



FINAL INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

*Improving Livelihoods and Rights Awareness
for Socially-Excluded Nigerian Women through
Vocational Training and Men's Engagement*

DFID SPONSORED PROJECT 2014 - 2016

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ACCRONYMS

CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DFID	Department for International Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FIDA	International Federation of Women Lawyers
GALS	Gender Action Learning System
GPAF	Global Poverty Action Fund
IDI	In-depth Interviews
KII	Key Informant Interview
LHI	Life History Interviews
MEP	Men's Engagement Programme
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEP	Men Engagement Programme
MHCDPR	Ministry of Human Capital Development and Poverty Reduction
₦	Naira – Nigeria currency
-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
PPP	Purchasing Power Parities
SARC	Sexual Assault Referral Centre
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
ToR	Terms of Reference
VSLA	Village Saving and Loaning Association
WfWI	Women for Women International
ZI	ZENITH Insurance

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report is a presentation of the outcomes of an independent assessment of the 3-year project (January 1, 2014 – December 31, 2016) of Women for Women International (WfWI) titled *“Improving Livelihoods and Rights Awareness for Socially-Excluded Nigerian Women through Vocational Training and Men's Engagement”*. It highlights the extent to which the project realised its set goals among other things. The evaluation was commissioned and managed by WfWI in line with its agreement with the Department for International Development (DFID). It was executed between 5th October 2016 and 31st January 2017.

The project was largely funded by DFID through its Global Poverty Action Fund (GPAF) and implemented in 3 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Enugu state. It was aimed at reducing poverty and enhancing participation by rural women in more gender-balanced communities. The project supports the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 1 and 3 and had the following outputs:

- i. Women in Enugu have greater understanding and knowledge of their rights and basic life skills to facilitate improved livelihood and participation in local communities;
- ii. Women in Enugu have increased knowledge and skills in market-relevant vocational activities and a basic understanding of managing their businesses;
- iii. Women in Enugu have a basic understanding of co-operatives informing their decision to better organise themselves in groups; and
- iv. Male community, legal, and religious leaders and men in target communities have better awareness of women's rights.

Methodology

The study employed both primary and secondary sources of data in answering the evaluation questions which are based on OECD-DAC criteria. Primary data were collected using semi-structured data gathering tools. This was done through the conduct of In-depth Interviews (IDIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KII), Life History Interviews (LHI) and analyses of data sets generated by the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) unit of WfWI during the life of the project. Essentially, the analyses of quantitative data in this report were based largely on data collected by WfWI M&E unit. Secondary data were drawn from existing project periodic and evaluation reports and key project documents including the project proposal, project log frame, budgets etc. Also consulted was the report of the American Institute for Research's (AIR) Longitudinal Evaluation of WfWI 'Men's Engagement Program to Promote Women's Rights and Create a Gender-Balanced Society' (MEP). The combination of the different methods of data collection enabled the study team to corroborate and further explain some of the responses and issues that emerged from the administration of the data collection tools.

Project Rationale

The overall rationale for the project was the existence of pervasive poverty, food insecurity and gender discrimination which make women and girls have worse life chances than their male counterparts, among other factors. Poverty remains a big issue in Nigeria with an inflation rate of 17.6% in the latter part of 2016 (Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS), 2016), hence the relevance and appropriateness of the project. Its timing is also right as the project seems to have prepared beneficiaries for the current state of economic recession in the country.

Project Effectiveness and Efficiency

The project has been successful in meeting its targets within allocated time and budget. Existing facilities in project communities were effectively utilised to cut costs while ensuring that acceptable

standards were not compromised. Communities that were not privileged to benefit from the programme feel marginalised and yearn for the project to be extended to them.

Project Achievements

WfWI recorded tremendous achievements in the project communities within the short period of its implementation. The project engaged 4,500 women in 3 LGAs in Enugu State and created awareness among 4,650 males (family members of female beneficiaries of the project and community members) through the Men's Engagement Programme. It succeeded in putting women at the centre of the intervention and built their capacity for improved livelihoods as well as created an enabling environment for them to be involved in decision making both at the household and community levels. At the end of the project, the mean income which stood at ₦2,479 (\$8.12¹) at baseline (for the 3 years) increased to ₦16,664 (\$54.65), implying it remarkably enhanced the income generating power of the project beneficiaries. Women who had no savings among all beneficiaries in the 3 years had reduced from 47.8% at baseline to 1.8% at endline. Furthermore, women who had food insecurity reduced from 80.2% at baseline to 24.2% at endline, and the number of women who ran for leadership positions increased from 8.5% at baseline to 29.1% at endline. A total of 35 cooperative societies and 10 Village Savings and Loans Associations were formed during the life of the project and are functioning well.

The attention given to men in the project design and implementation enhanced women's opportunities in some of the target communities with women having the confidence to run for leadership positions and many actually becoming members of community leadership cabinets. The men acquired knowledge about women's rights and learnt to respect such rights. Men's capacity was also built to become advocates of women's rights in their communities and among their peers.

Conclusion

In view of the outstanding results of the project, there is no doubt that the methodology used by WfWI in Enugu State for addressing poverty issues is a viable and adaptable one for similar communities in Nigeria. The results of the project are a clear confirmation of the fact that the DFID fund has been well utilised.

Recommendations

There is a need to scale-up the programme to accommodate more communities and spread the benefits. DFID can support capacity building programmes by WfWI to train poverty alleviation-focused NGOs in the use of its model so that others can build on the work done in Enugu state and its environs, more so when WfWI is pulling out of the state.

The outcome of the project calls for continuous education of the communities on the rights of women and the need to do away with negative traditional practices (especially on female inheritance). More work needs to be done in some of the project communities found to have deep-rooted traditional and cultural practices and beliefs that support women's subordination.

There is a need to support communities to acquire advocacy skills for effective engagement with government agencies on the provision of access roads as well as other infrastructural services to facilitate trading between neighbouring communities. This will strengthen women's business opportunities and enhance the sustainability measures already put in place to support the outcomes of the project.

¹ The conversion rate used in this report is N304.95 being official rate of exchange at the time of writing the report.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

This evaluation is designed as an independent exercise aimed at verifying Women for Women International's (WfWI) record of project achievement. It is a third party assessment of the extent of realisation of the objectives of the project titled *"Improving Livelihoods and Rights Awareness for Socially-Excluded Nigerian Women through Vocational Training and Men's Engagement"*. It is an assessment of the extent to which the delivery and results of the project are good value for money and also a documentation of the project challenges and lessons learned in the process of its implementation. It is not an impact assessment but rather an examination of the outcomes and effects of the project on beneficiaries and their immediate communities.

In accordance with the Terms of Reference for the assignment, this independent final evaluation report is aimed at promoting the Fund Manager's understanding of WfWI's performance at the project level and also to inform the Evaluation Manager's assessment of performance at the fund level. This report therefore highlights the intended and unintended achievements of the project among other things.

2.2 Organisation Context

WfWI runs comprehensive programs around the world addressing the social and economic empowerment of marginalized women. WfWI is dedicated to working with women survivors of war in conflict and post-conflict societies across the world. It has been working in Nigeria (Enugu state) for over 16 years following women's exposure to sporadic communal clashes in the Eastern region of the country. It provides space for vulnerable and marginalised women to share their resources and knowledge and to change from victims to survivors to active citizens. WfWI's theory of change is based on the concept that lasting change can only be realised through the combination of access to knowledge, skills, resources and support networks. WfWI teach women their fundamental rights, basic business skills and vocational skills to enhance their earning power in their local markets. Women also learn to save and they receive support to establish cooperatives, associations, or village savings and loan associations (VSLAs). Women learn how to manage their health, including reproductive health and stress management, and the importance of good hygiene and nutrition for their families. With its headquarters in the United States of America (USA), the organisation collaborates with local CSOs in delivering comprehensive services to women and communities.

In 2013, WfWI secured a grant in the sum of 960,234 GBP from the Department for International Development (DFID) in support of a 3-year project with a budget of 1,347,987 GBP. The overall goal of the project is to reduce poverty and enhance participation by rural women in more gender-balanced communities. The project was designed to have the following outputs:

- i. Women in Enugu have greater understanding and knowledge of their rights and basic life skills to facilitate improved livelihood and participation in local communities;
- ii. Women in Enugu have increased knowledge and skills in market-relevant vocational activities and a basic understanding of managing their businesses;
- iii. Women in Enugu have a basic understanding of co-operatives informing their decision to better organise themselves in groups; and

- iv. Male community, legal, and religious leaders and men in target communities have better awareness of women's rights.

The projected enrolment figure of 4,500 female beneficiaries was met with the successful enrolment of 1,500 women annually between 2014 and 2016. The project targeted women who are vulnerable and socially excluded in the society. It sought to promote the empowerment of women in impoverished, rural settings to raise incomes and create safe spaces, support networks and opportunities for mentoring and leadership. The project engaged men in rigorous processes of enlightenment and re-assessment of social norms that constrain women's lives and perpetuate exclusion and poverty.

The project was implemented with the understanding that women's empowerment requires widespread social change that involves both men and women. It was therefore successfully developed to engage men as allies in women's empowerment process. The project is particularly unique in its targeted outreach for men tagged Men's Empowerment Programme which covers numerous issues, such as helping men understand the rights of women, Nigerian laws that criminalize treating widows like property and the need to respect such rights. For example, the illegal practice of transferring widows to their brothers-in-law/husbands' relatives is a pervasive tradition in some communities. Trainers worked to share information with men about the rights of women as protected by law, such as the right to property ownership and the right to refuse practices such as female genital mutilation. During the 3-year period of implementing the project, more than 4,000 men participated in the men's engagement program. The project also started the Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) scheme amongst the project beneficiaries. In total, 10 VSLAs were formed and provided mentoring and follow-up support.

2.3 Logic and Assumptions of Evaluation

In assessing the outcomes of the project, the evaluators were mindful of the fact that WfWI had been working in Enugu State for some years prior to the commencement of the DFID-funded project. Some CSOs such as Civil Resource Development and Documentation Centre (CIRRDOC), Women's Aid Collectives (WACOL), Federation of Female Lawyers International (FIDA) and Widow Foundation have also created awareness on human rights, harmful traditional practices and provided legal aid in some of the LGAs where the DFID-funded project was implemented. The evaluation was therefore done using contribution-based approaches. A wide range of evidence sources was consulted to determine the 'contribution' of WfWI (through the DFID funding) to higher level outcomes.

2.4 Overview of UK Aid Direct-Funded Activities

Implementation of the WfWI 3-year DFID funded project commenced in 2014 and ended in 2016. The project was implemented in 3 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Enugu State, Eastern Nigeria. The planned outcome of the project is that "socially-excluded women in Enugu have increased income and leadership roles in the local community". A review of project documents revealed that WfWI enrolled 1,500 women annually for 3 years in its 12-month training program where women acquired business, vocational and life skills. The training was designed to enhance women's opportunity to improve their individual and families' income, health and education. Being a holistic approach to women's economic empowerment, the program identified male allies (50 male leaders annually) and trained them as peer educators of women's rights.

3.0 Evaluation Methodology

3.1 Evaluation Plan

The study employed both primary and secondary sources of data in answering the evaluation questions. Primary data were collected using semi-structured data gathering tools. This was done by conducting In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KII), Life History Interviews (LHI) and analyses of data sets generated by the M&E unit of WfWI during the life of the project. Secondary data were drawn from existing project periodic reports, key project documents including the project proposal, project log frame, budgets etc. Also consulted was the report of the American Institutes for Research's (AIR) Longitudinal Evaluation of WfWI 'Men's Engagement Program to Promote Women's Rights and Create a Gender-Balanced Society' (MEP). The combination of the different methods of data collection enabled the study team to have a deep understanding of the project.

The semi-structured data-gathering tools used in generating qualitative data were designed to elicit information that can contribute to answering questions in the five major areas of the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria. The questions were open-ended to enable respondents the opportunity to freely air their views on different socio-cultural issues.

The evaluation team coded and analysed all qualitative data in Dedoose, a cross-platform application for data analysis. The data sets were collated in excel sheets and handed over to the evaluators who later analysed the data using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). All data were disaggregated by sex, LGA, community and stakeholder group, and triangulated across sources and stakeholders. Progress over the past years was assessed in two ways: comparison of endline and baseline findings, and stakeholder perceptions of changes since inception. The analysis was mainly descriptive and analytical.

