

End of Assignment (MEAL) Report

Women Leadership Development in Uganda: A Case Study of the Female Future Program (FFP)



Octoville Development Company Limited

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End of Assignment (MEAL) Report

Introduction

The Women Leadership Development in Uganda: A Case Study of the Female Future Program (FFP) was an evaluation study project initiated by the Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE) with the support of the ICR Facility and delivered by the Octoville Development Company Limited. The project undertook the evaluation of the FFP against the backdrop of overarching business environment issues and highlighted findings based on efficiency, relevance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the program.

The Technical Assistance focused on 4 key areas:

- Program Evaluation
- Lessons Learned Development
- Success Stories Documentation
- Advocacy Research

An overview of the intervention logic is provided in Figure 1

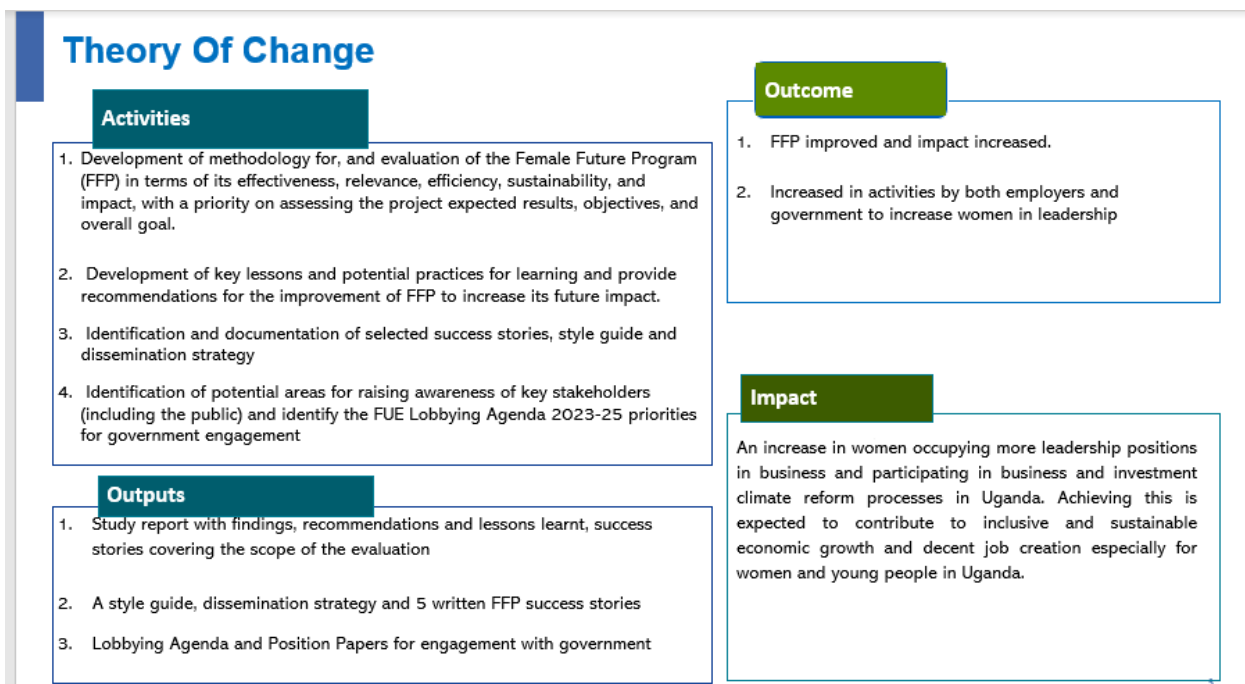


Figure 1: Intervention Logic

Overview of Delivery

The project was delivered in 5 phases that comprised: Intervention plan validation (Inception), Desk Review and Analysis, Qualitative and quantitative research through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) of the selected stakeholders, Diagnosis and reporting on findings with recommendations, report validation and project close out.

An overview of the programme approach and methodology is provided in Figure 2 below.

