what specific pathways are the most effective. The original design of IELD contained in the ProDoc mapped out a three-prong approach that aimed at building partnerships for women entrepreneurs to grow their businesses, creating a policy and institutional environment that supported WEE and increasing the flow of domestic financing of investments for WEE at the local level. While in Bangladesh and Tanzania some activities are being done on each stream, a critical mass of interventions has not been seen yet.

The geographic concentration of the work in Tanzania could provide some possible insights in the future into how change takes place. This future work could also assist in identifying which groups are actually benefitting, how various stakeholders are participating in decisions and whether relations at the local level have begun to change. This is particularly important in the context of the broader KJP initiative in Kigoma that is taking a multi-prong approach that includes both refugee and host communities.



# SOLIDIFY GAINS WITH CONTINUED FUNDING

With continued access to funding, **Bangladesh and Tanzania** should be able to solidify gains made to date and increase the impact of their programming. Some pockets of interventions could influence the extent to which the ideas and approaches are replicated and scaled in Bangladesh and Tanzania



**In Bangladesh**, the gender responsive budgeting and planning work has potential for influencing future funding decisions at the local level.



**In Tanzania**, opportunities for synergies across the three components are seen in the Kigoma region where a One UN approach is being taken and the work under IELD fits into a broader reform framework for the region.

# TOOLS VALUABLE FOR DECISION-MAKING AT LOCAL LEVEL



The tools developed under IELD are valuable for better decision making at the local level in a wide range of contexts. The LEAs provide a method to assess the local economy and identify the key barriers to women's economic participation.



# QUESTION AROUND CATALYTIC LEVERAGE



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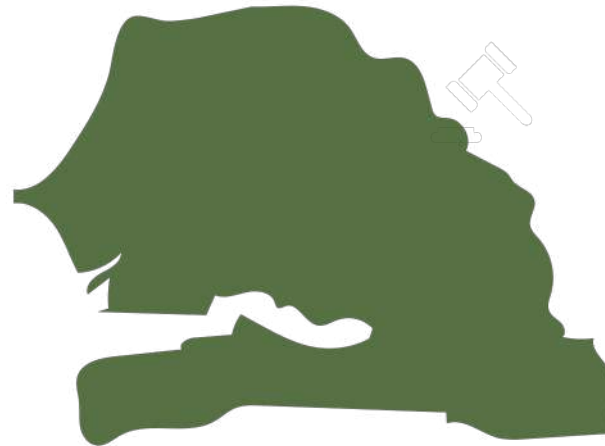
While IELD has achieved financial leverage, it is not clear whether all the approaches, funding will result in catalytic leverage. Systemic change at the country level requires a clear model that not only engages at the individual investment level but also with the broader financial ecosystem. By having a link to the broader market systems, systemic change is more possible.

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# SOLIDIFY GAINS WITH CONTINUED FUNDING



Some potential for broader based influence in financial access for women is seen in Bangladesh with its two-prong approach—working with the Bangladesh Bank and funding individual investments.



In Senegal, the establishment of the WE! Fund at the Sovereign Wealth Fund could trigger ongoing access to funding.



In Tanzania, the facilitation of access to finance for SMEs is being done on an investment by investment basis making it more difficult to see the path to catalytic leverage at the country level.

# RECOGNITION FOR ROLE IN GENDER LENS LANDSCAPE



UNCDF is now being recognized as playing a role within the gender lens financing landscape. One of the objectives of UNCDF in undertaking IELD was to gain a track record in gender lens financing. This has been achieved two ways. Globally, UNCDF appears to have a niche in the area of engendering public investments.



First, the investments under IELD have supported both public markets and SMEs.



Second, UNCDF staff are participating in various summits and meetings and engaging in global dialogue.

