

Rising Up! Promoting Congolese Women's Land Access and Preventing GBV in Eastern DRC (Rising Up!)

Resilient, Inclusive & Sustainable Environments (RISE) Challenge

JULY 2023

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

THE IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION

NORC conducted an IE* of Rising Up!, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a recipient of a RISE Challenge grant, funded by USAID's Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Hub (USAID GenDev), to help women obtain customary land titles while preventing and reducing economic gender-based violence.

Evaluation Questions:

1

Is the activity design based on local context and flexible to achieve results on the ground?

2

Is the activity reaching participants they are meant to target?

3

Is the activity achieving sustainability?

LESSONS LEARNED

What Worked?

- ▲ **Flexible design** – for example, the decision to involve more men and youth – was critical to activity success.
- ▲ **Rigorous monitoring and feedback** led to important changes in the activity's approach.
- ▲ Engagement with an important customary leader helped to **mitigate resistance** in the community.
- ▲ The activity reportedly had **positive effects** on economic and psychological violence, like a reduction in cases and new knowledge of service providers.
- ▲ The activity **connected the community** to an organization that provides services to GBV survivors.

What Did Not Work?

- ▼ Despite efforts to negotiate them down, **land title fees** were a barrier to participation.
- ▼ Some women who paid land title fees (sometimes after taking a bank loan) **did not receive titles** because they could not afford to travel to collect them from government offices.
- ▼ Change agents **experienced backlash** in the community due to undelivered land titles.
- ▼ Change agents reported that their **stipends and equipment to carry out activities were insufficient**.
- ▼ The activity **timeline was too short** to achieve all its goals.

*Data collection included reviews of 10 activity documents and 6 FGDs and 9 KIIs with USAID, Resonance, implementing partners, program participants, and local experts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Implementation Evaluation Question 1



Continue to engage men, boys and community leaders. Their backing can support the safety and success of interventions addressing economic GBV.



Ensure sufficient time to see process completion. Ensure promised outcomes for participants that invest in processes. Specifically, for interventions that reform or put in place new systems of natural resource governance, these systems must be fully institutionalized by the end of the grant period.



Budget for fair compensation of participants. Include logistical (e.g., transportation) and practical (e.g., refreshments) supports.

Implementation Evaluation Question 2



Include a range of participants to secure wider community support. Engaging a broad base of community members can help prevent resistance and might foster greater assistance and solidarity for women affected by economic GBV.



Monitor emerging effects and use data to adapt programs. Strong monitoring for this activity allowed program implementers to identify and mitigate resistance from eldest sons.

Implementation Evaluation Question 3



Prevent adverse outcomes by ensuring ethical activity completion and activity sustainability. Especially when the program involves investments by people with limited resources, implementing agencies must make careful exit plans to ensure that the activity does not have adverse outcomes. For example, for women who invested in land titles, follow-up actions should be conducted to ensure women receive titles they had paid for. Furthermore, to be ethical, grants that aim to sustainably change systems of natural resource governance and social norms must be longer than two years to give time for major shifts and to avoid harmful outcomes or backlash.

For more information about this evaluation, contact:

Jessica Wallach | wallach-jessica@norc.org or
Rachel Rosenberg | rosenberg-rachel@norc.org

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