



**Background:** The Haella Stichting launched an out of the box competition in Jan 2021 about women’s rights, with a strict condition stressing that “nothing about women without women!” The Support Trust for African Development (STAD) was among the lucky winners for this grant which was aimed at contributing to poverty reduction by strengthening indigenous women and girls with basic entrepreneurship skills in Juba, Central Equatoria Region. The specific objective of the project included; (i) Training women and girls in basic business skills such as simple basic bookkeeping practices, opening accounts and savings, gathering information about new needs and government policies & some income generating activities (IGA), (ii) Training women and girls in reusable sanitary pads and liquid soap making, and, (iii) Raising awareness on the United Nations Security Council Resolution (S/RES/1325) on women, peace and security as well as issues of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV).

**Evaluation Methodology and framework:** The evaluation methodology used mixed methods approach (incorporating both qualitative and quantitative designs) and the evaluation framework adopted was based on the OECD-DAC criteria 3 focusing on the five key evaluation components of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability (Table 1)

**Findings and Discussions** **Demographic Variables:** Majority of the participants were women (95.3 %); more than half (69.7 %) of all respondents were 35 years and above; just as a sizeable number of participants indicated they had either separated (30.2) form their spouse or widowed (16.3%), a relatively higher number were married (41.9%). More than three-quarters (76.7%) never reached secondary level of education. In terms of economic activities, participants were mainly engaged in small-scale business of either selling food item (72.1), selling clothes (18.6) or being employed in a restaurant or a shop (9.3) and getting a small monthly income (Figure 1).

**Key evaluation findings based on project objectives**

**Objective I:** Majority of the respondents (86%) reported having improved or learnt new knowledge about how to run their business. The basic skills training included on; undertaking bookkeeping to ascertain financial flows, how to handle customers, etc. (Table 2).

**Objective II:** Majority of respondents did point out that the liquid soap training couldn’t have come so timely. With the emergence of the COVID-19, the production of the liquid soap would be a good source of income for them (through selling in the market) as well using it at home as shown by the comments of the following participants; “..... this training has come at the right time, now that there is corona everywhere, and the liquid soap is being used as part of the prevention, we are very happy to contribute to the prevention of this disease” Female Participant [34 years old] “.....the liquid has also an increased market and can be multipurpose. Beside selling it, I can also use part of it at home. Since this is a small-scale business, we may not have the capacity to only produce for the market, occasionally we also use it at home as well”, Female Participant [35 years old]

**Objective III:** Respondent reported that the awareness raising was valuable as it empowered them, knowing their rights and contribute peace and security in the country as one of the participant’s narrated; “...the retraining by the other woman was so good and practical, if possible, she should also come back again to teach us more. I really have enjoyed her sessions very much”, Female Participant [42 years old]

**Assessment of project objectives as per the OECD-DAC criteria**

**Relevance:** The project interventions were found relevant and well targeted, fully adapted to the local conditions and in meeting the needs of project beneficiaries especially in the current situation of disruption of works due to the COVID-19 situation.

**Effectiveness:** Based on the evaluation findings, the overall project performance was rated as successful and satisfactory as most of the set targets were achieved (Table 3 Below).

**Efficiency:** This was rated as good. Nearly all project activities were delivered on time at a relatively reasonable cost.

**Impact:** The immediate project impact is that all respondents reported a higher level (86%) satisfaction of the project in terms of the knowledge they had received, and this would suggestively mean that the intervention changed their lives in a positive way.

**Sustainability:** STAD will occasionally do refreshers trainings to the participants as a way of ensuring sustainability of the project as well as continue looking for funding opportunities to augment the gains that have been made by the Haella Fund to prevent them from being reversed.

Table 1. A summary of evaluation methodology, sample size computation and selection, data collection, management and analysis procedures

Approach	Survey participants	Sample size calculation	Data Collection tools	Data Management and Analysis.
Quantitative approach	Women and girls’ members of local women’s group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No formal sample size computation done</li> <li>All respondents were members of a local women’ group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic standardized paper-based questionnaire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertook data cleaning (by checking for duplicates as well as missing data if any).</li> <li>Undertaking data analysis by using descriptive statistics.</li> <li>Results were presented in tables</li> </ul>
Qualitative Approach		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A purposive sample of 10 women were selected for two FGDs (5 in each)</li> <li>Similarly, 3 members were also purposively selected for Kils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FGD and Kil guides</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualitative data analysis was done using thematic analysis.</li> <li>There was a joint interpretation of results with the quantitative analysis).</li> </ul>

Table 2. Percentage distribution of respondents by basic business skills training questions

Questions	Yes		No	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Do you have problem-solving and decision-making experience?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Do you know how to maintain and control stock levels?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Do you have good time-management skills?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Do you have a clear vision of where you want to take your business?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Can you find new customers?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Can you manage purchasing for the business?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Do you have bookkeeping skills and know how to use them for your business profitability?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Can you analyze your competitors and your customers?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Are you familiar with different marketing channels?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Do you know the best way to promote and sell your product or service?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Are you familiar with different marketing channels?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Do you know how to build relationships with the customer by establishing rapport and trust?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Do you know how to identify customer needs through effective questioning and investigation?	43	100.0	0	0.0
Do you know how to overcome customer objections?	43	100.0	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0</b>