# EVALUATION FINDINGS SUSTAINABILITY



# CONTINUED USE OF KEY TOOLS



All three UN agencies have committed to continuing to expand the use of key tools developed under IELD

**1**



Unlocking Public and Private Finance for the Poor

Women's Economic Empowerment Index

**2**



United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Local Economic Assessment

**3**



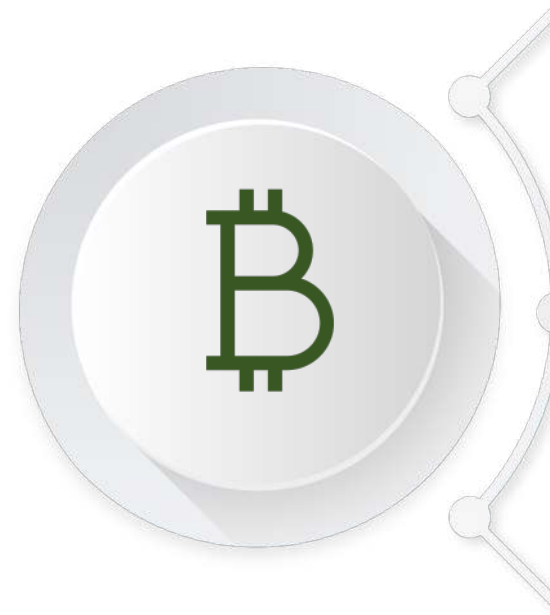
United Nations Development Programme

Capacity Training Development Modules

# CONTINUATION AND CREATION OF SPINOFFS



**Many of the investments will continue and create economic spinoffs for women.** The management of the public markets in Tanzania will be done by SPVs with participation by women's groups—with the markets very likely being self-financing.



Subarta in Bangladesh, which had not yet received its funding at the time of the evaluation, has potential to train many women for skilled jobs.

Most, but likely not all, of the SMEs in Bangladesh and Tanzania will likely continue to grow and create additional benefits.



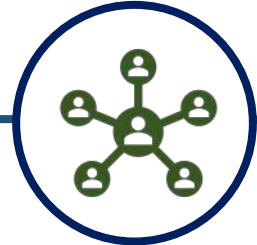
In Senegal, the technical assistance and seed money to structure and establish a capital investment fund could prove sustainable.



# SUSTAINABILITY RELATING TO STAKEHOLDERS

The growth of the SMEs will partially rely on having access to appropriate technical assistance going forward. The needs of growth-oriented SMEs are fundamentally different from a micro-entrepreneur.

The capacity development for government will be a longer-term process and will require sustained efforts to have an influence on WEE and investments. While awareness of barriers has increased, changes in staff behaviour and political decisions to act can take a significant amount of time.



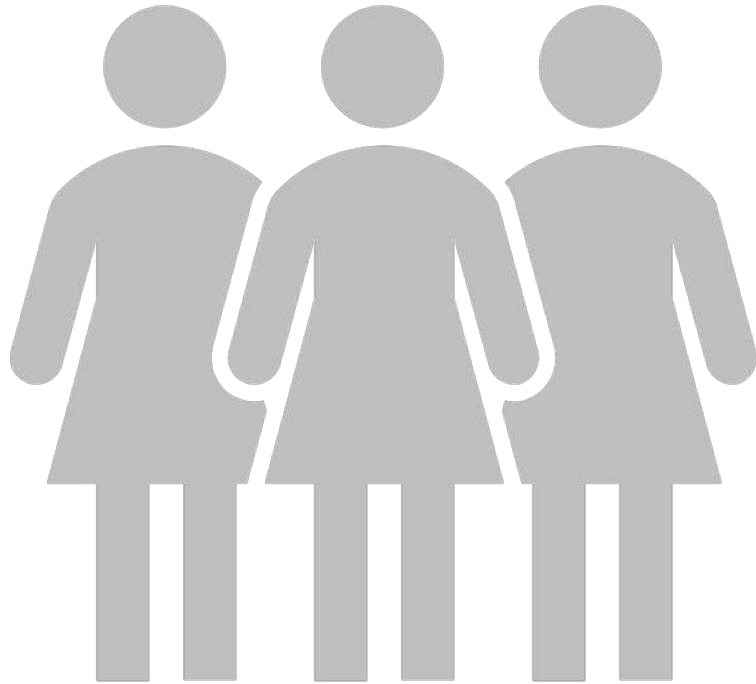
Some of the women micro-entrepreneurs that have been trained will continue to find markets and improve their incomes. their continued growth will likely rely on two factors—their desire to move from a livelihood focus to an enterprise focus and their access to the range of services they will need to make the transition.

The amount of work being done to strengthen the meso level is limited, and not all the work being done has a clear link to a sustainability strategy.

