



## End of term evaluation 2017-2021: Southern Africa: Principal recommendations and Management Response

### Context

As part of the implementation of and 5-year programme subsidised by the Directorate General for Development (DGD), the Royal Decree of 2016 stipulates that the recognised ACNG must carry out a final evaluation for each of its specific objectives. In 2021, the organisation FOS commissioned the consultancy firm ACE-Europe (In cooperation with HIVA) to conduct the final evaluation of the South Africa, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe Specific Objective, collected here in the Southern African Regional Report, on the interventions of FOS and partners for the 2017-2021 programme.

The final external evaluation of the programme took place between December 2021 and June 2022. The report of this final evaluation can also be found on the FOS website.

Please find below the management response of FOS to this evaluation report.

Recommendations	Taken into consideration (yes/partly/ no)	Management Response and Actions planned
<p><b>1. Clarify long term theory of change and the role of FOS regional office in it.</b></p> <p>Developing a ToC for the programme at national level: scenarios for how the CSO ecosystem in a sector could develop over time (especially for SA &amp; Moz)</p> <p>Avoiding donor-driven dynamic: 'Going with the grain' (strengthening existing dynamics), connecting the dots (e.g., a</p>		<p>FOS partly agrees with this recommendation. There is a need for more clear strategic choices (e.g., partner choices) or a bigger narrative rather than having these choices flow out other aspects or constraints of the programme.</p> <p>There is a clear absence of a 'donor driven' dynamic in the region. Yet the remark to not only focus on strengthening existing dynamics, or aspects of the partner that are already strong, is interesting and relevant. However, as always, these dots need to be connected according to the needs of the partners.</p>



<p>whole-of-chain approach)</p> <p>FOS office: explore 'reflective observer' role (draw inspiration from Central America office)</p>		<p>There is inspiration to be found in other regions, especially in a region where the regional cooperation is stronger, and the reflective observer role is more pronounced. FOS will foster learning between the regions to strengthen this aspect.</p> <p>In the programme 2017-2021 we developed ToCs at the national level. For the programme 2022-2026 there is a ToC at the regional level. There are actions planned that focus on the national and regional level that detail the strategic path that the programme will take: the gender focus in the new programme (as further detailed below) shall firstly focus on the national level (workshops are being held at the time of writing), while the year 2023 will focus on the regional level.</p>
<p><b>2. Strengthen regional dynamics of the programme</b></p> <p>Acknowledging the differences in socio-economic and political situation between countries</p> <p>Realising the transaction costs of regional activities</p> <p>However, observing a growing convergence in target groups and thematic areas across the 3 countries</p> <p>Increased relevance of regional and international trade union action</p> <p>Potential regional synergies are not explored systematically</p>		<p>FOS will strengthen the regional dynamics of the programme. This aspect is already embedded in the new programme 2022-2026 where the regional focus will firstly focus on gender as a cross cutting theme that is relevant to all partners. FOS chose this approach as gender is a theme all partners are working on, and where a few partners have more expertise than others. Sharing and collaborating on this theme will enhance the work of all partners.</p> <p>Seeing the lack of gender equality and the prevalence of gender-based violence in the partner countries, FOS found it important to strengthen the gender focused work within all partners. Other subjects (issues on migration, xenophobia, just transition, COVID-19) can follow, after laying the groundwork with gender.</p> <p>As stated in the recommendation itself, the differences in socio-economic and political situations in the region and the scope and limits of the programme need to be considered when constructing the regional dynamic. Adding to this is the limited scope of the programme. The Southern African region is a large and diverse</p>