Qualitative data was collected from 6 communities in the 3 Local Government Areas where the project was implemented and Enugu, the state capital. The LGAs are as follows:

Table 1: LGAs and Communities

Isi Uzo	Nsukka	Igbo Eze North
Mbu Amon Mbu Akpoti	Obukpa	Umuogbo Agu Umuagama Enugu Ezike

Table 2: List of Interviews/FGDs Conducted

S/N	Nature of Interview	Isi-Uzo	Igbo Eze North	Nsukka	Total
1.	Life History	2	3	2	7
2.	FGD (Men)	1		1	7
3.	FGD (Women)	2	2	1	
4.	KII	Community/Religious leaders (4) NGO/CBO in the community (2) Trainers (6) - Economic Empowerment Trainer - Poultry And Piggery Trainer - Social Empowerment Trainer (3) - Business Trainer			13
5.	IDI	1 Women,	3 Women,		14

		1 Man	1 Man	
		WfWI Staff (6) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. M&E Assistant 2. M&E Officer 3. Men's' Engagement Programme Coordinator, Project Lead, Enugu, WfWI 4. Economic Empowerment Assistant, WfWI 5. Economic Empowerment Assistant 6. M & E Manager 		

Table 3: Number of Respondents for the WfWI M&E Data set

S/N	DESCRIPTION	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	TOTAL
1	Number of Respondents (baseline)	1,382	364	297	2,043
2	Number of Respondents (Endline)	503	327	285	1,115
3	Year Total	1,885	691	582	3,158

The total number of respondents for the quantitative data collected by the WfWI project M&E team is 3158 for Year 1 to Year 3 (baselines for the three years is 2,043, while that of endline is 1,115); The respondents at baseline for Year 1 (comprised of all project beneficiaries for the year) are more than those at endline for Year 1 and other subsequent years whereby only data was collected on a sample of between 30-35% of enrollees². The wide disparity in number of respondents between baseline at year 1 and other periods, is because of a policy change in the WfWI's approach to data collection which favoured collecting data from just a sample of beneficiaries as opposed to the earlier practice of collecting data on all project beneficiaries. The analysed data are therefore presented in percentages because the total number of baselines and endlines are not equal and frequency distributions may look disturbing. For variables at the scale level (monthly income and monthly savings), the figures were grouped into categories in order to ensure easier perusal and analyses. However, the mean and standard deviation were derived at scale levels because categorical variables cannot give accurate means and standard deviations.

3.2 Strengths and weaknesses of selected design and research methods

The team of researchers that went to the field to gather data had a two-day training session during which the data gathering tools were pre-tested in Mbu in Isi Uzo LGA and thoroughly reviewed based on outcome of pre-test. The tools were also translated into Igbo language in preparation for use when interviewing respondents who are not be able to follow the interview process in English language or Pidgin English. These preliminary steps made the tools well focused on the information needed and made its use easy for the data collectors.

Strengths

- Igbo and Pidgin English are the widely spoken local languages in the project communities. The team of evaluators had both Igbo and non-Igbo speaking members. The evaluators therefore worked in groups that had those who could and those who could not speak Igbo. All

² As some point in the process of implementing the project, WfWI took the strategic decision to switch to sampling for data collection across the whole organisation as opposed to the initial practice of collecting data from all project beneficiaries.

respondents were given either water or soft drinks during the interview sessions because of the intense heat during the period that the field work was conducted.

- The data-gathering tools had open-ended questions and this allowed participants the opportunity to air their opinions freely on different issues. Basic rules were set by the respondents before the commencement of FGD sessions. With this, participants were careful to allow one another to air their views even when they did not really agree with them. This enabled the evaluators to hear different views on issues discussed and allowed for robust harvest of ideas.
- Having gained experience of working with people in rural communities over the years, the evaluation team used the Gender Balance Tree game³ as an ice breaker in getting FGD participants to be comfortable before discussions began in the various communities visited.
- The gender balance tree game and the open semi structured discussion format facilitated the groups to speak freely about the gender dimensions of the project.
- The evaluation questions were unpacked in more precise and concrete sub questions, specified for each type of interviewee or focus group. This assured the generation of adequate responses from the different types of beneficiaries and stakeholders
- Before the start of field work in Enugu, the team had familiarised itself with all available project documentation. It was helpful that WfWI was able to provide good quality progress reports and detailed M&E data;
- The team translated the evaluation tools and pre-tested them before actual field work started. To this end, the team had a clear understanding of how words were used within the communities and this helped in ensuring that questions were asked accurately
- The field work focused primarily on beneficiaries and key stakeholders of the project. This gave good insight in the actual implementation, outputs and outcome of the project as perceived by the beneficiaries and stakeholders themselves

Weakness

One weakness that was observed in the process of data collection was the time available for the field work which was short (7 days) considering the long distance that the evaluators had to travel each day from the capital city of Enugu to the various project locations. The evaluators, however, ensured that all that needed to be done was done by working late in some of the communities visited.

3. 3 Summary of problems and issues encountered

The project accountant was one of the members of staff that the evaluators planned to interview at the WfWI office in Enugu. This was not possible because the accountant was on annual leave at the time of visit. However, adequate financial reports were made available to the evaluators for review. The death of a community member in one of the communities where interviews were conducted (Obukpa) had a slight implication for the number of beneficiaries that turned up for FGD session. Those that turned up were, however, not below the minimum number of persons that should participate in an FGD session. This therefore did not have negative effect on the quality of data that was generated.

³ This is a GALS methodology of enabling women and men to assess issues around inequalities in gender roles and control over resources and therefore seek to address them. The cover page has a picture of women in Mbu trying out their hands on the game.

4.0 FINDINGS

4.1 Overall Results

Based on the project intervention logic (See Annex 2), the main activities of the project can be summarised as:

1. Enrolment of 4,500 women in 3 LGAs in Enugu State for training on:
 - a. their rights and fundamental life skills for improved livelihoods
 - b. skills in agribusiness and a basic understanding of managing a business
 - c. basic cooperative development and informing their decision to better organise themselves to form groups
2. Awareness creation on women's rights among 4,650 males (family and community members) through the Men's Engagement Programme.
3. Communication of key messages around women's rights produced as Radio jingles and aired by local radio stations.
4. Project Evaluation – The American Institutes for Research (AIR) conducted a mixed methods, longitudinal, non-experimental study conducted over two years that includes a process evaluation of the Men Engagement Programme (MEP)

In assessing some of the results of the project, key project documents were reviewed. Table 4 shows the targets and reported results (*WfWI's M&E data - GPAF-IMP-092_Interim Report_Oct2014_Reporting Logframe and GPAF-IMP-092_Annual Report_Apr2015_Reporting Logframe*) for the project's outcome and outputs. .

Table 4: Achievement Table⁴

INDICATOR	TARGET	ACHIEVED
OUTCOME: Socially-excluded women in Enugu have increased income and leadership roles in the local community.		
Percentage (and number) of women who report an increase in income of at least \$30/month at graduation.	50% (1500)	63% (1,849)
Average monthly individual income of women at graduation.	\$30	\$72.85
Percentage (and number) of women who: a) report running for a leadership position; and b) Successfully obtained leadership positions, at the community level in the past twelve months (at graduation).	30% (900) 3% (26)	23% (680) 12% (360)
Number of cooperatives established (Given the length of time and necessary conditions to formally register a cooperative, cooperatives are defined here as a group of women working together for economic purposes and are pursuing legal recognition of their entity at the local level).	6	35
Percentage (and number) of women who set up new businesses by graduation.	50% (1,500)	48% (1,409)

⁴ These results reflect only Years 1 and 2 of the project, the end line data for the final year was not available as at the time this table was generated.

Representative women in the community report behaviour change among men in the community following the MEP training and outreach.	N/A	Scheduled for reporting BY WfWI
Output 1: Women in Enugu have greater understanding and knowledge of their rights and basic life skills to facilitate livelihood and participation in local communities.		
1.1 Women in Enugu have greater understanding and knowledge of their rights and basic life skills to facilitate improved livelihood and participation in local communities	90% (2,700)	98% (2, 935)
1.2 Percentage (and estimated number) of women who report having improved their knowledge of rights at graduation.	90% (2,430)	99% (2,902)
1.3 Percentage (and estimated number) of women who report organising community activities at graduation.	60% (1,620)	90% (2,642)
Output 2: Women in Enugu have increased knowledge and skills in market-relevant vocational activities and a basic understanding of managing their business.		
2.1 Number (and percentage) of women who complete vocational skills and business skills training.	90% (2,700)	98% (2,935)
2.2 Percentage (and estimated number) of women who report gaining skills in vocational activities trained (at graduation).	90% (2,430)	100% (n=320).
2.3 Percentage (and estimated number) of women who report using vocational skills gained to earn an income (at graduation).	50% (1,350)	82% (2,407)
Output 3: Women in Enugu have a basic understanding of co-operatives informing their decision to better organise themselves in groups		
3.1: Number (and percentage) of women who complete basic cooperative development training.	90% (2,700)	98% (2,935)
3.2: Number of women groups supported to develop cooperatives by graduation.	10	35
Output 4: Male community, legal, and religious leaders and men in target communities have increased awareness of women's rights.		
4.1: Percentage) of Level 1 male leaders who complete men's engagement programme (MEP) training in women's rights and gender equality.	90%	100%
4.2: Percentage of Level 1 trainees completing the MEP training who report changes in knowledge and attitudes regarding women's rights.	80%	51%
4.3: Number of Level 2 men reached by trained MEP Level 1 trainees.	1000	926
4.4: Number of male family and male community members reached (Level 3) in community meetings.	2,000	1,504
4.5: Representative male family and community members report retaining one key message heard in radio jingles.	No milestone Achievement: To be reported December 2016.	Radio jingles held quarterly throughout the project duration.

4.2 Assessment of Accuracy of Reported Results

The project results as presented in the WfWI progress reports show a high success rate of implementation both at the outcome and output levels. For example, reports of increased income

levels among beneficiaries, which confirm that the project contributed immensely to its expected outcome, were corroborated by data generated by the evaluators during field work.

Table 5: Percentage change in the average monthly income for all women from year 1 to year 3

Monthly income	Percentage at baseline	Percentage at endline
No income	2.1	0
Less than ₦1,000	4.8	0.1
₦1,000-₦4,999	87.0	8.2
₦5,000-₦9,999	5.4	26.6
₦10,000-₦14,999	0.6	22.7
₦15,000 and above	0.1	42.4
Total	100.0	100.0

Source: WfWI M&E data set

As shown on Table 5, the respondents that earned above ₦15,000 (\$49.19) monthly increased to 42.4% from 1.0% at baseline. The mean income at baseline for beneficiaries in year 3 of the project was ₦2,479 (\$8.19), while the maximum income was ₦18,000 (\$59.02). Endline data on the other hand, revealed that the mean income rose to ₦16,664 (\$54.65) while the maximum income rose to ₦150,000 (\$491.88). Both the women and men in the communities visited testified to the fact that the economic statuses of the project beneficiaries have been transformed; women have gained knowledge and the economic activities they were able to develop following their participation in project activities have thrived.

In assessing accuracy of reported results, the highlights of achievements in relation to the four project outputs are presented below:

Output 1: Women in Enugu have greater understanding and knowledge of their rights and basic life skills to facilitate improved livelihood and participation in local communities

Knowledge of Rights

The project exposed women to different learnings on women's human rights and access to referrals and complimentary services. Partnerships with organization such as FIDA saw the inclusion of lawyers on the programme's team of trainer who taught women about their rights, gender equality, ownership, inheritance, marriage, divorce, child custody, domestic violence and rape. The following remarks from some of the respondents affirm this.

"I now know that I have the rights to own my husband's properties when he dies. And also to report my husband's family to human rights organization, if they try to take the properties from me" (Female participant, FGD session at Mbu Akpoti, Isi Uzo LGA)

"...In aspect of women's rights, formerly the people of this community did not have regard for women but through the teachings of the program, we now know we have full rights in our husbands' house. Even in the Igwe's cabinet, we now have three women for the first time due to the training we got from WfWI which made us push for women to be put into the cabinet so as to make our voice heard".(A female IDI respondent in Mbu Akpoti, Isi Uzo LGA)

Apart from knowing their rights, women demonstrated knowledge of where to go in situations of experience of abuse of their fundamental human rights. For instance, the women reported that they would take cases of sexual abuse to Tarma SARC should such occur in their community.

Women acquired basic life skills

Project beneficiaries acquired basic life skills such as effective time use, healthy living and basic literacy etc. Some of the beneficiaries consulted made the following remarks:

“WfWI taught us how to relax ourselves and not to work throughout the whole week. Sharing of house chores among our children and joining a cooperative society”. (A female FGD respondent in Obukpa, Nssuka LGA)

“The WfWI helped me in knowing how to write and speak in public. They encouraged me to speak in public through literacy. Some women do not know how to write their names but now they do know how to and even sign their signatures”. (A female IDI respondent in Mbu Akpoti, Isi Uzo LGA)

The use of skills acquired during training has enhanced women’s livelihood and increased contribution to household earnings by women, with the resultant effect of positive social and gender relations in some households. Men reported that they now respect women and appreciate their opinion on household matters. Women reported having less friction with their husbands in the home and the traditional rulers also reported having less cases on domestic conflicts to resolve. Skills acquired has also enhanced women’s leadership roles within the community. Whereas many communities mentioned women’s involvement in the Igwe’s council and community decision making processes, this was not the case in Enugu Ezike in Igbo Eze North LGA.

Increased participation in local community

The training enhanced women’s participation in community activities. The following are statements by different respondents that point to this fact.