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSES



# PROGRAMMES NOT ABLE TO TAKE SYSTEMATIC APPROACH



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**While some outcomes have emerged, none of the country programmes are yet able to undertake the systematic approach originally envisaged for IELD. The small size and nature of the funding available has meant that a critical mass of programming has not been possible.**



# BROAD APPROACH VS. GLOBAL PROGRAMME



IELD is viewed as a broad “approach” to tackling WEE not a global programme with a brand and coherence. While adapting the model to the country context is important, the wide variations in programming have meant there is broad diversity in terms of the programming areas.



# RRF ONLY CAPTURES QUANTITATIVE INDICATORS



The IELD results reporting framework only captures quantitative indicators. Financial leverage is the primary result that is publicly presented by IELD in terms of results reporting. While financial leverage is an important part of the programming, reporting only on that indicator does not convey the outcomes that IELD is trying to address in terms of systemic changes in capacities, policies and systems on WEE issues.



# APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTATION HAS BEEN VARIED



The approach to implementation across countries has varied so widely the programme now appears disjointed. Only Tanzania, and to a lesser extent Bangladesh, has enough of the original model elements to start to show the potential of the model, although on a small scale.



The idea of starting with LEAs that help establish priorities for investments and other support programmes is proving effective.

# **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

**High level discussions among the three agencies should be undertaken to review how the concepts behind IELD fit with their current priorities, clarify the objectives for future collaboration on WEE and agree on a strategy to move forward with future WEE work.**

**The results emerging from the existing programming need to be better identified and tracked to provide evidence of outcomes and better define how the pathways for change can work.**

**A strategy should be developed by UN Women for how the gender responsive LEA Guidance Note will be disseminated and promoted within UN Women and with outside stakeholders.**

**UNDP should continue the refinement of the training modules for local officials and develop an approach for replication in various geographic areas.**

**UNCDF should review the current investment process as it applies to funding small SMEs and determine whether some streamlining can be done to make it more efficient. Those involved in the investment process felt that a few areas could be streamlined for the smaller investments without impacting the quality of the overall process of its due diligence aspects.**

# KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

**UNCDF should provide adequate funding for ongoing and expert monitoring and coaching of the IELD investment portfolio to ensure that both financial and development outcomes are being achieved. Both funds and human resources are required.**

**In Tanzania, for the remainder of the Kigoma Joint Programme (KJP) funding, the three agencies should specifically target building synergies across the programming as the PPP and SME investments come on stream.**

**With the new funding from the Netherlands, the three agencies in Bangladesh should ensure that a full monitoring system is in place from the start of the new programming.**



# MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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## Recommendation:

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**High level discussions among the three agencies should be undertaken to review how the concepts behind IELD fit with their current priorities, clarify the objectives for future collaboration on WEE and agree on a strategy to move forward with future WEE work.**

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## Response:

Management agrees with the recommendation. Each agency will review how IELD objectives will inform future collaboration and corporate priorities on women's economic empowerment. The agencies will make independent efforts to make sure that IELD approach and its tools will continue to be used as a framework for future programming related to local investments for women's economic empowerment. IELD will convene a concluding committee to discuss how they want to share the concept forward for IELD.

Building on IELD work and in alignment with corporate priorities, UNCDF will develop and implement a new stream of work related to gender responsive municipal financing. A new programme concept, 'IncluCity', has been developed as a basis to initiate this work as a pilot starting in 2020. IncluCity is built on an innovative concept that combines local financing for municipalities with gender equality objectives in addition to addressing structural bottlenecks through conducive policy environment and institutional capacity at the local level. A pilot phase document and an implementation plan are currently being finalized and a full programme document is expected to be finalized in 2021.

UNDP has conducted a global review of its portfolio on Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE). The conclusions identified key strategic entry points for UNDP considering its comparative advantages to move towards WEE. The review and the IELD evaluation will inform the development of the upcoming UNDP Gender Equality Strategy. Gender-responsive local economic development is one of the key entry points for WEE and the IELD model will be incorporated and disseminated for overall UNDP Country Office implementation.

In addition, after successful piloting, starting in October 2020, the three-agency country team in Bangladesh under UN Women's leadership is implementing a full-fledged country programme, 'Women Empowerment for Inclusive Growth (WING)', a successor of the IELD programme. The programme builds on the technical work, knowledge and tools implemented in the last four years and will allow the three agencies to take this foundational work to scale.

