



United Nations Population Fund



RAPID GENDER REVIEW OF UNFPA BOTSWANA

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FOREWORD

Gender inequalities and violence against women and girls create greater consequences for women's well-being, rights, empowerment, and health including their reproductive health. Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment is a goal in itself and is also central to achieving success on sexual and reproductive health (SRH) outcomes. As part of efforts to be accountable, effective and efficient in achieving its gender outcomes within the broader SRH mandate, UNFPA Botswana Country Office participated in an agency level rapid gender reviews conducted to establish the capacity of the agencies on gender programming.

The rapid gender review was conducted as part of the Gender Review for the UN Botswana Partnership Framework (UNBPF) 2017-2021, implemented through the UN Joint Gender Programme. For Botswana, the UN Gender Scorecard as the tool used for the UNBPF gender review was adapted to be a 'Gender Scorecard Plus' to facilitate gender reviews at both the UNBPF level and the UN agency level. This meant that in addition to using the UN Gender Scorecard for UNBPF review, the 2013 UNICEF Gender Programmatic Review tool was used to guide agency level gender reviews. The UNFPA gender review focussed on agency efforts towards achieving gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment. It provided an opportunity to assess the agency's performance on mainstreaming gender and promoting gender equality.

The findings reflected the Country Office's commitment towards gender equality. However, more needs to be done to take advantage of the existing communication opportunities and platforms to promote gender equality as a key factor in achieving universal access to SRH. The review also point to the need to strengthen the use of existing gender tools like the Gender Equality Marker to facilitate tracking of the Country Office's efforts on gender programming. The other area for improvement is the staff capacity on gender mainstreaming. The findings of this review provide valuable learning for the Country Office to improve on the design and implementation of programmes aimed at addressing gender inequality within the SRH mandate.



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PART I: INTRODUCTION

The UN team in Botswana, under the UN Joint Gender Programme, jointly supported a Gender Review of the new United Nations Botswana Partnership Framework (UNBPF) through the use of the UNCT Performance Indicators for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women – ‘the UN Gender Scorecard’. The UN Gender Scorecard assesses how well gender equality has been mainstreamed through the UNDAF cycle and how the UNDAF can strengthen gender programming in alignment with UN commitments to gender equity.

In addition, the Joint Gender Programme identified the need for rapid gender reviews at agency levels and has therefore adopted key dimensions of UNICEF’s Gender Programmatic Review Tool to facilitate this process. The UNICEF’s Gender Review Tool consists of five key areas of analysis:

1. Key Area 1: Accountability and Partnership
2. Key Area 2: Capacity and Knowledge
3. Key Area 3: Programming and Financial Resources
4. Key Area 4: Communication and Advocacy
5. Key Area 5: Staffing and Organizational Culture

UNFPA Context

Gender equality is a central principle of UNFPA’s work. The UNFPA goal is to achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and promote reproductive rights. Promotion of gender equality and non-discrimination is a key factor in the realization of reproductive rights, reduction of poverty and achievement of sustainable development. UNFPA supports mainstreaming of gender in SRH programmes, including addressing gender based violence (GBV) as a human rights violation. UNFPA has a specific outcome on gender: *‘Advanced gender equality, women’s and girls’ empowerment, and reproductive rights, including for the most vulnerable and marginalized women, adolescents and youth’*.

The methodology used for UNFPA’s rapid gender review was conducted through:

- Document review of key organisations programme documents and reports
- Staff interviews and discussions. The Assistant Representative, Mareledi Segotso, together with three staff members Kealeboga Kelly Dambuza (NPO-Gender), Keetile (NPO-Population & Development) and Kefilwe Koogotsitse (NPO-ASRH) were interviewed.

The UNFPA review focussed on three of the five key areas of analysis as follows: *Accountability and Partnership; Capacity and Knowledge; and Programming and Financial Resources.*

PART II: KEY FINDINGS

Key Area One: Accountability

The Country Office (CO) expresses its commitment to gender equality in a very visible and concrete manner. The following are just some of the examples of this commitment:

The Country Office (CO) has been the leading agency on gender in Botswana for the past years. The Assistant Country Representative demonstrates exceptional commitment to gender in the UNCT. UNFPA is the **managing agent for the UN Joint Programmes on GBV and Gender Mainstreaming**. The Assistant Representative chairs the Technical Working Group (TWG) for the Joint Gender Programmes (JGP). Two more UNFPA staff members (Gender and Population & Development) sit on this TWG and provide much needed and valued coordination and technical support to the implementation of the UNJGP. This includes monitoring and reporting on both financial and programme progress and management of UN-driven initiatives under the UNJGP. The Joint Evaluation of Joint Programmes on Gender Equality in the UN System has UNFPA listed as one of the top managing agents in regional and global joint gender programmes. From the evidence, it is clear that this commitment, performance and capacity are mirrored in the Botswana CO.