“Our women take decisions in their meetings “Ndinne Mama” meaning Mothers. They make local laws guiding the community as regarding those who impregnate girls, you must marry a girl if you impregnate her”. (Male Respondent, FGD session with Men at Mbuakpoti, Isi Uzo LGA)

“before the women are side lined whenever the men are having meetings but now they are part of the decision making. The men also want to be part of the program”. (Female Respondent, FGD session with women at Umuogbo-Agu, Igbo Eze North LGA)

“Yes. We have 5 women in the Igwe’s cabinet”. (Male Respondent, FGD session with Men at Obukpa Nsukka LGA)

“In some communities they advocated and dug a well to supply water to the community” (Staff, WfWI).

“After training, they now take part in decision making and the husbands are happy that their wives can now contribute. Some who are widows now fight for their rights and recover lost property. We also train them in advocacy and some now advocate for some things in their community like the Fulani herdsmen destroying their crops. In some communities they advocated and dug a well to supply water. In social network, they now have better

understanding for women to unite and they now join different meetings for collaboration with other women. (WfWI Staff, Enugu IDI session)

Output 2: *Women in Enugu have increased knowledge and skills in market-relevant vocational activities and a basic understanding of managing their businesses*

The women confirmed having acquired knowledge and skills from the economic empowerment training in vocations such as poultry, piggery, farming and trading. They described to the evaluation team the different businesses they run either singly or simultaneously alongside other businesses such as selling of raw foodstuff, cooked food, tailoring and hairdressing, grinding/milling of grains etc.

“Before, I was only engaged in farming, but having had an encounter with WfWI, I now buy and sell. I plant cassava and process Garri. I sell beans, rice and crayfish. People come from Enugu to buy. I have been doing the Garri before WfWI started but the WfWI they has helped me advertise in their office and this has helped me to sell more. I sold two bags yesterday. My income has increased. Before, I produce just basins of Garri but now I sell in bags, which has increased my income”. (Female IDI respondent at Mbu Akpoti, Isi Uzo LGA).

“What I learnt from them is also too much. I was into trading before I met them but now I have added poultry farming which I didn’t know before. I learnt it from them. But now I have no money to run the poultry and have diverted into the rearing of local fowls”. (Female IDI respondent at Enugu Ezike, Igbo Eze North LGA)

Women are also transferring vocational skills to others in their communities. In response to the question of what the benefits of the project are, a beneficiary made the following remarks:

“The benefits are enormous...Even in my poultry business, there is a woman who never attended the programme but I personally trained her and now she is operating her own business”. (LHI Enugu Ezike, Igbo Eze North LGA)

The lessons learnt in managing businesses that have yielded positive results, according to the women, include customer relations, product packaging and presentation, record keeping and savings among many other topics taught. The women now appreciate the importance of saving regularly and obtaining loans for business expansion purposes. According to a respondent:

“before I used to cook Opa (a local snack) and my capital base was ₦2000 but now I buy one bag for ₦35,000 thus I have increased my capacity”. (Female Respondent, FGD session with women at Umuogbo-Agu, Igbo Eze North LGA)

Although many of them are not making use of the banks for their savings because of several challenges that are linked with accessing the banks, except in Nsukka local government where banks are located at close distance to the women. However, the women have made very good use of the skills gathered through the Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) to ensure adequate savings and access to loans when required. The findings of the evaluators aligns with the reports of WfWI in relation to project’s achievement with VSLAs. As shown on Table 6, women used knowledge acquired during training to enhance their businesses by saving and taking loans.

Table 6: Data on VSLA

S/N	Description	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
1	No of VSLA Formed	N/A	4	6
2	Total no of members at start	N/A	57	86
3	Total no of members at Endline	N/A	73	86
4	Total savings	N/A	₦1,137,600	Not Available
5	Total No of credit beneficiaries	N/A	About 70%	Over 90%
7	Total credit given at end	N/A	<₦1,000,000	>₦1800000
8	Average saving per person	N/A	₦15500	>₦18000
9	Average credit per person	N/A	₦33,000	>₦40000

Source: WfWI Nigeria Office

Output 3: *Women in Enugu have a basic understanding of co-operatives informing their decision to better organise themselves in groups*

Findings in the course of gathering data by the evaluators align with findings reported by WfWI in its annual report for 2016 to the effect that cooperatives and business groups facilitate women's access to business investment and growth opportunities. There was an increase in knowledge about the value of forming cooperative groups. Women reported been trained on cooperative formation and the workings of cooperatives. A total of 35 cooperative groups were formed in the different project communities. The cooperatives are engaged in different businesses, including poultry, piggery and trading.

I have added poultry farming ...When we met women for women, we formed a cooperative and we were doing it together. That is still in progress. I have more than 20 birds". (Female IDI respondent at Enugu Ezike, Igbo Eze North LGA)

Whereas several women noted that they do not save in the bank, they reported saving through their cooperative groups. In assessing the achievements of the project a male respondent made the following remarks:

"They (WfWI) were able to educate our illiterate women, made them form cooperative societies, opened different bank accounts for them and these women can now sign and write their names without any aid". (A Male IDI Respondent at Enugu Ezike, Igbo Eze North LGA.)

Output 4 *Male community, legal and religious leaders and men in target communities have better awareness of women's rights*

The project provided training to 150 male leaders (50 per year) drawn from among community leaders, religious leaders, police men, community security groups etc. This is the first level of the Men's Engagement Programme (Level 1 MEP). The training provided information on women's rights. It built the capacity of key male community leaders to be advocates of women's rights and empowerment across the communities in two ways. Firstly, men enrolled in the programme are provided training on women's rights issues and awareness; secondly, the programme followed a 'training of trainers' model, in which the capacities of the initial Level 1 MEP participants were built to provide training to another set of key male community stakeholders on women's rights. The direct beneficiaries of the training thereafter stepped down the training to 10 men each. This proved to be a very productive method as many men were able to acquire knowledge about the rights of women without being directly engaged by WfWI.

In gathering data for the evaluation, interviews and FGD sessions were conducted with participants of the MEP programme as well as other men who had benefitted through the step down programme. All the MEP participants engaged demonstrated a good level of awareness of the key women's rights messages of the programme. This finding corroborates the finding of the AIR longitudinal evaluation which showed that "79% of the participants responded correctly what gender violence entails, and approximately 94% understood basic human rights principles". This, however, does not mean that they all respect all such rights. With regards to domestic violence, some men (especially in Enugu Ezike) still felt that there were times that a woman required beating to be taught a lesson. However, majority of the respondents at the FGD sessions opined that there is no reason why a man should beat a woman and that violence does not resolve conflicts. The men that attended the MEP training were quite supportive of the women and were enamoured by the changes that they observed in the women that participated in the programme.

Some of the respondents were enthusiastic about joint decision-making with their wives on some house hold-related issues, especially since the women were very supportive financially. This seemed to have reduced the level of conflict in the households.

"there was an instance where a man approached me during a program and asked if the program teaches family planning and remarked that the training has helped to resolve a conflict in his home. " (Trainer, Enugu)

Despite men's agreement that women's rights were human rights, majority of the male respondents are of the strong opinion that property ownership is a man's thing. Whereas some men in communities such as Obukpa expressed the opinion that it was okay for a woman to inherit her husband's property, they had a condition attached to this. The widow has to remain in the late husband's house. If she decides to remarry, her late husband's assets will have to be taken from her. With respect inheritance from fathers, the men were adamant across all LGAs and communities. They insist that it is an issue deeply rooted in the culture of communal ownership of land, which may be tampered with if a woman who is married decides to take her own share of the family property.

4.3 RELEVANCE

4.3.1 Extent to which grantee support achievement towards the MDGs, specifically off-track MDGs

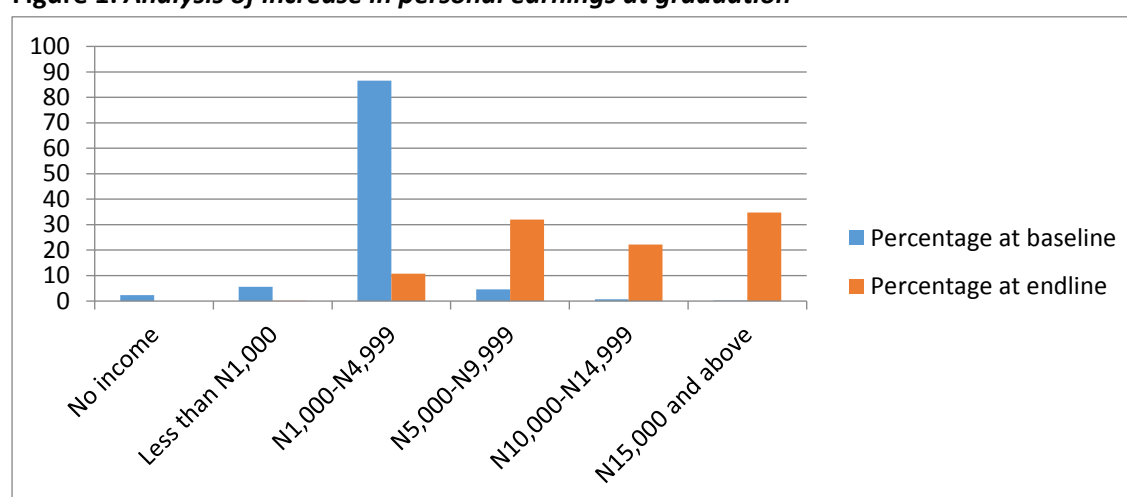
The WfWI project is quite relevant especially because of its contributions to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal 1 (Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger) and Goal 3 (Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women). The relevance of the project towards MDGs 1 and 3 is reflected in the intended outcome of the project, which is *"socially-excluded women in Enugu have increased income and leadership roles in the local community"*. The project sought to increase women's economic power through skills acquisition for improved income generation and savings. At the inception of the programme, baseline data from women enrolling in the training programme in January 2014 reflected the challenging realities that women face in Enugu state. For instance, the M&E data collected at the beginning of the project revealed the following poor indices:

- Average daily income was \$0.44
- Women without formal education 29%
- Women who felt that they had good knowledge of their rights – less than 3%
- Women who had run for any community leadership positions – 7%

Furthermore, WfWI reported that the DFID-supported communities are “rural communities with little or no infrastructure, where the main sources of income are subsistence farming and small trade. Women are regularly faced with human rights related-challenges especially on inheritance, domestic violence, ritual killing, kidnapping and teenage pregnancy” (GPAF-IMP-092-Interim Narrative Report of October 2014). Despite the fact that this report was given by WfWI in 2014, as at 2016 when the evaluation team visited, the status of the communities have not changed. They remained disadvantage and without government presence especially in terms of provision of basic infrastructure and services.

The beneficiaries of the project have a continuing need to understand their rights and learn skills to earn an increased and sustainable income. The project sensitised women on the need to become economically empowered and provided opportunities for women to improve their wellbeing.

Figure 1: Analysis of increase in personal earnings at graduation



Source: WfWI M&E data set

From the analysis of the project M&E data set, 2.1% of women did not earn an income at baseline and 87% earned between ₦1,000 – ₦4,999 in a month. But at endline, the story changed as only 8.2% of the women earned between ₦1,000 – ₦4,999, 26.6% earned between ₦5,000 and ₦9,999 and 42.4% earned ₦15,000 and above. Findings from beneficiaries clearly showed drastic increase in income among participants. Findings also revealed that more women have been able to save. The analysis of WfWI M&E data revealed that 47.8% of women had no savings at baseline but this drastically reduced to 1.8% at endline. The percentage of women who could save between ₦1,000 to ₦1,999 increased from 2.6% to 34.4% and women saving ₦15,000 and above increased from 0.1% to 42.4%. This findings corroborates what was found on the field during data collection for the final evaluation. For instance none of the seven (7) respondents of the Life History Interviews (LHI) had savings before coming in contact with WfWI. Annex 13 shows their financial status pre and post participation in project activities.

4.3.2 Extent to which the poor and marginalised were reached

The project applied different mechanisms in trying to reach the poor and marginalised. Firstly, extensive community assessments were conducted prior to commencement of implementation in

order to understand the community dynamics, providing a demonstration of project efforts to understand the parameters of exclusion within the communities.

Pre-selection assessments were also conducted to assess their eligibility and to ensure that entry was limited to marginalised women. WfWI's selection criteria for participation in the programme include:

- i. Experiences of war and conflict, such as being a victim of violence;
- ii. Economic factors, such as being financially responsible for a disabled family member;
- iii. Social factors, such as social or family exclusion;
- iv. Motivation factors, such as willingness to work to earn an income; and
- v. Ability to participate, such as receiving support from family to attend training.