UNCDF and UNDP are collaborating to initiate a new programme to provide gender responsive economic recovery support to local governments and affected women SMEs. The joint program aims at developing a global crowdfunding platform to channel funds towards local gender-responsive investments, ensure gender-responsive local institutions and enabling environments for women-led MSMEs. It builds around IELD experiences and tools.

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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## Recommendation (Cont'd):

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High level discussions among the three agencies should be undertaken to review how the concepts behind IELD fit with their current priorities, clarify the objectives for future collaboration on WEE and agree on a strategy to move forward with future WEE work.

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## Key Action:

- Agreed action for incorporating IELD approach in current and future programmes of the agency
  - Responsible Unit: UNCDF/UNW/UNDP
  - Completed
- High level discussion on how the three agencies incorporate IELD tools in future agency programmes related to WEE financing in the next Steering Committee
  - Responsible Unit: UNCDF/UNW/UNDP
  - Initiated

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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## Recommendation:

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**The results emerging from the existing programming need to be better identified and tracked to provide evidence of outcomes and better define how the pathways for change can work.**

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## Response:

Management partially agrees with the recommendation. Although current RRF includes mostly quantitative indicators, programme monitoring and data collection tools support collection of qualitative data including details on the innovation introduced by the programme, results scale-up and lessons learned. In addition, programme reporting templates gather qualitative data by each output in addition to RRF data. The point is well taken that a more comprehensive results framework will need to integrate outcomes related to capacity changes, institutional strengthening as well as additionality provided by IELD. For a thorough qualitative assessment of results, the programme plans to produce knowledge products that will elaborate on the programme's efforts towards capacity development, innovations, as well as major lessons for wider dissemination among practitioners.

## Key Action:

Detailed qualitative information included as part of WEE case studies

- Responsible Unit: UNCDF
- Ongoing

Programme approach, results and lessons systematically documented and analysed for the qualitative indicators of the WEE investment projects

- Responsible Unit: UNCDF
- Ongoing

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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## Recommendation:

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**A strategy should be developed by UN Women for how the gender responsive LEA Guidance Note will be disseminated and promoted within UN Women and with outside stakeholders.**

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## Response:

UN Women plans to take concrete action for the wider dissemination of the LEA tool within the organization as well as with external partners. UNDP HQ gender team has incorporated the LEA tool as part of the service offer to UNDP Country offices, promoting its use and further disseminating it. Similarly, UNCDF will make available LEA tool and the related guidance note for its country programme teams and make sure that the local economic assessments undertaken in countries by UNCDF programmes are built on the gender responsive elements included in the LEA tool. Need based technical support will be provided to the teams on the effective implementation of the tool.

## Key Action:

LEA disseminated internally in UNWomen HQ, Regional and Country Offices and external partners

- Responsible Unit: PPID/UNW
- Not Started

LEA tool made available to UNDP and UNCDF country teams

- Responsible Unit: UNDP/UNCDF
- Initiated

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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## Recommendation:

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**UNDP should continue the refinement of the training modules for local officials and develop an approach for replication in various geographic areas.**

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## Response:

UNDP has finalized the basic level of the training course, with exercises and examples from different regions. UNDP, with UNCDF, is producing an intermediate level of the training course, as the audiences may be very diverse from country to country. A Rapid Handbook for gender-responsive economic recovery planning post-COVID is being coordinated by UNDP, to complement the training course. UNDP has developed a partnership with UCLGs (United Cities and Local Governments) to co-author the Handbook, together with UNCDF, and to roll out and disseminate both the handbook and the training courses. The first global launch event is planned for January 2021. Technical support is already offered to those country offices and local governments demanding for it. After each implementation of the training course, the localized exercises will be added to regional databases, so country offices from each region will be able to exchange exercises and localized examples. UNDP and UNCDF have also co-developed a concept note and are exploring partnerships for a scale up of the IELD approach.

