Mid Term Evaluation Report

No Ianda Djuntu- Drawing the pathway together: new leadership for meaningful participation, peace and stability in Guinea Bissau

Mid Term Evaluation development and timeline

The evaluation has been carried out between October 2021 and January 2022, after 9 full months of implementation of the project.

A workshop to strengthen Voz di Paz Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) capacities and design the Mid Term Evaluation exercise was carried out at the beginning of October 2021 and, as a result, a plan (attached) has been formulated. Between November and December 2021, the project team collected the data accordingly to the plan. Finally, an analysis workshop has been organized in January 2022 to identify the main recommendations for the project.

Data Collection Methodology

As foreseen in the Plan, data was collected with both quantitative and qualitative methods.
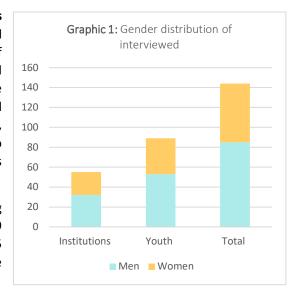
Qualitative

6 focus group have been carried out in different localities involving 107 youth members of the platforms, 60 men and 47 women. Participants in the focus groups were selected randomly among participants in the platform activities carried out between October and November 2021. In each focus group the project team asked participants to identify **what change have the activities made to young people's assertiveness in decision making** using the most significant change methodology.

Quantitative

The questionnaire has been applied to 144 people instead of the 162 foreseen in the plan. The difference is due to the lower participation within the platforms at this stage of the project comparing with the first activities held at the beginning of 2021.

Of the **144 interviewed**, 89 were **youth members of the platforms** created within the project and have been interviewed by Voz di Paz (VdP) staff in the framework of the project activities carried out in November. The remaining 55 were **representatives of local institutions** (political parties, defence and security forces (DSF), traditional leaders and local government) who have been contacted through phone interviews by VdP staff.

59% of the 144 interviewed are women. Among youth members of the platforms, 36 out of 89 (40%) were women, while out of the 55 institutions representatives 23 (42%) were women.

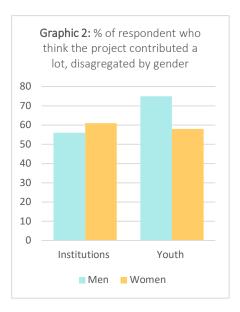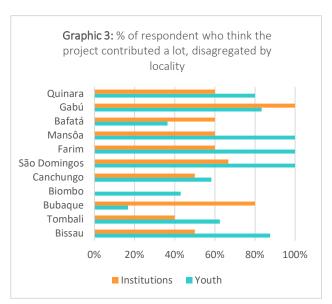Graphic 1: Gender distribution of interviewed

Analysis

The midterm evaluation is organized around 4 questions with the aim of identifying the contribution of the project to 4 key areas in the first 9 months of implementation. Recommendations for the remaining 9 months have been produced by the project team based on the data collected.
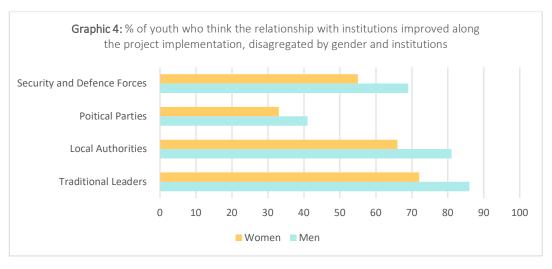
Did the activities contribute to trust between young people and institutions?

The majority of the interviewed think the project contributed a lot (**64%**) or a little (34%) to the **rapprochement between youth and institutions**. This perception differs if we compare the response by gender, by locality and by group as showed in graphics below.

Graphic 2: % of respondent who think the project contributed a lot, disagregated by gender

Graphic 3: % of respondent who think the project contributed a lot, disagregated by locality

Looking at youth perception of the different institutions, it is clear that the **greater closeness is with traditional leaders,** with 80% of young leaders considering their relationship improved since the beginning of the project. **The weaker relationship remains the one with political parties,** with only 38% of young leaders thinking this relationship improved throughout the project implementation. Youth perception is influenced by gender as showed in Graphic 4.