Women who met at least one of the first 3 criteria above and also meet the 4th and 5th criteria were selected for participation. The more common criteria that seemed to qualify most of the beneficiaries that were consulted were the willingness to work to earn an income and the ability to participate. However, the women were generally poor and poverty was responsible for their exclusion from so many things. For instance, some of the one of the respondents made the following remarks:

"Before I was not involved in any association because I do not have enough finances to contribute my share but now I am a member and can contribute my share easily. In church when they are doing launching or fund raising I cannot give anything but now I proudly stand up and give". (LHI Obukpa 02, Nsukka LGA)

"I never participated or volunteered in church activity. But since I met WfWI, I have started participating". (LHI Obukpa 01, Nsukka LGA)

Project staff reported that limitations were placed on participation of women who had formal employment, who reside outside the immediate project areas and communities where buy-in amongst community leaders was weak or non-existent, and of those outside the age bracket of 18 – 55 years old. There is no doubt that these might have excluded some women who had other forms of vulnerability; however, any project must have its own boundaries. That notwithstanding, the project did not deliberately seek out women with physical disabilities or HIV positive women (although the project created awareness on HIV and created opportunity for HIV counselling and testing).

Furthermore, what resonates more in the description of the beneficiaries of the project the staff and trainers is poverty. They seemed not have a common definition and understanding of what "poor and marginalised" meant in the project. The following are contributions from staff and trainers in describing the defining poor and marginalised who are the focus of the project:

"The centre of everything we are doing is under the word poor. Because someone who has been excluded from her rights and her privileges, not being able to be integrated into the society. And why I use the word poor is because poverty is the cause of marginalization. If a woman is equipped with skills as we are doing, if a woman's income has improved, the society will begin to recognize her. This is why it is good to equip them with skills to change them from the levels where they are operating in terms of poverty level to the next level".

"We target indigent people; women with poor literacy level, living in rural areas and have low income earning about ₦1,000.00 weekly on the average".

“These are women that are less privileged and earn less than \$5 a month. We see most of them in rural areas and some of them are tattered because of the society values for them. They have many children, no education, no skills and the women are saddled with the task of taking care of their children. Some of them are malnourished and confused. The Naira equivalent of their earning is about ₦1,200 – ₦1,500”.

Evaluators received information on different systems of selection of beneficiaries from the project staff. These include selection with involvement of local leaders, selection by project staff following house to house visits, calls made in church by the priests for interested women to register to participate in the project, or calling women to register based on previously made lists. The women themselves, however, did not report any systematic way of selection. The following are some of the responses to the question of how women got onto the programme:

“I am the leader of group 50. How I was selected to be part of this program was that a woman called Fidelia called me that WfWI was in town and I should bring 25 names and inform them”. (LHI Umuogboagu, Igbo Eze North LGA).

“They called the women in the community. It was announced in every church and all of us gathered in the school. They told us they needed 300 women and asked us to write our names. They said they didn’t want any woman above 60 years of age. They wanted people with the ability to understand the training but they selected both learned and unlearned women”. (LHI, Mbuamon, Isi Uzo LGA).

According to one of the staff interviewed, the challenge of recruiting adequate numbers of participants in the project communities influenced the different methods through which beneficiaries got onto the project. WfWI’s commitment to targeting the most marginalised communities appears strong and the results of the project confirm that most of the beneficiaries require the intervention.

4.3.3 Extent to which project mainstreamed gender equality in the design and delivery of activities (and or other relevant excluded groups)

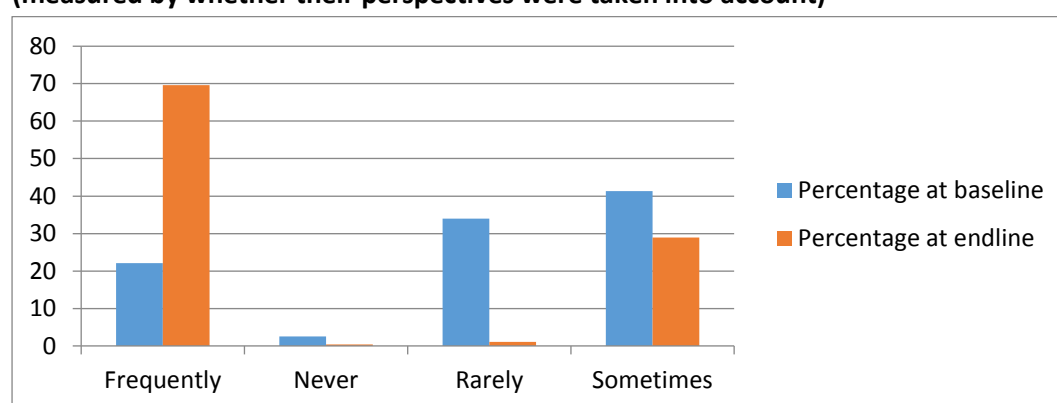
Gender equality concerns were found to be mainstreamed into the design and implementation of the project. As reported in April 2016, both men and women were engaged in decision making in the project at all levels. For example, women participants identified 20% of men’s engagement programme (MEP) participants; four male and two female facilitators were engaged for MEP training (instead of all male facilitators); Male lawyers and cooperative trainers were also engaged to lead sessions with women. The Nigeria team of WfWI has 12 males and 29 female staff (WfWI Annual Report, March 2016).

Although women were the core target of this project, the Men’s Empowerment Programme (MEP) was designed to increase their knowledge on women’s human rights, thereby paving the way for women to achieve more. According to a WfWI report, communities targeted by this project are highly patriarchal, with women and girls excluded from decision making processes in many aspects of their lives and girls undervalued. By targeting women and teaching them about their rights, their value as members of families, and providing them with skills that enable them to earn an income and contribute significantly to the prosperity and wellbeing of their households, the project contributed to improved equity within families. Each individual woman also gained the knowledge and confidence

to transform the way she interacts with those around her, for instance the confidence to participate in her community and the knowledge to make informed decisions.

Findings from the field work confirmed WfWI report in the preceding paragraphs. Discussion with respondents during data gathering revealed that many women are now able to do things they otherwise could not do before. There were instances of women paying children's school fees, buying foodstuffs for the home, renovating their homes as well as owning businesses and multiplying the proceeds. This certainly was a far cry from baseline findings for women in the project. WfWI has indeed empowered marginalised women in Enugu through trainings conducted and other forms of support provided.

Figure 2: Percentage of women who reported improvement in decision making in their household (measured by whether their perspectives were taken into account)



Source: WfWI M&E data set

The percentage of women that were involved in decision making whose perspectives were taken into consideration rose from 22.1% at baseline to 69.6% at endline. This was corroborated by women who were consulted:

“In the past, the women were side-lined whenever the men were having meetings, but now they are part of the decision making”. (Female participant, FGD session at Umuobuagu, Igbo Eze North LGA)

“Every woman now knows her right in the community. A man wanted to take my husband’s orange tree, but I challenged him and told him that the tree belongs to my family. And he left us alone”. (LHI, Umuagama, Igboeze North LGA)

4.3.4 Extent to which the project responded to the needs of target beneficiaries, including how these needs evolved over time

Comparison of baseline and endline data for the three years of the project clearly showed that the project met the needs of the target group. Table 7 highlights the wide differences that project interventions made to the lives of beneficiaries in different areas from year 1 to 3.

Table 7: Comparison of baseline and endline data on different outcome

S/N	Description	% at baseline	% at endline
1	Women who had no income	2.1	0
2	Women who earned between N1,000 & N4,999	87.0	8.2
3	Women who earned between N15,000 & above	0.1	42.4
4	Women who had no savings	47.8	1.8
5	Women who saved less than N1,000	49.2	35.0
6	Women who saved between N1,000 and N1,999	2.6	34.4
7	Women who are worried that food will run out in 3 months	80.2	24.2
8	Women with no writing skills	55.2	37.0
9	Women whose writing skills were adjudged good	4.9	17.9
10	Women with no reading skills	60.7	46.2
11	Women with no knowledge of reproductive health	51.0	0
12	Women with no knowledge of rights	47.0	0.1
13	Women who reported high level of knowledge of their rights	0.0	65.3
14	Women who reported their perspectives were taken into consideration frequently in decision making	21.4	71.8
	Other values		
15	Mean saving	N193	N1,779
16	Standard deviation	N304	N2393
17	Maximum saving	N4,000	N40,000

Source: WfWI M&E data set

Data on income and savings present wide gaps among beneficiaries at baseline which narrowed drastically at endline. For instance, a larger proportion (87%) of the beneficiaries earned between N1,000 (\$3.28) and N4,999 (\$16.39) at baseline, while only 0.1% earned N15,000 (\$49.19) and above. Following project interventions, the women who earned between N1,000 and N4,999 reduced to 8.2% with many of them moving up to the group of those who earned N15,000 which stood at 42.4% at endline.

Women who were interviewed during the evaluation confirmed that the project met their needs for knowledge related to economic and social development, especially in relation to good personal hygiene practices, business-related skills including marketing and savings.

Over time, the need to discuss issues related to family planning, HIV/AIDS and other health related issues arose. WfWI collaborated with other CSOs and met this need and also provided links to where people could report cases of violence against women as well as seek redress. WfWI's approach and interventions were tailored to the priorities and needs of the target beneficiaries. The project used a combination of approaches during the 3 years to put women in the driver's seat of their own learning and progress. For instance, women were given the opportunity to choose which vocational skill they wanted to specialise in, depending on their past experience, interests, needs and constraints; during follow-up meetings, women traders were supported to conduct their own market assessments and helped to understand the business environment in their respective locations. This enabled them to consider several factors before deciding on the businesses they engaged in. It was reported that women were asked to work on "individual participant plans", to set their own personal goals and

objectives for their time in the programme. Participants of the MEP were also consulted before concluding their training manual so that the content of the MEP training manual met the needs of the women and men in the target communities.

4.4 EFFECTIVENESS

4.4.1 To what extent are the results that are reported a fair and accurate record of achievement?

The results as reported in the WfWI progress reports (October 2014, April 2015 and April 2016) revealed a high success rate of both implementation and achievement of project goals (see also 4.2 above). The evaluation team was given the raw data in the data set that was used to triangulate all the findings the team made on the field. Based on the data set, field interviews and evaluation team observations, the evaluation team is able to report that the project reports are fair and accurate.

Focus groups discussions with beneficiaries and Life History Interviews (see annex 1) also confirm the results that have been reported. Women testify of the knowledge they have gained and the improvement in their economic activities because of the project. Annex 13 is also a confirmation of how women's lives transformed (especially in relation to improved livelihoods, income and savings) following participation in the project.

4.4.2 Extent to which project delivered results with value for money

A careful review of the project activities carried out by WfWI shows that there has been a reasonable level of efficiency in managing the project funds. To ensure value for money in result delivery, WfWI's procurement policy has been followed closely for all required inputs. The policy outlines the procedures for purchasing "reasonably-priced, high quality goods and services" complying with organisational, financial and donor requirements. Depending on the cost of the product, quotations are collected from at least three vendors and a selection committee decides the vendor to provide the required service. The vendor with the lowest total cost that meets the required quality criteria is chosen.

The evaluation team observed that the project staff were highly skilled and on top of their various portfolios. Project staff and trainers interviewed were quite articulate in sharing their experiences in implementing the project.

The project leveraged on local expertise at limited or no costs, collaborating with medical and legal practitioners as well as non-profit groups in delivering training modules. The project also leveraged on community facilities; the communities supported the project through provision of training venues and provision of other services that added value to the project at no cost. Human resource was also sourced locally and their capacity built for project sustainability. For instance Village Agents were trained to train others in the community and support the formation of VLSAs.

The project team was focused in its spending and did not spend outside allocated funds for achieving their results; rather they sought alternative sources to meet other needs that arose during the course of the training e.g. as noted above, additional resources, both in cash and kind was leveraged from other skilled organisations such as the Carosa Memorial Foundation Opi and Annunciation Hospital Emene who supported the project by providing HIV counselling and testing services.

The distance from the WfWI office location to the communities where the project was implemented was observed to be rather far and the roads were very bad. However, WfWI had the appropriate cars to manoeuvre these roads. They also did effective follow-up and learning despite the bad roads and the difficulties associated with reaching the project locations during the raining season as described by respondents. According to a CSO respondent, *“only WfWI vehicles can go to such locations”*. It is also worthy to note that field visits are usually joint visit for various components of the project, thereby reducing cost of travel.

Available evidence showed that majority of the programme inputs are locally sourced, and in some cases, in order to train and support women, inputs are sourced from the target communities. This is commendable and highly empowering for the community women.

The Incentives given to the women was of utmost value as it ensured that the women were in attendance at the trainings. The evaluation revealed that some of the women added the stipends to

their savings and used them to improve their businesses. Evidence from the life history interviews revealed that the output of the project far outweighs the input as women’s lives have been significantly improved. The percentage change in the monthly income of women from baseline to endline demonstrate the success of the interventions of the programme and the efficient utilisation of project funds. At graduation, there was no respondent without income. Maximum income at baseline was ₦18,000 (\$59.02) whereas the maximum income at endline was ₦95,000 (\$311.53) in Year 2 and ₦150,000 (\$491.88) in Year 3⁵. It is important to note that the mean income rose by 502 percent at graduation.



Members of the evaluation team in a photograph with a project beneficiary who was able to buy a used motor bike from her savings after putting leaning from training to practice.