Planning Organization and Pre-Data Gathering Activities	Data Gathering	Diagnostics and Evaluation	Recommendations and Report Development
<p style="text-align: center;">Planning</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Data Gathering</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Programme Efficiency and</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Validated Study Recommendations</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct project kick-off meeting with Project Sponsor to reconfirm/validate expectations, objectives, scope, approach, and deliverables with key stakeholders. ▪ Organize required project resources and mobilize project team. ▪ Identify project risks and determine relevant mitigation strategies. ▪ Agree project governance and reporting structures. ▪ Develop the project inception report. 	<p>Desk Reviews</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Desk review of relevant documents: The consultant collected and reviewed all relevant documentation, activities, and reports; including past self-assessment reports; financial reports, publications, and training materials. 2. Other similar projects across the globe were also identified and reviewed to identify best practices and or benchmark criteria. 3. Desk review of legal and other political conditions that influence women leadership in Uganda was conducted. <p>Focus Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public and private stakeholders that have sponsored participants for the FFP. ▪ Past and Intending Participants of the FFP ▪ Other Private and Public Sector Stakeholders in the labour market in Uganda. ▪ Size of FGDs was between 10 - 20. <p>Key Persons Interviews (KPIs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key Person Interviews (KPIs) were also conducted with key stakeholders in the labour market in Uganda. ▪ Size of KPIs was between 7-10. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluation of the FFP for Effectiveness and Resource Efficiency ▪ Statements on implementation efficiency compared to other similar programmes. ▪ Evaluation of the Business Environmental challenges hindering women from aspiring & thriving in leadership positions in Uganda. <p style="text-align: center;">Evaluation of Programme Competitiveness and Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluation of Market Competitiveness (content, delivery, and pricing), Market Size and Demand Features for the FFP. ▪ Evaluation of environmental contexts that affect the programme implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Document findings from desktop reviews, interviews and focus group sessions. ▪ Develop draft report of key findings and recommendations. ▪ Conduct stakeholder engagement workshop to discuss key findings and recommendations. ▪ Update and finalise report based on feedback from project workshop.
<p style="text-align: center;">Pre-Data Gathering Activities</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and validate interview frameworks. ▪ Agree and validate interview questions for key stakeholders. ▪ Engage FUE and local partners to develop information on operational contexts within Uganda. ▪ Select Representative sample to ensure minimal selection bias. ▪ Identify target interview respondents. ▪ Agree interview documentation templates and logistic arrangements. ▪ The evaluation team will develop, in consultation with the FUE team, a logic model of how FUE's interventions are expected to lead and improve national and local strategies in mitigating and adapting evolving opportunities for women leadership. 			
		<p style="text-align: center;">Development of Key Lessons</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and or Development of success criteria, determining internal and external factors. • Analysis of emerging patterns, trends, and demand factors. 	
		<p style="text-align: center;">Success Stories Development</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identification of Success Stories. ▪ Development of Style Guide for Success story dissemination 	
		<p style="text-align: center;">Advocacy and Lobbying Objectives</p>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Based on findings on internal and broader political economic contexts, global development, comparative global benchmarks and best practices, the consultant developed advocacy and lobbying objectives that will guide future FUE lobbying agenda. ▪ Other Interventions that strengthen the capacity of FUE to strengthen partnerships will also be identified. 	

Figure 2: Work Approach and Methodology

Phase 1: Intervention Plan Validation (Inception). Following the introduction of Octoville to the FUE team by the ICR Facility and series of meetings to discuss and agree on the methodology and workplan for the study, the inception report was developed. It contained the defined scope and objectives of the study, theory of change, work approach and methodology, key assumptions and critical success factors of the project.

Phase 2: Desk Review and Analysis. The desk review focused on the delineation of the contextual framework of the study, which include literature on gender equality in the global workplace and best practice recommendations, a review of the state of gender parity in Uganda (policies and legal frameworks), review of the use of quotas in resolving gender equality in public leadership position and in corporate boards. The review also evaluated the FFP curriculum, governance structure, previous evaluations and compared the programme content, structure and pricing with other similar programmes designed to promote female leadership in the workplace.

We collected and reviewed all relevant documentation: FFP activities, reports, past baseline/self-assessment reports, deliverables from project activities, e.g., published reports and training materials, and government, media, academic publications. Authorities in the subject matter of women leadership in Africa and other relevant nations were cited such as:

- Women, Business and Law Report, 2022
- AfDB Group Uganda Country Gender Profile
- World Bank Publications on Gender Parity
- OECD Report on Quotas in Gender Equality
- Quota Systems in Gender Equality Literature
- Global Data on National Parliament
- UN Women Report
- FUE Website
- Past FFP Publications

Phase 3: Primary Data Collection and Analysis. A full study protocol was developed to guide data collection using Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Surveys. The main study population was FFP participants, FFP resource persons, implementing partners and industry experts in Uganda. The goal was to within the broader context of evaluating women leadership development in Uganda, determine the FFP's programme performance in terms of efficiency, relevance, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

The study adopted a stratified multi-stage cluster sampling strategy to inform the selection of FFP participants while a purposive sampling strategy was adopted for selection of other participants.