As part of its gender mainstreaming efforts, UNFPA actively participates in the process of developing the 11th National Development Plan for Botswana to strengthen integration of gender, SRH and population dynamics. The recent visit of the Regional Director of UNFPA to Botswana resulted in negotiating for an opportunity to further review the final draft of the **11th National Development Plan** to enhance mainstream of gender. UNFPA convened a review session with UN Women and Gender Affairs Department and submitted to Government detailed comments to strengthen gender integration in the NDP11.

The CO also collaborated with UN Women and the Gender Affairs Department to convene the Botswana gender sector for input in the nation's **Vision2036 development framework**.

UNFPA supports the Government on reporting on key regional and international gender and human rights instruments. The CO was instrumental in the preparation of the latest **Botswana CEDAW Report** and continues to support development of the **annual SADC Gender Protocol Barometer** for documenting Botswana's progress in achieving the provisions of this Protocol. UNFPA will further provide technical support to the Gender Affairs Department for the domestication of CEDAW.

1. Joint Evaluation of Joint Programmes on Gender Equality in the United Nation System, Final Synthesis Report, November 2013
2. UNFPA Inception Report, Conducting Rapid Assessment on Adolescent Pregnancies in Botswana, August 2016

UNFPA is embarking on a **rapid assessment**, with the aim of collecting data on **school drop outs due to pregnancies**. This assessment is intended to inform the development of a national strategy on reducing adolescent pregnancies. 'Education Statistics in Botswana also show that school dropout due to pregnancy is the most common form of drop out after primary school.' Although rapid, research initiatives like these strengthen UNFPA's knowledge and capacity to influence policy on gender, education and adolescent reproductive health.

The CO **shares relevant gender information through a common drive for access by all officers**. Information on latest developments and research on gender are regularly circulated to other staff members through emails by either the Assistant Representative or the Gender National Programme Officer.

The mandatory use of the **Gender Equality Marker (GEM)** as a tool for tracking resource allocations and expenditures on gender is used by the CO. The process of rating each planned activity's contribution to gender is undertaken by the respective programme managers (for Gender, SRH and Population & Development). However, staff acknowledged that there is minimal tracking and reporting against the marker.

Key Area Two: Capacity, Knowledge & Gender Mechanism

It is compulsory for all programme officers in UNFPA to complete the **Distance Learning Course on Population Issues (DLPI)**. The course has 8 modules, including one on Gender Mainstreaming.

Gender related topics are part of the **weekly learning-hour sessions** intended to build staff capacity and knowledge on UNFPA mandate areas. At least one gender topic per quarter is presented and discussed during these sessions. The latest gender information from the UNFPA Regional Office and Head Quarters are shared with all programme staff.

The CO has a permanent **Gender National Programme Officer**. The Officer coordinates the UNJGP, facilitates implementation of the gender activities within the UNFPA mandate, and provides technical support to gender implementing partners. However gender mainstreaming in the CO programmes is currently a random process, therefore limiting robust gender responsive programming.

A look at the **CO's website** revealed that documents and information on the work of the CO on gender is slightly outdated. The CO is not taking advantage of its online communications for advocacy and to address critical issues on key gender, SRH and population related matters such as those affecting key populations or other marginalised groups. Valuable human stories reflected in publications should be posted online in order to promote open dialogue on these critical issues.

Key Area Three: Programmes

At the time of drafting this report, the CO was still in the process of preparing a new CPD (2017–2021) with its Results Framework. This review assessed the commitment toward gender responsive programming against the current CPD (2010-2016).

UNFPA is implementing its programmes through three components: (a) sexual reproductive health and rights; (b) gender equality; and (c) population and development. The gender equality component has two outputs:

- The first output relates to the strengthening of the institutional and technical capacity of key gender institutions in the Government and civil society to accelerate gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive programming. The output is directly in line with the role UNFPA plays as lead and managing agent in the UNJP on gender mainstreaming and its results framework.
- The second output relates to the strengthening of institutional mechanisms to accelerate the prevention of and response to gender-based violence, again, directly in line with the results framework of the UNJP programme on GBV.

The two outputs demonstrate strong accountability to achieving gender equality through the CO programmes. Implementation of these programmes is done in collaboration with government and civil society partners.

Part III: Key Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Strengthen application of the Gender Equality Marker (GEM): The application of the tool requires the CO - including management - to have a thorough grasp of the guidelines and their application. Refresher orientation for staff on the tool and its value to tracking results against gender equality must be arranged

Encourage documentation: Compile and disseminate best practices and lessons learned on gender, and share this information on the CO website or in the Shared Drive. Encourage staff to share one story each quarter or use already prepared materials.

Create an environment for learning: Make it compulsory for all staff to complete the online course on gender called 'Gender Equality, UN Coherence and You'. Increase frequency of gender discussions during the CO 'learning hours' initiative.

Increase the knowledge and capacity of staff regarding all the dimensions and struggles for the LGBTI community and HIV/Aids: This can be done through the brown bag lunches, distribution of material of relevant definitions and terminology, or inviting the community for open discussions.



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