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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## Recommendation: (Cont'd)

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**UNDP should continue the refinement of the training modules for local officials and develop an approach for replication in various geographic areas.**

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## Key Actions:

- Finalization of the WEE training courses, with proofreading, design and publication
  - Responsible Unit: UNDP
  - Course finalized, in process of proofreading and design
- Rapid Handbook for post COVID-19 gender- responsive economic recovery developed and disseminated
  - Responsible Unit: UNDP with the support of UNCDF & UCLG
  - First draft prepared, being revised by UCLG
- Services to UNDP country offices and local governments offered to implement the tools and collect exercises for the database.
  - Responsible Unit: UNDP
  - Initiated
- A joint UNDP / UNCDF proposal is finalized to scale up the IELD approach for a post covid-19 gender responsive economic recovery programme.
  - Responsible Unit: UNDP and UNCDF
  - Completed

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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## Recommendation: (Cont'd)

**UNCDF should review the current investment process as it applies to funding small SMEs and determine whether some streamlining can be done to make it more efficient. Those involved in the investment process felt that a few areas could be streamlined for the smaller investments without impacting the quality of the overall process of its due diligence aspects.**

## Response:

UNCDF partially agrees with this recommendation. The investment process has not affected planned commitments for IELD investments. The programme managed to fund 22 IELD investments in 2018 and 2019, that is about 1 investment per month. The projects were extensively reviewed for thematic and financial viability before clearances granted to be presented in the LD and LDCIP Investment committees. The average grant size was about \$120,000 per project. Moreover, the project development process was also a capacity development exercise for gender responsive enterprises and PPPs that required significant handholding and technical support to develop and refine business plans and financial plans to be investment ready.

The current pipeline development process is built in a way that ensures quality control and proper due diligence at every step from project sourcing to disbursement of funds and monitoring of results. There are important checks and balances and necessary approvals required to maintain the integrity of the process as per UNCDF's internal control framework for programmes and operations. This process is transparently built with a participatory approach to ensure that the most viable projects are selected and funded that have potential to produce desired outcomes.

UNCDF has taken necessary steps to avoid unnecessary delays and make the investment approval process more efficient. A condensed review process is being adapted for smaller projects as well as bulk approval modality is used for an efficient due diligence and quality assurance of the investment projects. For loan-based projects, UNCDF has streamlined the transaction assessment process in order to avoid overlapping steps undertaken by the LDC Investment Platform and the Investment Committee led by the transaction team. In case of smaller projects, more than one project was presented to the investment committee to receive approval for a bulk of projects. IELD investments for Mali have followed such a condensed approach whereby 3 investments per committee were presented for approval twice, resulting in a total of 6 investments approved within a short time frame. This reduced the transaction costs and increased efficiency as well as ensuring timely disbursements of funds to the grantees.

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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## Recommendation: (Cont'd)

**UNCDF should review the current investment process as it applies to funding small SMEs and determine whether some streamlining can be done to make it more efficient. Those involved in the investment process felt that a few areas could be streamlined for the smaller investments without impacting the quality of the overall process of its due diligence aspects.**

## Key Action:

UNCDF Investment committee reviews more than one WEE project

- Responsible party: UNCDF
- Completed

WEE investments follow the efficient UNCDF investment review and funding process that uses online protocols for quick approval and disbursements

- Responsible party: UNCDF
- Completed



# MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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## **Recommendation:**

**UNCDF should provide adequate funding for ongoing and expert monitoring and coaching of the IELD investment portfolio to ensure that both financial and development outcomes are being achieved. Both funds and human resources are required**

## **Response:**

UNCDF has put in place systems for monitoring results of investments as part of a corporate online platform. In addition, to assess impact of IELD investments in SMEs and municipal projects, a dedicated monitoring matrix has been developed with both qualitative and quantitative indicators. The matrix allows systematic collection of data on key outcomes from each grantee on yearly basis. This complements the data collected through corporate monitoring tools for the investments.

IELD investments were finalized and grants were disbursed in 2018 and 2019, with 14 investment grants disbursed in 2019. Therefore, it is still too soon to assess a meaningful impact on the livelihoods of women. However, monitoring of projects is ongoing by the country team and for a systematic and comparable data collection, UNCDF will use the WEE dedicated monitoring matrix in addition to corporate tools. The data collection process has already been initiated with an aim to analyze early impact across all 22 WEE investments before the end of this year. In addition, the IELD programme is developing case studies and knowledge products this year to document substantive results of investments by UNCDF across programme countries. The assessment will include qualitative analysis on the achievements of the WEE investments as well as an account of the current gaps and needed technical support for the funded SMEs on a regular basis.