FFP participants were stratified first by sector. Participants' sectors were categorised as:

- Primary (natural resources and agricultural industries),
- Secondary (construction, utilities and manufacturing industries)
- Tertiary (service rendering industries), and
- Quaternary

Summary of Interviewed Participants

35 respondents were interviewed in the study representing FFP past participants (18), Industry experts (7), FFP resource persons (7), FFP Aspirant (1), Sponsoring Organisation (1), and Implementing Organisation (1). Of the 18 past FFP participants, half were self-sponsored, and the other half were sponsored by their organisations. Of the 18 past FFP participants, 10 were from the private sector, 7 from the public sector and one from NGO. Out of the 10 from the private sector, 3 were from manufacturing, 2 each from Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), Consultancy and the Banking and Finance sector. One was from the Oil and Gas sector.

The Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) focused on past and future participants of the FFP, other private and public sector stakeholders in the labour market in Uganda. Perceptions and experience of respondents regarding the business environment issues affecting women leadership in Uganda were assessed.

For the FFP Participants, their experience and perspectives of the efficiency, relevancy, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the FFP in Uganda were evaluated. Their perceptions, knowledge, and experience regarding local sociocultural and political contexts that influence the quantity and quality of women leadership in Uganda were also evaluated.

The qualitative data were in the form of audio-recorded discussion and summary notes. Thematic analysis was employed in the data analysis.

Diagnosis and Reporting on Findings and Recommendations

The following business environment issues were identified as major constraints to women leadership in Uganda based on the FGDs, KIIs and the survey deployed:

1. Capacity
2. Workplace culture
3. Gender Based Violence (GBV)
4. Workplace bias
5. Policy
6. Workplace supporting systems

The Key Recommendations based on Study Findings

For the Wider Business Environment

1. Increase Promotion of Women in Leadership/Management Programmes and Trainings: A Women in Management/Leadership curriculum be developed and inculcated into the tertiary education curriculum
2. Implementation of Voluntary Quota System in Corporate Boards: A voluntary quota system promoted by FUE and similar stakeholders could significantly increase female representation in corporate boards. A voluntary quota of 50% is recommended.
3. Increase Advocacy for Policies and Laws that Provide Women with Equal Administrative Authority over Assets During Marriage: Policies and laws that provide women with equal administrative authority over assets during marriage would significantly increase their capacity to contribute to society
4. Increase Advocacy for Policies and Laws that protect women during and After Pregnancy

For FFP and Similar Training Programmes

5. Development of a shorter module training, that can be completed in a shorter time frame to make it the training more affordable.
6. Inclusion of some other course components such as emotional intelligence, strategic thinking, networking skills, and time management skills. Other recommended topics include digital, and ICT based topics that are relevant to effective leadership such as effective use of social

- media, Office Apps, Digital Marketing, Content Creating, among others
7. Inclusion of case studies and real-life board session simulation videos. This will enable female leaders understand board room procedures and equip them with skills to navigate their ways through boardroom politics and heated arguments during such sessions.
 8. Collaboration with prominent tertiary institutions for the recognition, and possible accreditation, of women leadership training leadership programme. This would increase the recognition and awareness of the programme by potential participants as well as local and international employers. It would also increase uptake of the programme as its affiliate institutions would serve as marketing agents.
 9. Strengthen collaboration with employers to engender in-firm management development interventions that support women to gain management experience
 10. Step Down Training: FFP and similar training can be stepped down to train fresh graduates, junior-mid level women in management to provide and equip them with requisite skills and knowledge to thrive in leadership roles, C-Suite, and subsequently in board positions. Mainstreaming a women-in-business curriculum into the training of university graduates and WIL Fellowship already identified in the lobbying agenda, will achieve these objectives
 11. Extend the reach of the programme to women in other regions of the country; the FFP has been targeted at women in the city centre, Kampala Uganda to be precise. The FFP and other similar programmes may collaborate with past participants of the FFP who have moved away from the city centre to provide trainings to other women in areas where the FUE's presence and reach is lacking
 12. Post-training support and refresher events/courses: The FFP and similar programmes will benefit immensely from developing post-training support for participants. Most of the past participants rated FFP poorly in this regard. While participants acknowledged that they have received support at a time from some resource persons and co-participants after the training, there is no proper structure to make such support accessible to all past participants
 13. Develop Low-cost Training for Women in the Primary Sector: Increasing the impact of the FFP and similar programme might include identifying low-cost training interventions that can serve more women, particularly in the primary industries and scaling the programme to more women in the secondary, tertiary, and quaternary industries with larger GDP per capita
 14. Effective Database Management of participants: FUE and similar organisations need a database management system that tracks past participants and resource persons and updates their data regularly. The database will also serve as a pool of professionals and board candidates that can be recommended to organisations and institutions
 15. More visibility/advertisement for the programme: the FFP is not known outside of some circles which is small, and the programme currently relies on referrals by past participants. FFP and similar programme will benefit more from collaborating with more organisations and association of human resource practitioners in their countries. Effective and strategic use of the social media will also help to create more awareness about the programme.