The MEP further helped the men understand women’s rights issues and promoted the support

that the women got in terms of attending the trainings and running their businesses. The reported changes in behaviour and relationships within the households and communities point to the value that the project added to the lives of the people. For instance, baseline data revealed that over 90% of beneficiaries expressed fear that food would run out in their homes in three months. Endline data on the other hand revealed a completely different situation. Whereas 35.0% of respondents had this fear in one of the communities (Enugu Ezike), others were only 6.8% (Obukpa) and 12.2% (Mbu).

4.4.3 Extent Project used learning to improve delivery

Interactions with project staff and review of annual reports as well as previous evaluation reports reveal that learning was taken seriously throughout the project life. The project employed several

⁵ This was based on data given as at April 2016

means for feedback including informal meetings of project staff and trainers with project beneficiaries. Members of staff generally reported that there was a continuous learning schedule which enabled them to understand the needs and thoughts of the beneficiaries. The regular 'Friday staff meeting' was also a good forum for sharing information and making decisions on project developments and useful information picked from the field.

WfWI-Nigeria staff and trainers reported that women participants were vocal in and have influenced the programme to include specific topics in their trainings that they deemed useful for their lives. In response to the feedback from beneficiaries, the programme adapted and introduced sessions like family planning, health care and other health-related issues including substance abuse which were not part of the programme's initial plan into their schedule. These have yielded results as shown through the identified outcomes of the project.

"We alert trainers of our findings. If we ask a woman a question and her answer is not well articulated, we report to the trainers and they go back and review". (Staff respondent, Enugu)

All the adaptations required during the life of the project were made. Whereas some were just adjustments to plans, some involved variations to the project activities. For instance, the project provided continued support to business groups in building stronger leadership to ensure that their businesses are successful and sustainable. Following learning from beneficiaries of Year 2 (2015), the decision was taken to orient all 2016 participants about Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) and identified "Village Agents⁶" from among the participants early in their practice, so they can be mentored to support the long-term use of VSLAs in each community.

At the early stages of the formation of the VSLA, it was observed that women were sceptical about taking loans. Further investigation by the project team revealed that the women were afraid of the consequences of not being able to repay loans. This learning by the WfWI was corroborated by the project beneficiaries that the evaluation team spoke to in the course of gathering data. A Respondent during a life history interview made the following remarks:

"I was still in the palm oil business but there was a difference after joining WfWI. I know how to save and to borrow loans to do business and increase my earnings. I was afraid to take loans because of repayment fear but I was taught how to discipline myself through savings and 'Esusu' and to recycle loans". (LHI, Mbu Akpoti, Isi Uzo LGA)

Following this learning, the project team introduced two new modules to the training manual. These were record keeping and effective loan utilization. These topics transformed women's understanding and perception about loans.

Findings from the baseline assessment conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) informed a slight change to the methodology for the longitudinal evaluation study e.g. reduction to 2 years instead of the initial plan of 3 years. The outcome of the AIR's baseline report also informed changes made to the training sessions. The report noted that Level 1 MEP trainees indicated that they would have preferred more resource persons (doctors and lawyers were mentioned specifically) to be

⁶ Village agents are those who, having participated in a VSLA, understand the methodology well and teach it to others for a fee.

present during the training to answer questions specific to their fields. This was adjusted during subsequent trainings with WfWI collaborating with other CSOs and professionals (lawyers for issues on human rights and doctors for health issues). This was also integrated into the women's programme and has yielded great results.

"we collaborate with medical professionals as well as legal practitioners in bringing the module to life so the women meet with doctors and sometimes get referrals to have a one-on-one consultation with doctors and knowing where they are coming from, they are well attended to by the medical personnel. Lawyers also give pro-bono services; we don't pay the professionals". (Staff Respondent, Enugu)

Learning from the project has also been used to improve WfWI projects in other countries e.g. according to previous reports, WFWI has been able to build on the tools used by AIR in evaluating the project's MEP to improve monitoring tools and indicators for WfWI's men's engagement activities in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Poor attendance at the Level 3 MEP training in 2014 also informed the decision to hold training sessions on weekends and before the rainy season.

4.4.4 Key drivers and barriers affecting the delivery of results for the project

The key drivers that positively influenced the project effectiveness include:

- Community awareness/engagement and acceptance by community members
- Strong relationships (Productive project teams)
- Buy-in into the project by participants
- Collaboration with other NGOs
- Internal staff training

Community awareness/engagement and acceptance by community members

Engaging a wide range of community members in the project was an important way to ensure community buy-in into the project. The programme engaged in a lot of sensitisation before the onset of the programme activities. This led to strong buy-in and limited resistance from the communities.

"We did not experience any resistance. In all of the communities where we worked, no! We had experience in this from previous projects and we had lots of sensitisation prior to kick-off and we followed a process". (Staff respondent, Enugu)

For some of the communities where the project took place, the good report of the achievements of the project in neighbouring communities created awareness about the project and the following wide acceptance in other communities.

"I heard about their training then I called them to come and train my women. I see how the character of the women has been in terms of neatness and it made me interested. I felt something was different in our neighbouring communities".
(Community leader, Mbu Akpoti, Isi Uzo LGA)

The project reputation allowed for wide acceptance across different communities. This led to garnering of support for the project as many of the communities allowed free use of its facilities including meeting halls.

Strong relationships (Productive project teams)

Relationships emerged as a key driver which facilitated the successful implementation of the WfWI-Nigeria project. Relationships were important in several ways in terms of facilitating greater community engagement. Within this context, relationships were multifaceted and included both external (with other organisations, professionals and community leaders) and internal (between staff/trainers) components. External relationships not only included the community in which the project was set, but also other service providers in the area, e.g. the project partnered with other organisations and key stakeholders such as medical doctors and lawyers. A previous report noted the close cooperation between WfWI and target communities for the project. In particular, there was strong support from the community stakeholders (especially Igwes – traditional chiefs) in Obukpa for the MEP. There was also strong support for the women's programme by the Igwes in several communities. The presence of positive relationships among workers in a healthy, productive team environment was cited as a key internal enabler. According to a staff respondent,

“Unity of spirit/purpose is a key driver. We have that oneness, the same goal to see change. The drivers, trainers and facilitators come out on time” (Staff Respondent, Enugu)

Project buy-in by men and other community members

Participants highlighted the importance of the buy-in of the men in the project. The acceptance of the male folk and their encouragement to the women was a great enabler for the project. The project engaged with the men through the Men's Empowerment Programme which involved the husbands and male relatives of the project beneficiaries. The MEP programme generated improvements in attitudes and knowledge regarding women's rights among the men. This informed the overwhelming support for the womenfolk to attend and make use of learning from the project.

Collaboration with other NGOs and stakeholders that could positively impact the project/collaboration amongst women beneficiaries of the project

Building on previous work helped the project to get established. WfWI Nigeria extensively worked with other NGOs and stakeholders that could promote the achievement of the project goals. The project engaged in informal partnerships with different institutions including:

- Diamond Bank and Access Bank for provision of financial services to project beneficiaries
- Carosa Memorial Foundation, Annunciation Hospital, University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, Nsukka, ESUT Parklane Hospital Enugu, Redemption Clinic Enugu and Women Cancer Care for a range of health training sessions for female and male participants
- Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria, who carried out free HIV Counselling and Testing for interested participants and conducted cervical screening tests at a subsidised rate of N500.

Internal staff training

The internal training provided to enhance staff skills on a regular basis also ensured that the project teams were productive.

Other drivers

As earlier noted, the stipend paid to the women is a contributory factor to the success of the project. A respondent shared this information.

“I started my poultry last year August with the 10,000 Naira I saved from the stipends given by WfWI. I save whenever I sell my fowl every three months. I have saved about 20,000 Naira but I still have my capital. My first sale is better than this time because it seems everyone is

into poultry now. I also plait hair. I keep records of all what I sold so I can know my profit which I learnt from WfWI". (LHI Obukpa 02, Nsukka LGA)

Also strategic, are training materials including pictorial manuals given to all beneficiaries.

Key Barriers

Below are the key barriers and challenges that emerged from the evaluation data and progress reports) that were submitted earlier by WfWI in the course of implementing the project.

Target group/Beneficiaries

Continuity for beneficiaries in some communities was challenging for a number of reasons. Examples of difficulties included:

- Relocation of participants or their husbands from the community
- Death of participants - this was rare but it was reported that a participant died at some point.
- Some women just stopped coming due to family pressure especially husbands stopping their wives from further attending the programme.
- Some women dropped out due to unknown reasons.
- Not turning up to planned workshops or events, in some cases, may necessitate withdrawal of such participants depending on the group as there were rules guarding the groups. For Women in the yearlong training programme, the rule is that when they fail to show up six times (not consecutively though), they get removed from the class.

Prevailing culture in communities

Previous reports and findings during data gathering for this evaluation highlight deep-rooted traditions and culture that seem difficult to change despite the level of training and engagement with project activities. ,

"...in Enugu-Ezike, they hold culture very high, they don't believe in inheritance for women, they believe in widows marrying their husband's brother or kinsman and they marry many wives etc. A great majority of them don't believe women should inherit land even after the training. Thus we had to fashion their training to their cultural beliefs but I know that many of them don't believe that women should inherit land, even after the training". (Staff Respondent, Enugu)

This was corroborated by findings from the field work where practically all the respondents noted that as for inheritance-related issues it was their culture that women do not inherit their fathers' land. This was so despite all the changes reported about the WfWI project within their various communities. They seemed to hold strongly to this particular culture.

Additional funding for women to plough into their businesses

Issues around sourcing additional funds for women to expand their businesses are still the biggest challenge to business expansion. Women in all the communities visited mentioned the need to expand their businesses but they noted that the current economic situation in the country has not been favourable. Also creating a barrier is way the market functions. There are specific market days that women can take their wares to larger market for sale –

"Our market is only once in four days; because it is not on daily basis we do not make money all the time. If we sell every day and make more profits there would be a difference, since transportation to where we buy things to sell is very expensive".

This was reported as a factor that served as a challenge as it limits women's opportunity for high business turnover.

Market saturation was also raised as an issue. Some mentioned that when they first started their business, for instance poultry, it yielded much result but that as many more people ventured into the same business, the profit margin has reduced. A major barrier here is the fact that several people started doing the same business within a community.

Other factors

According to project reports, there were other external factors beyond the control of project implementers that created obstacles. Elections campaign of 2015 affected the 2nd level of the MEP. The timing for the men's meetings as well as the periods toward Christmas were other factors that affected some of the sessions. Community strife and general distrust within some communities as well as conflicting events happening on meeting days also led to low turn-out of participants sometimes.

Bad state of connecting roads did not make it easy for the women to carry their goods/products to the urban areas to sell. The issue of transportation is a big one. According to a respondent,

"it will be useful if they can help us with good roads; our women are strong but the roads are bad and when we farm we cannot take our produce out to sell". (A female IDI respondent in Enugu Ezike, Igbo Eze North LGA)

In most communities there are no banks. This makes it difficult for the women to continue using the banks for their savings. The distance to the nearest bank is usually too far and the cost of transportation makes it pointless considering the amount of money they intend to save. As a result of this, many have abandoned their accounts and make use of it only if a relative from out of state wants to send money to them.

There was also a challenge of limited time frame, as some groups were formed in August 2016 and one of the rules of VSLA is that you provide support for 9 to 12 months. In view of the fact that WfWI has moved its office to Jos, arrangement has been made for follow-up support for the new groups. According to the project staff, the short time frame within which the project was implemented also affected the number of groups that were formed.

Other factors are, lack of availability of trainees during farming seasons, and difficulty for trainees to move around during the rainy season also caused setbacks. Also, a significant number of women participants come to the classes with children who become distractions during training.

Strategies taken (initiative, innovation) based on lessons learned

- The challenge of adequacy of funds to meet loan request by members of VSLA informed the introduction of a new strategy. The women in the different associations were sub-divided into 3 groups with each group using the savings to trade one after the other. This led to an increase in the money in the associations' boxes. It also led to the emergence of new trading ideas among the subgroups e.g. one of the groups produces brooms in bulk and sells on market days.
- Following concerns around security raised by members of the VSLA, the idea of carrying money boxes around on days of meetings to meeting venues was changed. VSLA groups now hold their meetings in the house of the box keeper. This was an adjustment to the model.

- Adaptation of training manual for MEP to suit local realities.
- During training sessions, women look for other colleagues who are not participating in any session and keep their babies with them. This does not seem to be a structured arrangement for ensuring that women are able to concentrate fully during training sessions.

4.5 EFFICIENCY

4.5.1 Extent to which WfWI delivered results on time and on budget against agreed plans

The project was designed to achieve certain milestones in order to be considered a success. Hence, the project team worked to ensure that recruitment, internal staff capacity trainings, and vocational trainings for men and women were all delivered on time and on budget. Recruitment processes were streamlined to reduce cost, staff and contractors were duly hired, trained and deployed efficiently to oversee trainings, and regular monitoring and follow-up was on track for work consistency and quality. The project was on track against its deliverables and original timescale due to the clear organizational policies and processes guiding planned activities and close cooperation with stakeholders. The project was also implemented by a committed and experienced team who ensured that costs were kept at acceptable levels.