Graphic 4: % of youth who think the relationship with institutions improved along the project implementation, disagregated by gender and institutions

This finds confirmation in the change stories shared by the participants, where recurring episodes of trust and openness of traditional leaders or local government to youth leaders or groups acting at the community and sectorial level are shown. No stories involving political parties have been mentioned throughout the focus groups. In general, the political arena is more impermeable than other decision-making environments. Participation in politics is strongly linked to individuals' economic capacity: young people do not have the material goods to contribute to the agenda of main political parties and this contributes to their low engagement within the political structures. The geographical element also plays an important role: decisions are taken mainly in Bissau, consequently excluding people who are active at the regional level. This impermeability resulted in a **lower engagement of political parties in all project activities**. The same young people from political parties who have been invited to take part in the platforms at the beginning of the project left after the first meetings, and those who had been involved for specific activities, including the steering committee of the project, didn't take part in them.
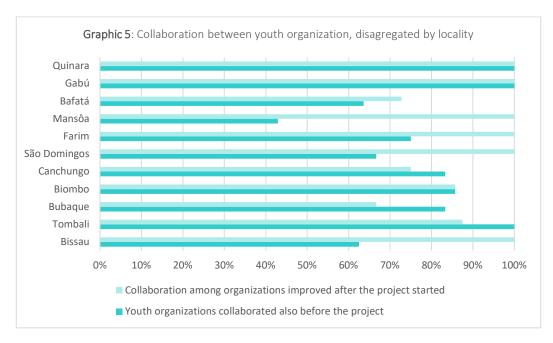
> *"There is now a very strong rapprochement between young people and*
> *local authorities: community leaders, SDS, CSOs. Proof of this is the increase*
> *in consultations and requests from youth organisations at almost every*
> *important event and moment.'' Nixon Augusto da Silva*

Did the activities contribute to strengthen the relationships between youth organizations on the platforms?

The majority (89%) of youth interviewed thinks the platform mechanism increased the collaboration between youth organizations in the project. Whether 79% of the youth members of the platform think that **collaboration was a reality among the different youth organizations** at the regional level even before the project, 78% consider this **collaboration increased after the creation of the platform** and 88% of youth members of the platform positively evaluate the participation of their organization within these mechanisms.
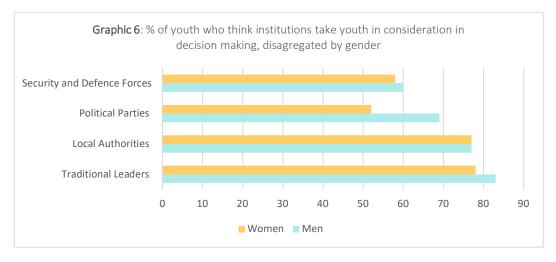
> *''In the community, we are involved in decision making on various issues:*
> *market, school, celebrations, consultations for important decisions by*
> *elders, and within the platform, we have had more collaborations between*
> *different youth organisations.'' Carlito Gomes*

The positive contribution of the platform mechanism seems stronger in some localities, where previous collaboration was lower than in others, and where 100% of youth recognized the positive impact of the activity, such as in Mansôa, Farim, São Domingos and Bissau (Graphic 5).

Graphic 5: Collaboration between youth organization, disaggregated by locality

Quinara
Gabú
Bafatá
Mansôa
Farim
São Domingos
Canchungo
Biombo
Bubaque
Tombali
Bissau

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

■ Collaboration among organizations improved after the project started
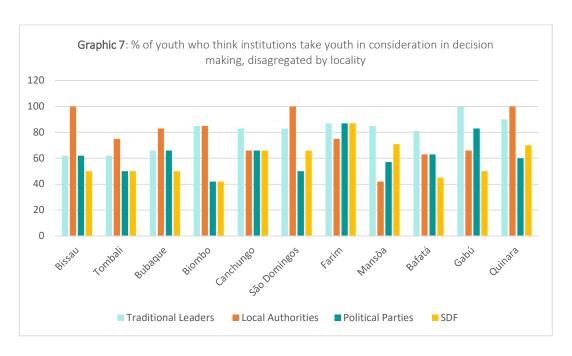■ Youth organizations collaborated also before the project

After the completion of the project activities, are the institutions more open to youth participation?

The majority (87%) of the interviewed think youth are called to participate in decision making. When focusing on youth perception we can see that **youth think that some institutions take their opinion in consideration more than other**. Traditional leaders and local government are considered to be among the more open institutions, with more than 75% of youth thinking they are taken into consideration by these institutions. This percentage, however, goes down to 65% for political parties and to 59% for DSF. In the case of political parties, there is also a stronger difference between the perception of young women and young men with only 52% of women thinking they are considered in decision making against 69% of young men (Graphic 6).

Graphic 6: % of youth who think institutions take youth in consideration in decision making, disaggregated by gender

Security and Defence Forces
Political Parties
Local Authorities
Traditional Leaders

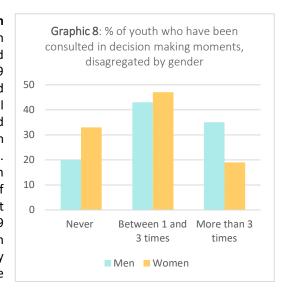0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90

■ Women ■ Men

Disaggregating the data by locality (Graphic 7), the situation seems quite heterogenous. The cases of Mansôa and Farim, both in Oio Region, are noteworthy. There, Local Authorities are perceived as less open than other institutions while DSF are among the more open ones.