For FUE Lobbying Agenda

To address the business environment issues identified from the study, three key lobbying agenda were recommended for the FUE to improve the business environment for women leadership in Uganda, these include:

1. The development of a Women in Leadership Fellowship (WILF) to help promote the FFP and similar women in leadership programmes
2. Development and Streamlining of Women in Business Training Curriculum in collaboration with the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) in Ugandan Tertiary education
3. The development and launch of the "Uganda Gender and Equity Certification" Standards (Uganda G and E Standards) for businesses in collaboration with the Uganda Government and other relevant stakeholders. The Uganda G and E Standards is a set of minimum workplace standards for adoption by members of FUE and other businesses in Uganda.

Phase 4: Dissemination and Validation Workshop. The validation workshop was organised to validate the findings and recommendations from the study with all relevant stakeholders especially the ones that participated at the FGDs, KIs and the survey. It was attended by members of Uganda parliament, FFP participants, CSOs, Organised Private Sector and BMOs.

Participants, in addition to their contributions at plenary were divided into three groups to develop the way forward on the key findings and recommendations presented. Their recommendations are part of the action plan presented under 'Next Steps' in this report.

Participants validated the report as a true reflection of the FFP experience and the business environment in Uganda.

Phase 5: Project Close Out. The project close out meeting was held to clearly identify operation owners for each of the activities in the action plan developed and the timelines for their implementation. FUE expressed their satisfaction with the report and their commitment to the implementation of the recommendations and the action plan developed. One major concern expressed was the capacity of the organisation to implement the report and the fears were allayed with the ongoing support of ICR and Octoville where such support is sought.

Ensuring Safeguarding

To ensure safeguarding of all persons and groups involved in the project, Octoville adhered to the British Council's Safeguarding Policy and Adults at Risk Policy in the service contract. In addition to this, the national laws and organisational policy relating to safeguarding were also mainstreamed into all engagements with project participants.

Although most of the project activities were implemented virtually, we ensured all project team members met the criteria set out in the safeguarding policies of the British Council and Uganda laws. The team was carefully selected and was carefully vetted before selection.

Before data collection, respondents were prompted to give their consent. They learned about their rights, potential benefits/risk and the evaluation topic. Participation was voluntary and they were presented with the option of withdrawing their participation at any time.

Ensuring Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Participants Selection. We worked closely with the FUE to align on demographic selection criteria to ensure participants were evenly distributed based on cohort, industry type, sector, gender, and geographical balance to achieve inclusive and representative perspectives. We worked closely with the FUE on the selection of participants. The selection was done across the four major categories of primary, secondary, tertiary, and quaternary of FFP participants, potential participants, resource persons, industry experts and sponsors.

Facilitation. Data gathering guidelines were developed for each category of respondents interviewed and surveyed and it helped to promote a non-discriminatory and participatory environment for both data collectors and respondents.

Ensuring Information Management and Data Protection

We reviewed the Data protection clauses in the service contact for partners and suppliers signed with the British Council and ensured the provisions were adhered to by all persons engaged in the implementation of the project.

A study protocol was developed to guide the facilitation of data gathering. After a careful communication of the objectives of the study to respondents, we obtained their consent for each of the surveys, FGDs and KIIs. All staff and members of the project team have a non-disclosure agreement with us which is in line with the British Council's Data Protection legislation relating to the processing, privacy, and use of Personal Data.

During and after data collection, opinions were not linked with individual respondents. Information was anonymised and no specific identifiers beyond demographic information was collected.