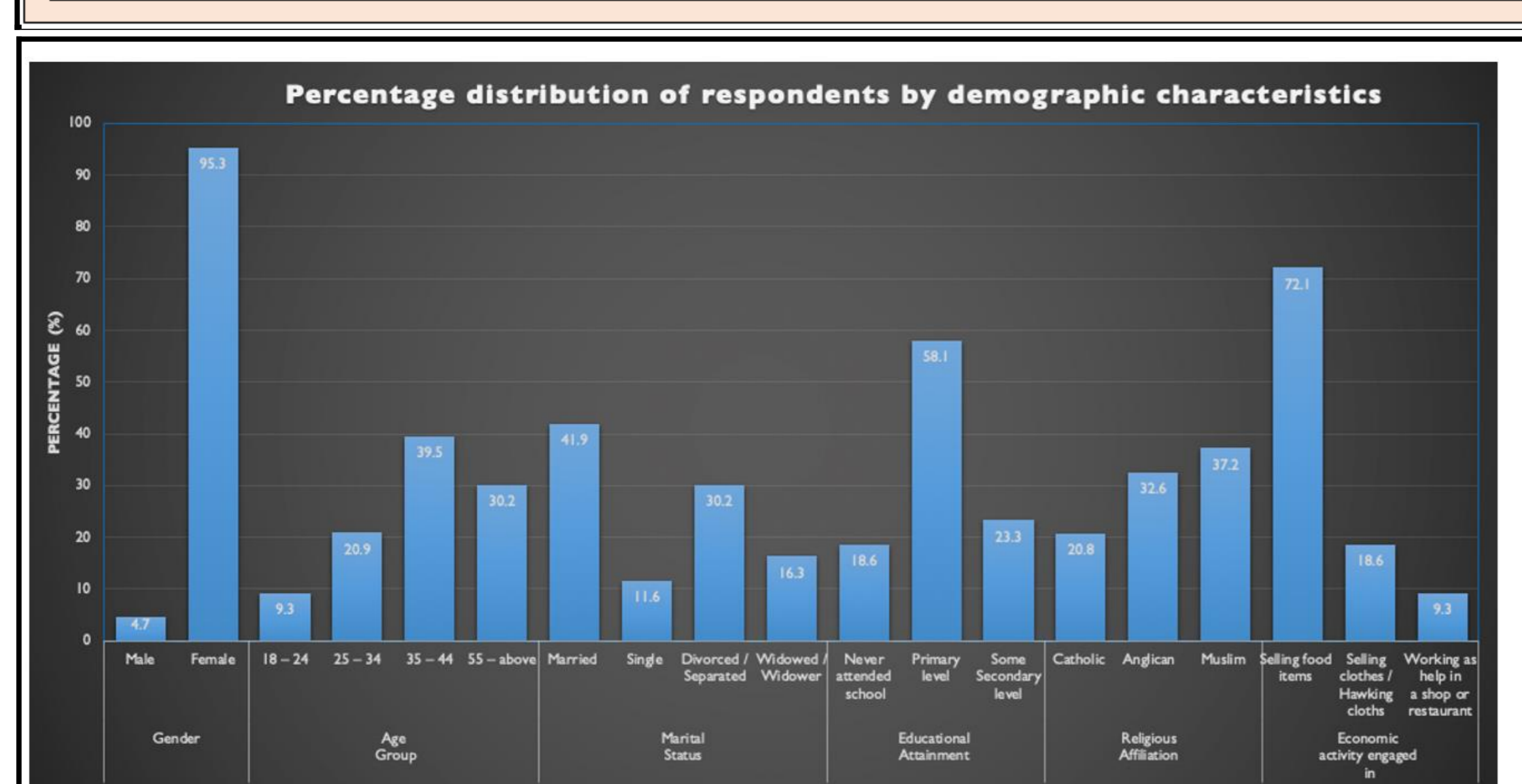


Table 3. Indicator targets and actual performance against indicators.

Project Outcome/Indicators	Baseline	Targets	Achievement	% achievement
<b>Outcome I: Training workshop in business skills</b>				
Number of indigenous informal women networks participating in the project	0	5	5	100%
Number of women attending the community conversations through their community networks	0	50	43	86%
Number of women attending the workshop through their networks	0	50	43	86%
<b>Outcome II: Training women in income generating activities (IGAs)</b>				
Number of indigenous informal women networks participating in the project	0	5	5	100%
Number of women attending the community conversations through their community networks	0	50	43	86%
Number of women attending the workshop through their networks	0	50	43	86%
<b>Outcome III: Training and creating awareness about the UNSCR 1325</b>				
Number of indigenous informal women networks participating in the project	0	5	5	100%
Number of women attending the community conversations through their community networks	0	200	43	22%
Number of women attending the training through their networks	0	200	43	22%

**Lessons Learnt:** (i) Involvement of community members created ownership; (ii) Being flexible in these COVID-19 times, (iii) Involvement of skilled and experienced trainers, and, (iv) Since most of the trainings were tailored were basically tailored to the needs of the women with limited levels of education, we believe they can be sustainable as it would be easy to hire trainers to do them in future or similar projects

**Conclusions:** Overall, it can be arguably said that the project achieved most of its set objectives; it has empowered the target group on key business knowledge (including on liquid soap making) on how to carry out their day to day businesses; Participants also underwent awareness raising on the UNSCR 1325 resolution and thus, have knowledge and information on women, peace and security.

**Recommendations:** (i) Do more training sessions to all members (including those who missed this training) and if possible, more resources could be mobilized for the training girls/women to make re-usable pads using the local materials (for sustainability; (ii) Continue training on the advocacy and awareness on women’s rights; and, (iii) Strengthening of the women and girls’ informal networks to carry on the synergies in this project including scaling-up the activities in support of the women which in due course allows for the creation of jobs and thus, contributing in combating unemployment.