In addition, a dedicated programme analyst has been added to the team to provide support to the country teams on regular monitoring to collect data and to provide required technical support to women SMEs and local governments funded by IELD. Additional funding is provided from HQ funds as needed to country teams to ensure timely support for the grantees. In addition, to document qualitative impact of the investment projects, WEE experts have been recruited that will analyze projects' benefits to target women in addition to assessing the contributions of the project to the local economic development.

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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## Recommendation: (Cont'd)

**UNCDF should provide adequate funding for ongoing and expert monitoring and coaching of the IELD investment portfolio to ensure that both financial and development outcomes are being achieved. Both funds and human resources are required**

## Key Action:

Collection of data to monitor impact of WEE investments in collaboration with country teams

- **Responsible party: UNCDF**
- **Ongoing**

WEE investment's impact documented as well as a technical paper on WEE financing developed to assess development outcomes of the WEE projects

- **Responsible party: UNCDF**
- **Ongoing**

Dedicated human resource is in place for regular monitoring and assessment of WEE investment project impact

- **Responsible party: UNCDF**
- **Completed**

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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## Recommendation:

**In Tanzania, for the remainder of the Kigoma Joint Programme (KJP) funding, the three agencies should specifically target building synergies across the programming as the PPP and SME investments come on stream.**

## Response:

The three agencies agree with the recommendation. Initial results have been achieved in targeted districts in the Kigoma region as three main streams of work. The three agencies acknowledge that further coordination for more coherent response on ground will be more effective. Systems for joint work planning and agency wise coordination will be further strengthened through regular joint technical meetings as well as missions in the target districts. Improved collaboration with other KJP programme thematic areas will also be prioritized through a regular channel for information sharing as well as technical meetings on a regular basis.

## Key Action:

Information of programme implementation progress and achievements collected and shared as part of YWEE theme of the KJP

- Responsible unit: UNCDF/UNW/UNDP
- Ongoing

Participation in the YWEE KJP technical coordination and planning meetings

- Responsible unit: UNCDF/UNW/UNDP
- Ongoing

# MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

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## Recommendation:

**With the new funding from the Netherlands, the three agencies in Bangladesh should ensure that a full monitoring system is in place from the start of the new programming.**

## Response:

For the new country programme, proper monitoring systems will be put in place early on building on the experiences from IELD pilot work. The country team under UN Women's coordination will make sure that dedicated human and financial resources are allocated for tracking programme progress and reporting. The new country programme, 'Women Empowerment for Inclusive Growth (WING), includes a robust theory of change that builds on the comparative expertise of the three agencies. The new programme builds heavily on the technical work, knowledge and tools implemented in the last four years and will allow the three agencies to take this foundational work to scale.

## Response:

Develop a joint M&E framework to monitor WING project progress with collective accountability of the three agencies.

- Responsible unit: UNCDF/UNW/UNDP
- Completed

Put in place proper human and financial resources for regular monitoring of programme results.

- Responsible unit: UNCDF/UNW/UNDP
- Ongoing

Prepare a detailed M&E plan for WEE investment projects that will allow regular monitoring and reporting on intended results.

- Responsible unit: UNCDF/UNW/UNDP
- Completed


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SN	Evaluation	Evaluation Type	Planned Year	Completion Year	Status	Management Response
1.	Mid-Term Evaluation of Mobile Money for the Poor (MM4P)	Others	2017	2018	Completed	Yes
2.	Mid-Term Evaluation of Shaping Inclusive Finance Transformations (SHIFT) Programme in Asean	Others	2018	2018	Completed	Yes
3.	Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility	Others	2017	2018	Completed	Yes
4.	Local Finance Initiative Global Programme	Others	2017	2017	Completed	Yes
5.	Mid-term Evaluation of the CleanStart Programme Accessing Clean Energy for the Poor	Others	2017	2017	Completed	Yes
6.	Évaluation finale du Programme d'appui au développement local (PADEL) – Niger	Project	2016	2017	Completed	Yes
7.	Mid-Term Evaluation of the Making Access to Finance More Inclusive for Poor People Program	Others	2015	2016	Completed	Yes

To access our completed evaluations, which include management responses and key actions:

<https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/units/255>

# Thank You

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