The data is held securely by Octoville and will not be transferred or disclosed to third parties without the express consent of the data owner. Although data was obtained in Uganda it was transferred to

Nigeria the location of the members of the team. No data breaches, complaints, or external requests to access data were encountered during the implementation of the intervention. On termination or expiry of this Order Contract, Octoville shall, except to the extent it is required to retain a copy by law, stop processing the Personal Data and return and/or destroy it at the request of the British Council. Data associated with this project is governed by UK or EU Data protection laws, as applicable.

Communication

We maintained a tripartite communication with ICR and the FUE throughout the implementation of the study. A bi-weekly project progress meeting was held, and it facilitated the monitoring and evaluation of each stage of the project. As a result, the following were achieved:

- FUE buy in and visible commitment to the objectives of the project.
- Availability of Key Persons, Focus Group Participants and their level of involvement and participation during sessions, discussions, and interviews. Although we had challenges engaging more FFP participants, those that participated provided quality information and feedback.
- Timely decision-making, review, and approval of project outputs
- Effective project management to manage any project complexities and facilitate project coordination.

Part of the post project implementation plan by the FUE is the effective engagement of the media and the regular publication of the FFP success stories on their website.

The report presentation by the FUE will also be used to get the buy in of other stakeholders especially partners to boost the implementation of the study recommendations.

Issues and Challenges

The findings and recommendations from the study should be viewed in the light of some of the limitations encountered while undertaking the evaluation.

Low Participation of identified stakeholders. The data collection was focused on 6 categories of stakeholders namely, former FFP participants, potential FFP participants, sponsors, resource persons, The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprises (NHO) and industry experts. Out of 176 former FFP participants contacted, only 35 of them responded and participated in the FGDs, KIIs and the survey. The number represents about 20% (19.88%) of the original proposed number. To achieve this number, the consultant set up a follow up team with one dedicated personnel to track stakeholders using emails, calls and WhatsApp. Outdated emails and phone numbers were discovered and corrected in the process. FFP sponsors identified as one of the stakeholders for the FGDs could not be interviewed because their contacts were unavailable. While the total number of persons engaged in the study were far below envisaged numbers, the number of interviewees is representative of the total number of past FFP participants and resource persons. It is believed that the findings reflect the true state of the FFP.

Delayed response or feedback from host organisation. It took quite some time before timely flow of communication was achieved between the host organisation and the implementing organisation. The time lapse experienced could be a factor contributing to the non-responsiveness of some targeted study participants.

Overlap with similar exercise by NHO leading to both delay in FGDs and possible participants' fatigue. The annual evaluation of the FFP by the NHO was not envisaged at the outset of the study but it came up mid-way into the project. The commencement of FGDs, KIIs and surveys had to be postponed till NHO was done with their exercise. While due diligence was observed to ensure a

different set of participants were engaged from the ones that participated in NHO's exercise to avoid participants' fatigue, the general low response of past FFP participants and resource persons suggest that more active FFP participants might have been engaged for the NHO review, however, the additional 30 persons randomly chosen from the list of all cohorts since inception yielded the same poor response.

Lessons Learned

Below are lessons learned.

Methods of data collection. Two methods were designed for data collection in this study – FGDs and KIIs. After observing the low FGD response, owing to reasons such as, time constraint; questionnaires were deployed via emails to FFP past participants.

Coordination of similar projects. The project was initially planned to end in June 2023, but it extended by 4 months due to delay in starting the data collection. The deployment of research tools (FGDs and KIIs) was delayed due to lack of prior communication that NHO was undertaking a similar evaluation on the FFP at the same time. Effective coordination of similar projects could have avoided the delay.

Virtual FGD and KII sessions. If the FGDs and KIIs were undertaken physically and not virtually, there could have been more participation by the stakeholders. This is because some participants might still not be very familiar with virtual meetings. This was confirmed by some of the participants who though wanted to join the session, failed to successfully handle the process.

Physical and not virtual inception meeting. To address some of the constraints above for the benefit of future projects, a physical and not virtual inception meeting might have promoted trust by properly clarifying the objectives of the project. It is therefore very critical for project team members and the consultant to meet physically at the inception of a project especially where the consultant is based outside the country where implementation will take place.

Project Closure

All the objectives set out at the beginning of the project were achieved and they were validated by the FUE and the stakeholders at the Report Validation and Dissemination workshop.