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Graphic 7: % of youth who think institutions take youth in consideration in decision making, disagregated by locality

is also important to mention how, in the case of the DSF, the participation dynamic within the institution is different due to the strong hierarchy which characterizes the Army. The security sector reform could help creating greater opportunities for young people participation within these institutions but it must be done in a way that allows the manutention of a peaceful and balanced relationship between youth and the older generation. In general, the project team noticed a certain openness of the DSF structure to participate within the platforms and within the project activities overall, which contributed to improving the level of trust between the young and old generations.

"There has been a positive change. If before we only received orders to execute, now we are consulted by the military leadership and in our actions we use more dialogue" Jaquelina Pereira Barreto

To **quantify the real engagement of youth in decision making** young participants have been asked how many times they have been involved in decision making moments in the last 9 months: 26% said they have never been invited to participate in decision making at the local level, and 29% of interviewed youth mentioned they participated in more than 3 decision making processes together with institutions. The majority of youth (45%) however have been involved between 1 and 3 times, and. 74% of interviewed youth was thus involved in at least 1 decision making moment in the past 9 months. The influence of gender in youth involvement is clear, with men being generally more involved, as showed in the graphic on the side.

Graphic 8: % of youth who have been consulted in decision making moments, disagregated by gender
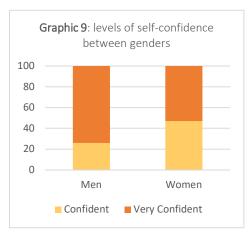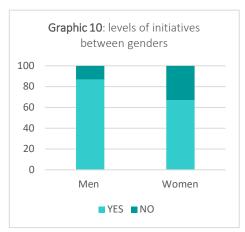
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"We are armed with tools that can help us participate in decision-making within our community, with youth associations and with local authorities. We are now called upon to participate in community meetings, elders meetings and by state authorities and FDS.'' Abu Bacar Cassama

Did the activities influence young people's confidence in their own abilities and engagement?

The totality (100%) of **youth feels confident of very confident in participating in decision making moments**. The majority of youth interviewed (79%) mentioned they took initiatives within their communities after the project started and 94% stated they feel more proactive than before the project started. The perception of the project team is that the project allowed us to channel youth energies, contributing to change the way youth see themselves and act within their communities.

Graphic 9: levels of self-confidence between genders

Graphic 10: levels of initiatives between genders

The data disaggregation by gender sheds light on the differences in young men and women perception. In general, young men feel more confident than young women in participating in decision making (Graphic 9) and report having taken more actions within their communities/institutions than their women peers (Graphic 10).

'' The platform make us feel more confident and safer in participating in the activities of our communities. It helped us to know our rights, duties and responsibilities and how to communicate.'' Djenabu Mané

Recommendations

Project implementation level	
Recommendation	Action Point
Political parties engagement should be discussed directly with platform members to identify entry points to engage political parties and address youth participation in decision making within these structures.	Organize a final event of the project to reflect together with participants on the project dynamics and impact including political parties' engagement as one of the reflection topics.

Further dissemination and reflection activities should target specifically political parties or foresee their active participation to ensure they are "part of the conversation".	Organize specific meetings with Political Parties and political organizations and representatives to understand their perception on youth participation.
Make efforts to improve platform members engagement. Among different platforms, the engagement of members and leaders is not stable. In some cases, such as Bafatá and Canchungo, the problem is mainly related to the platform leadership.	Close monitoring of the platforms along the project implementation paying special attention to those which showed some weaknesses and/or volatility.
Value the participation of those platforms' members who engaged along the project implementation.	Create connection with other structures and organizations active in the different regions.
In general, the change we achieved up to now is on an individual level, we should focus on how to act on a more structural and institutional level.	Organize a final reflection event with the participation of the main institutions responsible for youth promotion in the country.
Programme level	
Recommendation	Action Point
We should work to change the mentality of decision makers, especially political parties, to change the way they consider young people and create entry points for them.	Organize a reflection to understand what we could do in further interventions to target decision makers.
In terms of collaboration among youth organizations, further investment should be done to bring this activity at the sector and community level. Building bridges between youth belonging to different realities would enrich youth participation.	Organize a reflection on the platform mechanism at the end of their activities and define how they could be expanded or strengthened thorough further interventions.
To keep on working in this field it is necessary to broaden the idea of participation. There are other ways to participate which go beyond decision making. This should be valued.	Develop a study to understand participation dynamics at different levels and in different regions in order to identify entry points for youth participation beyond decision making and truly involving all the different layers of society.
In general, the change we achieved up to now is on an individual level, we should focus more on how to act on a more structural and institutional level.	Include more institutional/policy-oriented goals in further interventions.