The project annual budget aligns with total expenditure with some variances in expenditure recorded and reported annually. Overall, the total budget for the entire project duration stands at £1,346,731.78 with a total DFID contribution of £958,978. Funding from other sources totalled £387,753.79. Project funds have been effectively utilised as cost drivers have been considered in disbursement of funds.

Project activities conducted in due time include the following:

1. 4,500 women were enrolled at an annual figure of 1,500 from 2014 to 2016.
2. Baseline and endline data on beneficiaries were collected.
3. Rights education and life skills trainings were delivered to beneficiaries.
4. Trainings on business and vocational skills were conducted.
5. Cooperative development training was delivered to Year 1, 2 and 3 beneficiaries.
6. 35 Cooperative groups and 10 VSLAs were formed and provided mentoring and follow-up support.
7. International Women Day was commemorated annually
8. External research into the effectiveness of the Men's Empowerment Programme
9. The MEP manual was reviewed and revised to fit local context and was launched in 2015.
10. Radio jingles targeted at men were aired for 3-6 months annually to support implementation of MEP.
11. Quarterly community meetings were held throughout the project duration.

The expected outcome of the project is that *"socially-excluded women in Enugu have increased income and leadership roles in the local community"*. Analysis of data gathered on beneficiaries revealed a mean income of ₦2,479 (\$8.13), standard deviation of ₦1,574 (\$5.2), and a maximum income of ₦18,000 (\$59.02) at baseline. At endline, the mean income rose to ₦16,664 (\$54.64), while the standard deviation rose to ₦13,885 (\$45.53) and the maximum income rose to ₦150,000 (\$491.88). Findings from the FGDs also confirmed this assertion as majority of the women stated that their incomes have increased and they are now economically empowered to take care of themselves and

their families. Discussions held with the women revealed that many of them now have multiple sources of income.

Other milestones have also been achieved as findings revealed that men now have knowledge and understanding of women's rights and gender equality. Women organise community activities and women now use vocational skills gained to earn an income. Women also reported that there has been clear improvement in positive attitudes and knowledge regarding women's rights.

Although the milestone on percentage of MEP trainees who reported changes in knowledge and attitudes regarding women's rights was not fully met, findings from the field work revealed that men's attitude towards women's rights have improved as men now understand the need to support the empowerment of women in view of the immense contributions they are able to make to the household as well as to the growth of the local community.

Extent to which project understands cost drivers and manages these in relation to performance requirements

WfWI's has internal policies and procedures that drive project effective project management. Its procurement policies were strictly adhered to in dealing with contractors and vendors which ensured effective expenditure of funds on purchases and quality of various inputs while ensuring savings. The overall principles of the procurement policy are:

- ✓ Obtaining price quotations, reviewing them against clear criteria and justifying the vendor choice;
- ✓ Providing for open competition where appropriate;
- ✓ Ensuring adequate segregation of duties in request, review, approval, and payment processes;
- ✓ Adhering to approved Delegation of Authority Limits; and
- ✓ Clearly documenting the procurement process.

In conclusion, working with local partners was found to be very efficient and cost effective and this ensured nominal payments for services to partners. See sections 4.4.4; 4.6.1 and 4.7.2 for more information on collaboration and its contributions to the project's success and deliverables.

4.6 Sustainability

4.6.1 Extent to which the project leveraged additional resources (financial and in kind) from other sources and the effect of this on the scale, delivery or sustainability of activities.

WfWI collaborated with other professionals, groups, CSOs etc. to ensure project sustainability and to cut costs while also ensuring quality delivery of the project. According to the project coordinator, the project collaborated with medical and legal professionals as well as non-profit groups in the delivery of training modules. Women's health was addressed and referrals were made for further treatment for more pressing health issues. Also, support on health/wellness and legal service was provided to project beneficiaries through these collaborative efforts. WfWI was able to leverage additional resources (both in cash and in kind) from the following sources:

- Zenith Insurance gave a donation that was committed to carrying out community leadership and advocacy training for 95 participants (women and men). Afterwards, participants shared their learnings with 1,622 other community members.

- MAC AIDS Foundation supported the review of the HIV/AIDS training manual in 2014.
- Training venues were provided for free by the project communities for all women's social and economic empowerment training sessions as well as the MEP sessions.
- FIDA provided training on legal matters and offered pro bono legal services and advice to beneficiaries and this enhanced access to justice on various issues;
- The Ministry of Human Capital Development and Poverty Reduction provided support in the area of vocational skills training for women and men.
- Tamar SARC provided support by creating awareness for women on sexual and reproductive rights and also empowered project communities with information on steps to take when sexual abuse occurs.
- Carosa Memorial Foundation Opi and Annunciation Hospital Emene supported the project by providing HIV counselling and testing services for the women
- Solar Sisters - Collaboration is on-going with Solar Sisters to introduce the use of clean energy to the women.

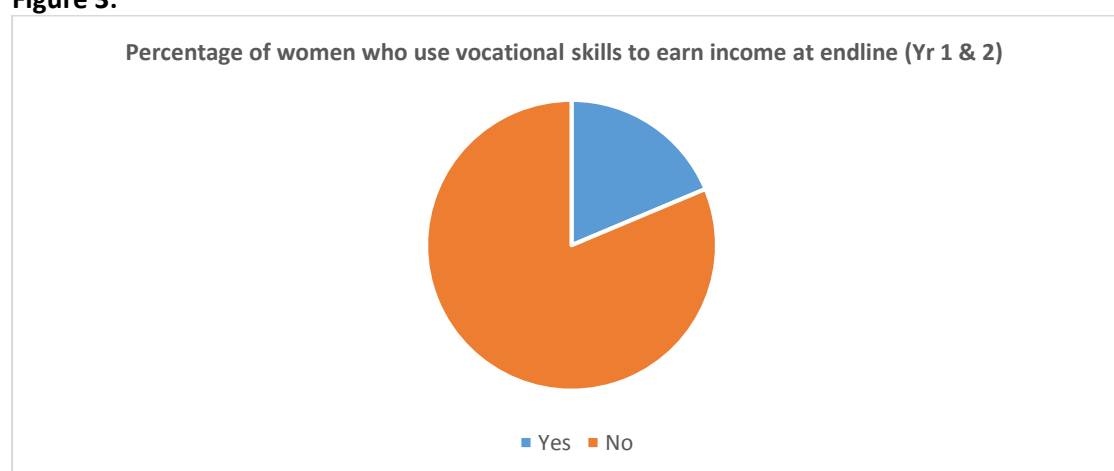
Women were introduced to commercial banks and have since opened accounts which many did for the very first time. This is an asset that cannot be taken away from the project beneficiaries.

The evident changes in the lives of beneficiaries have improved the communities and community members profess being better able to tackle issues of rights, violence, drugs, crimes, health, rape, etc. For instance, WfWI reported in September 2014 (GPAF Interim Report) that:

"Women in Obukpa took steps after their discussion on 'Rebuilding the Society' to nominate representatives to meet the traditional leader to talk about the security of their community, which they had concerns about due to the recent incidence of rape. The community thereafter authorised the women to be in charge of some security issues that were formerly in the hands of men".

Beneficiaries consulted in the process of gathering data for the evaluation, reported that the project has improved their lifestyles and empowered them in different ways through the life skills training, vocational and business training and men's engagement.

Figure 3:



Source: M&E data set

Findings as presented in Figure 3 and based on WfWI M&E data revealed that beneficiaries (81.3%) are now using skills acquired during vocational skills training sessions to run their own businesses and

run them successfully - a far cry from baseline studies which showed that very few women (18.7%) used vocational skills to earn income. Women in the target communities are supporting themselves and their families and contributing to socio-economic development of their communities.

4.6.2 To what extent is there evidence that the benefits delivered by the project will be sustained after the project ends?

Steps were found to have been taken to ensure sustainability of the project. For instance, women have successfully formed cooperative groups and VLSA. These groups were adjudged to be functioning well by the members and the trainers. Women have seen the benefits of working in groups.

Our communities have been empowered and we are ready to carry on with the WfWI project even after WfWI leaves our community. They have done us good and we understand the benefits of developing ourselves and our communities. (FGD Participant, at Enugu Ezike, Igbo Eze North LGA)

Another viable strategy and clear evidence of sustainability in this project, is the Training of Trainers approach used for implementing the MEP. The men were trained as advocates of women's rights and they used skills acquired during the training to mobilise and educate other men. These men are likely to continue to serve as community based resource for the propagation of human rights. This clearly aligns with the finding of the AIR longitudinal research which report showed that *"multiple participants specifically referenced the lesson around becoming individual allies to women and spoke of the importance of men and women working together, particularly for enhancing prosperity and aiding in community development"*.

Possible challenges to the sustainability of some of the components of the project are access to finance for business expansion and access to adequate mentoring support for newly formed cooperative and VSLA groups occasioned by the relocation of the office of WfWI from Enugu to Jos. Information gathered in the course of the evaluation however reveal that there is a system in place that will ensure continuous monitoring of all DFID-funded project-related activities over the next one year. This is adjudged enough time for the newly-formed groups to become independent. In addition, another sustainability plan that was built into the project is the training of some members of the VSLA as village agents, who have also formed a group and are holding regular meetings.

4.7 OUTCOME OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

4.7.1 Project beneficiaries have multiple sources of income

Beneficiaries who had no jobs or had only one source of income ventured into different vocational activities following leaning from the project. This led to increased earnings and the adoption of saving culture by beneficiaries.

Project beneficiaries play leadership role in their communities

Analyses of the M&E data set revealed that women who reported that they have been able to run for leadership positions increased from 8.5% at baseline to 29.1% at endline and 4% of the women have been able to obtain leadership positions. This finding corroborates finding from the field. According to a respondent,

“Women now have the right to join the Igwe’s cabinet and three women have now been allowed into the Igwe’s cabinet” (Female Participant FGD Session with Women at Mbu Akpoti, Isi Uzo LGA).

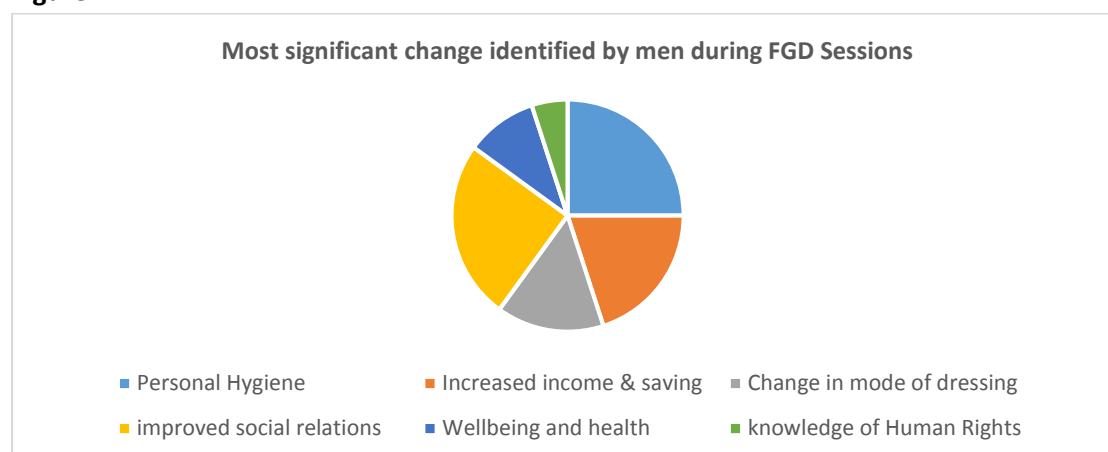
Women also report playing leadership role in promoting peace among couples and in the community generally. In responding to a question on women’s leadership role in the community, a woman leader had this to say:

“The women group intervene when a woman is beaten by her husband. We call the man to the village square and ask him to sit on the ground. We did this last year (2015). We have the backing of the Igwe to do that”. (LHI Respondent, Mbuamon, Isi Uzo LGA)

Most significant change

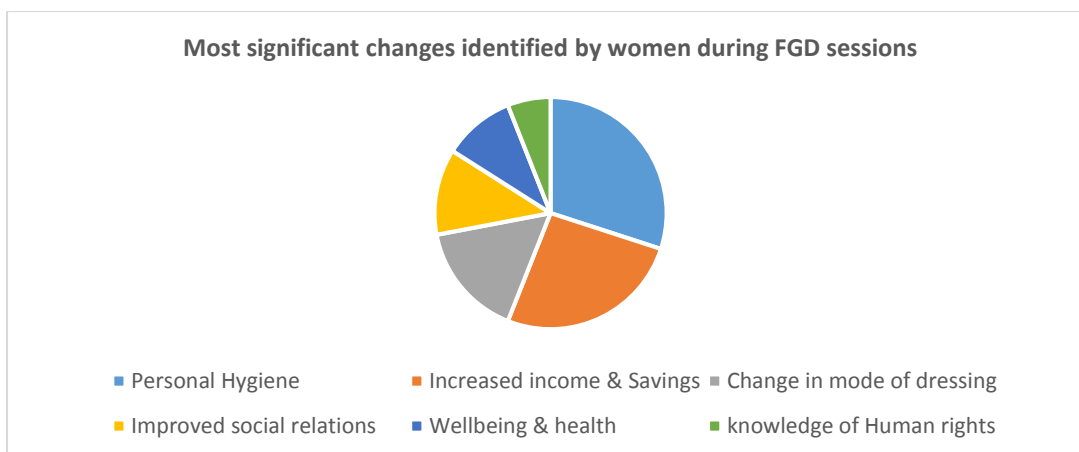
Respondents at the FGD sessions shared their opinions about the achievements of the project. A total of 7 FGD sessions (2 for men and 5 for women) were held, with 20 male and 50 female respondents in attendance. The most significant changes that the respondents highlighted during FGD sessions are as presented with the charts below:

Figure 4



The same number of men identified improved social relations in households (5) and improved personal hygiene (5) as the most significant change that occurred following implementation of the project. Only 4 men said increased income was the most significant change.