The dissemination and implementation strategy workshop held with the FUE looked at the dissemination strategy for the success stories of FFP participants and the style guide, the position paper developed for the FUE board based on the lobbying agenda, recommendations from the study and the three lobbying agenda and the action plan to implement them.

Overall, the programme has delivered on the objectives in a sustainable, impactful, and very effective manner. Key recommendations from the study and the subsequent comments and further recommendations at the validation event should be considered to improve the experience for future participants.

The FUE can provide leadership, in accordance with its mandate in driving the recommended three lobbying agenda to address the business environment issues affecting women leadership in Uganda.

The report is recommended for all persons that are interested in women leadership in corporate organisations and those who would want to see the importance of gender diversity in the development of corporate organisations in Africa and most especially in Eastern Africa.

The success of the intervention depends on the ability of the FUE to implement the action plan developed based on the identified areas of the lobbying agenda and the evaluation of the FFP. The timelines for the implementation of the activities in the action plan are set for 12 months.

Feedback from Partner Requesting TA

Douglas Opio, Executive Director, Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE) made the following remarks both at the workshop held at the FUE office and during the Report Dissemination Workshop with stakeholders.

He remarked that the report met the expectations of the FUE, and it speaks to the core issues of women leadership in Uganda. He added that the FUE has a policy and research unit and for them to generate position papers from the report for subsequent actions to implement the recommendations would be easy. At the Report Validation and Dissemination workshop, Douglas said the report is as good as the action that follows it. FUE would therefore hold further discussions and meetings on the report to provide a roadmap for action.

Next Steps

The implementation strategy for the study recommendations and the lobbying agenda has been developed and discussed with the Executive Director, the Coordinator of the FFP, Policy and Research department and the training department in a workshop.

The workshop looked at the dissemination strategy for the success stories of FFP participants and the style guide, the position paper developed for the FUE board based on the lobbying agenda, recommendations from the study and the three lobbying agenda and the action plan to implement them.

The action plan developed, has been adopted by the FUE to achieve the intended outcomes of the intervention as outlined in the figure below.

Theory Of Change

Activities

1. Development of methodology for, and evaluation of the Female Future Program (FFP) in terms of its effectiveness, relevance, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, with a priority on assessing the project expected results, objectives, and overall goal.
2. Development of key lessons and potential practices for learning and provide recommendations for the improvement of FFP to increase its future impact.
3. Identification and documentation of selected success stories, style guide and dissemination strategy
4. Identification of potential areas for raising awareness of key stakeholders (including the public) and identify the FUE Lobbying Agenda 2023-25 priorities for government engagement

Outputs

1. Study report with findings, recommendations and lessons learnt, success stories covering the scope of the evaluation
2. A style guide, dissemination strategy and 5 written FFP success stories
3. Lobbying Agenda and Position Papers for engagement with government

Outcome

1. FFP improved and impact increased.
2. Women in Leadership Fellowship formed
3. Women in Leadership mainstreamed in curriculum.
4. Uganda Gender and Equity Certification" Standards (G & E Standards) developed.
5. Increased in activities by both employers and government to increase women in leadership

Impact

An increase in women occupying more leadership positions in business and participating in business and investment climate reform processes in Uganda. Achieving this is expected to contribute to inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent job creation especially for women and young people in Uganda.

Project Team

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Annexes

Annex I: Literature

Policies and Regulations

The 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (Article 31, 32 and 33 clearly outlines the rights of women)
Uganda National Gender Policy (1997) and Uganda Gender Policy (2007)
Equal Opportunity Commission (EOC) Act of 2007
Presidential Elections Act (2000)
Parliamentary Elections Act (2005) and the Local Governments Act (1997)
Medium and Small Enterprise (MSME) Policy (2015)
National Women's Manifesto 2021

International Policy Instruments Ratified by Uganda

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
The African Charter on Peoples and Human Rights, Gender Policy and Strategy (July 2004)
The East African Community (EAC) (2000)
The Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (July 2003)
The New Partnerships for African Development (NEPAD)
The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Social Indicators Programme and the AU Heads of State Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality (July 2004),
The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Gender Policy (May 2002), and
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Annex II: Final Project Schedule

Months	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	
Preliminary Research and Intervention Plan Validation	Activity			Deliverable								
Qualitative and Quantitative Research			Activity				Deliverable					
Diagnosis and Report					Activity			Deliverable				
Result Validation								Activity		Deliverable		
Close Out										Activity		Deliverable

 Activity  Deliverable