Figure 5



The assessment by women was slightly different. Personal hygiene resonated more among women as the most significant change with 15 out of 50 women ranking it higher than other issues. Increased income was the next (13 women) and change in mode of dressing (8 women). The least with both groups was knowledge of human rights. On the contrary the issue of increased income and ability to save resonated more among the life history interviewees (See Annex 13 for additional information).

4.7.2 Extent to which Project Built capacity of Civil Society Organisations

WfWI collaborated with Tamar Sexual Assault Referral Centre (Tamar SARC) in Enugu. The Manager of the centre confirmed that the project of WfWI facilitated the entry of Tamar SARC into some of the communities it had planned to reach with its activities. According to her, Tamar SARC may not have been able to go to some of the project sites because it is only WfWI that has the kind of vehicle that can ply the bad roads leading to the project communities. In response to the question how the processes of WfWI helped Tamar SARC to support the project effectively, the manager said:

"It actually did because the collaboration was a smooth one. Before they approached us, we had intentions of going into the communities. But when they came, they had this project and what they intended to achieve. We felt it was something we could key into, which will benefit us and them too. So they made it possible for us to join them often. They drafted their programmes for the month and then gave us the programme and we sent our staff. On days of the programmes, they picked up our staff in the office to the field and brought him back. It was like that until we finished that session with them".

Tamar SARC supported the project by creating awareness on sexual assault and what specific steps to take when an incidence of sexual assault occurs in the community. Interactions with women and men in the communities visited revealed that the information disseminated in this regard was clearly understood and considered useful by project beneficiaries. This was also confirmed by the Manager of the Centre when she noted that:

"Due to increased awareness people are more inclined to report cases of sexual abuse, although following through to secure justice is still a problem".

When asked what steps to take should an incidence of sexual assault occur, both female and male beneficiaries of the project were able to clearly mention Tamar SARC as the place to go.

The collaboration between WfWI and Tamar SARC helped to boost the work of Tamar SARC in the state. According to the manager,

"... looking at the time we had the collaboration with WfWI, I could say we had more cases from that area." (Indicating that if they had the opportunity earlier, more cases could have been reported)

In response to the question of how the collaboration between Tamar SARC and WfWI has enhanced the success of the project, a respondent said:

"I talked earlier about building capacity of people. Looking at the project, the objective was to build capacity in terms of equipping them with skills. But including us in the project went beyond that skill acquisition, because we had to equip people with the knowledge of sexual issues, which some of them were not informed about. And not only that - when we equipped them with that knowledge, they also started making good use of it by even reporting cases of sexual violence when they occurred. So I think if they had two objectives to achieve, this could be added as a third one. Because initially, maybe it wasn't part of the project, but bringing in the collaboration expanded the achieved results for them".

WfWI also collaborated with the International Federation of Female Lawyers (FIDA), individual practicing lawyers and medical doctors in raising awareness on legal and health rights and in the provision of pro bono legal services to women in the project communities. One of the staff of WfWI that was interviewed had this to say:

"We collaborate with medical professionals as well as legal practitioners in bringing the module to life so the women meet with doctors and sometimes get referrals to have a one-on-one consultation with doctors and knowing where they are coming from, they are well attended to by the medical personnel. Lawyers also give pro-bono services. We don't pay the professionals. We partner with FIDA, WACOL and Tamar SARC. This has strengthened it (the project) in lots of ways. Women with legal issues speak to lawyers who help to get them justice; doctors as well - like the case of the woman with pus coming out of her stomach".

The intervention of WfWI was timely in saving this woman's life as she was reported to have been with the condition for some time and unable to access necessary medical services.

4.7.3 Contribution to Capacity building of Women's Groups

At the early stages of the implementation of the project, WfWI learned that many women on the project shie

d away from joining cooperative societies, although they joined religious and age-group associations. They preferred to trade individually and this was partly why many of them were very poor. The introduction of appropriate training modules to the programme has yielded positive results in this area. As at the third year of the project, 35 cooperative groups and 10 Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA) have been formed and are functioning well. While five (5) of the cooperative groups have been registered with the State Government, four (4) of the VSLA have shared out and started a second cycle. These groups are monitored regularly by the staff of WfWI and measures have been put in place for the monitoring visits to continue after the project activities stops in December

2016. The emergence of these groups has helped to transform the lives of many women in the project communities such that they have become role models for those who have not been able to join.

4.7.4 Extent to which the project has built the capacity of WfWI Staff

The point must be made that the project methodology is not a new one to WfWI. However, the DFID team was on ground at the beginning of the project to work members of staff through an understanding of the expectations of DFID. This, according to the staff was a particularly useful process as it helped to clarify grey areas. All departments were involved in the planning process and this was highly empowering for staff.

The M&E officers were highly involved in the process of enrolling project beneficiaries with a number of lessons learnt in this regard, including the need to take extra steps to ensure that project beneficiaries are resident within project communities.

In implementing the project, members of staff and trainers met on Fridays to discuss project implementation-related issues. At these meetings, reports of progress, challenges and plans were reviewed and decisions were made. Members of staff found this to be very useful and empowering as it gave a very good sense of ownership and control. It allowed for cross-fertilization of ideas and helped project staff to deepen knowledge and understanding of issues.

Friday meetings were also used for in-house staff training. Staff reported having the opportunity of attending training sessions on different topics including, but not limited to: effective facilitation skills, management skills, budget development, village savings and loans principles, cooperative principles etc. Members of staff had opportunities of writing seminar papers and making presentations or training other members of staff fortnight. Some of the staff interviewed highlighted the need for staff exposure to external training in order to deepen their knowledge and to enhance their capacity to better respond to emerging issues.

Despite the positive achievements around capacity building of staff, some issues of concern were observed by the evaluators in relation to data analysis. The practice of collecting data in Nigeria and sending to the WfWI headquarters for analysis without involvement of local staff may not be a good practice if the capacity of M&E staff is to be developed locally. This may not only be disempowering, but may also mean underutilisation of skilled manpower which may not produce good value for money.

4.7.5 Project Contribution to Capacity Building of Local Leaders

The project has contributed immensely to building the capacity of local leaders especially as it concerns the promotion of the rights of women. The *Men's Engagement Programme* engages men as allies in women empowerment initiatives. It brings together male leaders in the community such as traditional rulers, religious leaders, customary court members, security agents including policemen, neighbourhood watch (vigilantes) etc. The implementation of this segment of the project was in stages. At the first level and on an annual basis, 50 male leaders were identified and trained to train others on women's rights issues. Each participant at this level selected 10 colleagues and trained them in the community. Some of the trainees came together and held joint training sessions for their colleagues. This strategy was found to be highly impactful. After the Level 1 training in 2016 (Project Year 3), the traditional ruler of Mbu made a policy declaration that any man in his cabinet that either

beats his wife or whose wife complains of suffering any form of domestic violence, will be removed from his cabinet.

Through the DFID fund, WfWI succeeded in enhancing leadership capacity to respond effectively to the security situation in Umuagama in Igbo Eze North LGA. In highlighting some of the changes in Umuagama following WfWI intervention, a female respondent had this to say:

“Armed robbers used to attack us and there were many instances of bloodshed. The WfWI team met with the Igwe (Traditional Ruler) and funds were raised to hire the neighbourhood watch to protect the community”.

4.7.6 People receiving support from the project that otherwise would not have received support

The project beneficiaries are mostly rural based women and men who ordinarily may not have access to the kind of support they got through the project. The communities were located in hard-to-reach areas. The roads were very bad and they had little or no government presence. These are not locations that NGOs will ordinarily want to go and implement projects. Apart from the stress of reaching these communities, the cost of reaching them is also high. As mentioned earlier, other NGOs remarked that *“only WfWI vehicles can go to such locations”*. Table 8 presents the number of beneficiaries of the various activities of the project. Following participation in the project, over 140 women have become members of village savings and loans association and are accessing financial resources to support the running of their businesses. This was new to the women.

Table 8: Number of Persons that benefited from the different activities of the project

S/N	ACTIVITY	YEAR 1		YEAR 2		YEAR 3	
		F	M	F	M	F	M
1.	Social Empowerment Training	1,468		1,467			
2.	Cooperative Development Training	1,376		1559		1600	
3.	VSLA Training	0		57		86	
4.	VSLA Agents Training	0		0		8	
5.	Vocational and Business Skills	1,468		1,467		1500	
6.	Piggery	95		69		63	
7.	Poultry Farming	754		505		777	
8.	Trading	414		656		561	
9.	Crop Farming	215		69		63	
10.	Health Awareness (Free HIV Counselling and Testing)	1,068					
11.	MEP Level 1		50		50		50
12.	MEP Level 2		453		473		
13.	MEP Level 3		611		893		

Source: WfWI Nigeria Office

One of the Trainers that was consulted in the course of generating data for the evaluation made the following remarks:

“In the area of income, most women had nothing doing. The common belief is ‘I am a wife so I don’t have to do anything’. Many of them have now learned how to raise birds, pigs and are now earning income. As the income comes, they now have respect in their family because they can also provide for one or two things that the husband was always threatening them with. In the area of trading, we have seen women who said ‘I have improved in my skills’. Before I don’t know how to calculate my profit and loss, but now I can do that. In the area of farming, women

have more yields. There is money in the pocket of the women because they are busy with skills we have taught them". (IDI Respondent, Female Trainer)

This submission was found to corroborate the submissions of the project beneficiaries. According to one of them:

- *"Before WfWI, I looked like a seventy year old woman. I was looking tattered. If you see my picture, I looked like a dead woman. But now I have been revived. Before I used to make small money and I could not even save. But now, even if I make two Naira, I can save one Naira and use one Naira to solve my problems. My blood pressure was 201 against 140 (before WfWI), but now my blood pressure is normal. Before if I was sick, I used to go to the farm even though I would not get anything. But now I know when to go to the farm and how to get good output. And how to take care of my body. ...It is from the Savings Scheme we created that I borrowed ₦10,000 to invest in the poultry business that I am doing. After the initial investment, I made ₦40,000. I invested the money to buy chicken and feeds, and now I have ₦60,000 after selling the chicken". (LHI, Mbu Akpoti, Isi Uzo LGA)*

When asked what kinds of people are able to join the programme, the same participant said:

- *Only the poor and the less privileged women were allowed to join. Teachers were never allowed to join, they were rejected. Even those that had something they were doing were rejected. It is only those that were idle, that were helpless that they allowed to join". (LHI, Mbu Akpoti, Isi Uzo LGA)*

All these attest to the fact that the project reached out to those who were in dire need of help.

4.7.7 Unintended Changes

The project has contributed greatly to behaviour change in the communities reached. One of the staff of WfWI reported that reduction in substance abuse was not one of the expected outputs of the programme ab initio. The need to address the problem arose when the women made a request for it to be addressed by the project. In her own words:

The training on the effect of substance abuse has really impacted on the neighbourhood watch (vigilante) group. I have not evaluated the outcome but from oral evaluation, talking to them after the training and observations during training, one can tell that the training really impacts them. For CBOs, the training on the effect of substance abuse has impacted their lives positively and they want to go off substances. Most of the men say they take substance to keep awake and be strong. While the training was going on, their heads were bowed. I asked questions after trainings and the feedback from the men is that, 'We didn't know that we were killing ourselves'.

Although it is difficult to attribute this directly to the project intervention in view of the short life of the project, respondents at an FGD session in Mbu Akpoti, Isi Uzo LGA reported that the project has contributed to a reduction in unwanted pregnancies.

"Before, our girls were always impregnated from nowhere, but the programme taught the women to take care of their daughters and unwanted pregnancies have reduced". (Female Participant, FGD session at Mbu Akpoti, Isi Uzo LGA).

This statement was corroborated by one of the staff who during an interview session made the point that the women who attended the family planning classes shared information on how they taught their married female children family planning.

One of the unintended negative outcomes of the project that emerged during FGD sessions held with men in Obukpa and Umuogbuagu communities was the feeling of marginalisation expressed by the men. They remarked that they felt somewhat left behind with the changes they observed in their wives who participated in the programme. Some men had hoped that the MEP would have components that were similar to the women's training programme. Although, it has not been established that this had a negative effect (such as intra household conflicts) on the outcome of the project, it is an important observation.

One of the unintended positive outcomes of the project is the fact many people attest to the fact that some women, who prior to coming in contact with the project dressed shabbily, are now always smartly dressed in their skirts and blouses. The following responses corroborate this finding:

After two weeks into the program he saw many positive changes in me. Before, you could not wear skirt and blouse as a married woman but now my husband buys for me (Female IDI Respondent, Mbu Akpoti, Isi Uzo LGA).

In response to a question on the difference between project beneficiaries and those who had no opportunity to interact with the project, one of the participants at an FGD session said:

"I am wiser than them. They only tie wrappers, they cannot wear skirts. They do not make their hair. They do not bathe every day". (Female Participant, FGD session at Umuagama, Igbo Eze North LGA)

As presented in the GPAF Annual report submitted in April 2015, upon commencement of the project in Umuagama community in January 2015, it was observed that *"some Churches have not allowed their qualified members (approximately 3 women) to be part of WfWI's programme based on the belief that the activities are ungodly"*.

4.7.9 Change in perception of men's knowledge of women's rights

Through the MEP, men in the project communities had access to information on women's empowerment and rights. The social dynamics in the three LGAs visited are quite different, hence the outcomes of the interactions were different on certain issues. For instance, Obukpa in Nsukka LGA is a university community, meaning many of the residents are well educated. In one of the FGD sessions held with men, 3 members of the group possessed Master's Degree, 2 men had Bachelor's Degree, 1 man had National Certificate of Education (NCE) and the last man had GCE "O" Level certificate. This level of literacy translated into a robust interview with a good understanding of the questions and a corresponding supply of information. While the men in Obukpa were more open to women's participation in community leadership following their engagement with the project, this was not the case in Enugu Ezike in Isi-Uzo LGA where men were found to have very strong traditional values, many of which do not favour the promotion of gender equality. While the community leader that was interviewed in Obukpa reported that "there are five women in his 26-member cabinet and 3 women with chieftaincy titles in the community", a leader from another community had a contrary view.

"No! The women are afraid and they say they don't want to follow men to where they go. In this Igbo Eze North, there is no Igwe with a woman in the cabinet. Tradition forbids it. There are many things we discuss that women should not hear. If they hear, they will broadcast it. There are 33 traditional rulers in Enugu Ezike and nobody has a woman in their cabinet. Even if I say

women should be included in the cabinet, the cabinet members will revolt and say women will go and leak our secrets. The problem is that we contribute too much money every time; that is, the cabinet members. For example, if a cabinet member dies, we pay N7,000 each and women will not be able to do this". (Traditional ruler of Umuogbo Agu Community in Igbo-Eze North LGA)

On a similar note, in responding to the question of whether a woman can inherit her father's/husbands property/land, a community leader made this statement:

"The thing never reach here o! She cannot inherit her father or husband's property. Our tradition does not allow it. If a man has only female children and he dies, an uncle or brother of the man will come to live in the house with the women. Nobody will drive them from their father's house but if the women marry, they cannot take their father's property to give their husbands". (IDI Respondent, Community leader of Enugu Ezike in Igbo Eze North LGA)

Although men's perception may not have changed in the 3 LGAs on the issue of women's inheritance rights, their perception about physical and sexual violence against women has changed tremendously. Discussions with women and men in the project communities revealed that many were of the opinion that cases of physical violence against women have reduced in recent times. Respondents reported better treatment of women and reduction in incidence of domestic violence in their communities following, interactions with the project. According to a Respondent:

"the way we treat our women before by beating them anyhow has changed." Another respondent at the same session reported that the *"number of family cases received has reduced drastically in the community."* (Male participant at an FGD session in Mbu Akpoti Community, Isi Uzo LGA)

4.7.10 Effects of the project on the wider community

Men and women in all communities visited had very positive reports about the project activities on their communities. In assessing the achievements of the project in Umuogbo Agu, the traditional ruler highlighted the following as some of the changes he had observed following the implementation of the project.

- *They bathe well. They are more knowledgeable.*
- *There are many businesses women have joined. Some make oil, brooms etc.*
- *There is increase in the quality of life. Now women buy things for personal use.*
- *Women no longer wait for their husbands but they get things they can buy themselves.*
- *Fighting between husband and wife has finished. It is an old story.*
- *Everything has changed since WfWI came. They now know their rights.*
- *Once things have changed for women, it will affect the men because they teach each other and the things that created conflicts like lack of respect have stopped.*
- *They have done everything. But I would advise that they should help in expanding trade e.g. poultry or piggery workers should join forces as a group and find a company to help them.*

The report of one of the project staff also corroborates the point made by this traditional ruler to the effect that "fighting between husbands and wives has finished" following the implementation of the project. According to her:

“We worked in one community where the Igwe attended our activities and commended the efforts of the project, saying that he has fewer cases to settle now”. (WfWI Project Staff)

One of the female respondents also attested to the fact that the awareness creation done by WfWI in their community has brought about strategic changes in Mbu Akpoti.

“Formerly, in a bad family, the woman could be held responsible for the man’s death. She would then be made to drink the water used in washing the man’s dead body but this does not happen anymore. This tradition stopped last year after the WfWI program. They opened our eyes and bought us out of bondage”. (Female IDI Respondent, Mbu Akpoti in Isi-Uzo LGA)

Although the project sought to empower women economically, many men have also benefited from the project. In recounting the benefits of the project, one of the respondents made the following remarks:

“My wife promised that whatever she learns from the programme she would teach me, and now my wife has taught me how to run a poultry business and I have 150 birds (broilers). I wasn’t doing this business before”. (Male IDI respondent in Obukpa, Nsukka LGA)

The traditional rulers and religious leaders interviewed expressed joy and satisfaction with the project intervention. In the words of one of the project staff:

“The religious leaders have watched our trainings closely because some of the training venues we use are their church environment and they would not have allowed us if they did not believe that what we are doing is in line with changing or helping the women to get their values right. And as for the traditional leaders also, because we pushed for women to be among the council/cabinet, they have seen us as change agents in the community because changing the community starts from changing the woman. We have joined hands to bring a change which they would not have been able to do otherwise. So they see us as part of them, especially six months into the training; that was when trust began to set in”.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Summary of achievements against evaluation questions

Relevance

Poverty remains a big issue in Nigeria with an inflation rate of 17.6% in the latter part of 2016 (NBS, 2016). The project prepared beneficiaries for the current state of economic recession. It is unimaginable what the social status of the beneficiaries would have been if they did not have the opportunities that the project provided them. The attention given to men in the project design and implementation has greatly enhanced women’s opportunities in some of the target communities with women having the confidence to run for leadership positions. The project has made meaningful contributions to the MDG Goals 1 and 3.

Effectiveness

One major conclusion that the evidence and insights presented so far enable us to make with much confidence is that the methodology used by WfWI in Enugu State for addressing poverty issues is a viable and adaptable one for similar communities in Nigeria. The findings of the final independent evaluation largely corroborate the contents of the progress reports that WfWI Nigeria generated over

the 3-year period of implementing the project. The results of the project are a clear confirmation of the fact that the DFID fund has been well utilised.

Efficiency

The project has been successful in meeting its targets within allocated time and budget. Existing facilities in project communities were effectively utilised to cut costs while ensuring that acceptable standards were not compromised.

Sustainability

From what was seen and heard from the field, the project that was implemented with DFID funds is assessed to be a sustainable one. The beneficiaries have started to use the skills and knowledge acquired to break grounds. The skills and knowledge acquired by project beneficiaries cannot be taken away from them. The subtle changes that are occurring following the interventions implemented with DFID funds are lifelong.

Outcome

The project performed far beyond 90% in relation to most of the performance indicators (13 out of 19). Some performance reports were not available as at the time of writing this report. With the MEP and the awareness creation on fundamental rights, knowledge of where to seek legal aid and linkage with existing support mechanisms in the state, the project has made tremendous contributions to the process of empowerment and gender equality in the target communities.

5.2 Summary of achievements against rationale for UK Aid Direct funding

The overall rationale for the project was the existence of pervasive poverty, food insecurity, gender discrimination which makes women and girls to have worse life chances than their male counterparts, among other factors. The project succeeded in putting women at the centre of the intervention and built their capacity for improved livelihoods as well as created an enabling environment for them to be involved in decision making both at the household and community levels.

At the end of the project:

- The mean income which stood at ₦2,479 (\$8.13) at baseline (for the 3 years) increased to ₦16,664 (\$54.65) at endline, implying that the wide gaps in levels of income among beneficiaries have narrowed down remarkably.
- Women who had no savings among all beneficiaries in the 3 years had reduced to 1.8% at endline from 47.8% at baseline.
- Women who had food insecurity reduced to 24.2% at endline from 80.2% at baseline.
- Women who ran for leadership positions increased from 8.5% at baseline to 29.1% at endline.

5.3 Overall Outcomes and value for money of UK Aid Direct funded activities

The percentage change in the monthly income of women from baseline to endline (Year 1 & 2) demonstrates the success of the intervention of the programme and the fact that project funds were efficiently utilised. The WfWI M&E data set revealed that at graduation, there was no respondent without income; maximum income at baseline was ₦18,000 (\$59.02), whereas the maximum income at endline was ₦95,000 (\$311.53) in Year 2 and ₦150,000 (\$491.88) in Year 3. It is important to note that the mean income rose by 502 percent at graduation.

6.0 LESSONS LEARNED

6.1 Key Lessons from Year 1

In the progress report for year 1 WfWI indicated the following lessons learnt from the project:

- Adequate sensitisation of grass roots custodians of culture and youth is vital for moving forward in efforts at promoting gender equality. Without the buy-in of these influential individuals in communities, it is difficult for women to make significant changes in their life, hence the importance of the MEP component of the project.
- Awareness creation is a fundamental tool for change. It was realised that once women are well informed, they are empowered and can use the information gathered to advocate for and defend their actions positively

Key lessons from Year 2

- The timing of the trainings was very significant in determining the level of participation by participants especially the males. Poor attendance at the Level 3 MEP training in 2014 informed the projects decision to hold training sessions on weekends, before the rainy season and well before the Christmas season is in view. It was learnt that weekdays are not the best time for sessions, nor is November as many traders are busy preparing for Christmas business.

Key lessons from Year 3

- Cooperatives and business groups facilitate women's access to business investment and growth opportunities. Initial anecdotal evidence suggests that VSLA are stronger than traditional informal saving circles, and can help increase project sustainability by allowing more women to save and access credit.

Some other lessons that were reported and observed:

- The MEP manual was adapted to the local contents of the communities and this enhanced the success of this component of the project
- Enormous potentials exist within rural communities to support the success of development initiatives. They only need to be placed at the drivers' seat and transformation will begin and be visible within a very short time
- Collaboration with CSOs/NGOs that have expertise in other areas contributed immensely to the achievement of the project goals
- Project design should envisage and plan to address women's strategic needs and remove barriers to the realisation of potentials. The provision of crèche at women training centres is a key support mechanism for women.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for WfWI

For future projects, deliberate efforts should be made to seek out vulnerable women e.g. women with disabilities, women with dependents with disabilities, women who have experienced domestic violence, HIV positive women etc. in similar projects in the future.

It is one thing to know one's rights, but it is another to acquire the agency to be able to demand the actualisation of such rights. More work needs to be done within the project communities especially in

the area of violence against women in order to enable women report cases of Violence Against Women to the right agencies and actualise their fundamental rights through the justice system.

There is a need to strengthen understanding of strategic project related issues among project staff e.g. there should be a common understanding of what vulnerability and marginalisation mean within the context of the project.

Local M&E staff should be involved in data analysis.

Similar programme in the future should address strategic needs that can support women's realisation of their full potential. The project highlighted the need provide some form of mobile crèche (with toys and learning aids) and carers where children of nursing mothers that are on the programme can be engaged in an atmosphere of fun and light teaching while their mothers are being trained. This will ensure maximum concentration and participation by trainees, since they know that their children are being cared for while their training is on. Community women can provide such services at very low rates.

Recommendations for DFID

There is a need to support communities to acquire advocacy skills for effective engagement of government on the provision of access roads as well as other infrastructural services to facilitate trading between neighbouring communities.

Communities that were not privileged to benefit from the programme feel marginalised and yearn for the project to be extended to them. The need arises therefore, for a scaling-up of the programme to accommodate more communities and spread the benefits. DFID can support capacity building programmes by WfWI to train poverty alleviation-focused NGOs in the use of its model so that others can build on the work done in Enugu state and environs, more so when WfWI is pulling out of the state.

There is a need for continuous education of the communities on the rights of women and the need to do away with negative traditional practices (especially on female inheritance). There is the need for more work to be done in Enugu Ezike, Igbo Eze North LGA to address deep-rooted traditional cultural practices and beliefs that support women subordination.