		region.
<p><b>3. Exploring ways to strengthen the core functions of the FOS partners without creating a dependency situation where one funding partners becomes critical to the survival of the organisation.</b></p> <p>Challenge of punching above one's weight for longer periods of time</p> <p>Need to strengthen core-functions of partners (in partnership with others, where possible with domestic funding)</p> <p>Explore ways to strengthen the CSO ecosystem</p> <p>Looking at ways to improve the enabling environment</p>		<p>The partners have accomplished a lot with little resources. We understand the issues of sustainability connected to this but want to stress the positive aspect of the achievements of the partners with their limited means. The effectiveness and efficiency of the partners is very high.</p> <p>Regarding the strengthening of core-functions: the issue depends on partner to partner and their respective needs. The partners are very competent content wise, which is why the 'reflective' observer aspect is limited in Southern Africa, so FOS tries to provide other means of support, but this organisational support is also limited within the scope and the goals of the programme. The specific context of the partner country also plays a role in determining the need of strengthening core functions.</p> <p>The partners are also looking at ways to gain more financial independence. For instance, LEDRIZ are trying to look for alternative ways in raising funds which complement the FOS programme: they are offering consulting work to this end. Other partners also make efforts for their own fund-raising: CSAAWU has food gardens/food kitchens for their local communities.</p>
<p><b>4. Reaching out to the next level in dealing with gender discrimination</b></p> <p>Aiming at transformative change, by experimenting with actions in Q1 (internalized attitudes, values, practices) and Q3 (socio-cultural norms, beliefs, practices)</p> <p>Setting different levels of ambition per</p>		<p>While we agree with the recommendation and underline the importance of transformative change, we argue that this change is also a result of the actions of the programme. Informal, transformative change (Q1 and Q3) is a longer-term consequence of actions in Q2 and Q4.</p> <p>The current programme 2022-2026 has identified certain partners as 'gender focal points', as national or regional go-to partners that will support other partners in their initiatives regarding gender. Workshops</p>



<p>partner</p> <p>Explore partnerships with internal/external stakeholders</p> <p>Gender-based violence</p> <p>LGBTQI+</p>		<p>are currently being held to specifically determine the thematic focus of the partners with regards to gender.</p> <p>The Southern African programme is built on female leadership and women's empowerment but doesn't exclude awareness raising and education on gender equality amongst men.</p> <p>Lastly, it is important to note that the strongest partner organisation specializing in gender (WFP), that works on alle components of gender as mentioned in the evaluation report, was not part of the evaluation scope.</p>
<p><b>5. Mobilising additional leverage mechanisms for sectors that are linked to global value chains</b></p> <p>Individual litigation versus strategic litigation</p> <p>For workers that are linked to global value chains, a broader mix of strategies can be explored:</p> <p>Now focus is mainly on boomerang effect: going international, to put pressure on the national level (e.g., Bitter grapes documentary)</p> <p>International debate is shifting human rights due diligence of MNEs</p> <p>=&gt; responsibility of MNEs to assess HR risks, prevent, and/or address them, and provide remedy if required</p>		<p>FOS agrees with this recommendation but argues that it is not relevant or possible to implement with all the partners. Nevertheless, the recommendation gives us several examples to further explore. Partner CSAAWU, for instance, has already started this approach. There is a lot of potential here as it is very close to what FOS can offer as a transnational organisation, with networks and partnerships in different countries. In Bolivia, a good case was worked out regarding the value chains of the Brazil nuts, together with Belgian trade union sector. It also aimed to support solidarity between different step of the chains: nut collectors and factory workers. This experience could help CSAAWU and their efforts. There is also a potential to work more closely with the policy team in Brussel with regards to due diligence.</p>



<p>=&gt; towards responsible sourcing: avoiding price squeeze and resource squeeze of suppliers</p> <p>Examples:</p> <p>Fair Food: very different from industry-driven approach (eg. WIETA) and different from Fairtrade, ...</p> <p>HRDD legislation in France, Germany, Netherlands, and soon Europe</p>		
<p><b>6. Further review the programme management practices to make them more lean and adapted to the reality on the ground</b></p> <p>Reduce reporting cycle to 2x per year</p> <p>Adopt lighter reporting format of SA region, with some minor reviews</p> <p>Avoid funding gap in beginning of year</p> <p>At global level: develop 'low-cost' solutions that improve sharing of 'best-fit' practices and experiences across countries and continents</p> <p>Exchange experiences with outcome mapping, invest in learning spaces to review findings from M&amp;E</p>		<p>FOS agrees with this recommendation and has, as the evaluation states, made changes to the management practices during the 2017-2021 programme, to positive reactions of the partners, and made subsequent changes for the 2022-2026 programme. The improved M&amp;E system (further based on Outcome Mapping) is lean and adapted to the reality on the ground, without losing what made it good in the first place (the participative bottom-up approach). The programme will further invest in the use of Outcome Mapping and facilitate learning across the programme.</p> <p>With regards to the critique on the reporting practices. While FOS agrees with the need to adapt these to the partners and change it per semester, certain partners do want to keep the reporting to every trimester. FOS will adjust the reporting timings tailored to the needs of the partner. It is important to note that we cannot split financial and narrative reporting. This is thus not a generalized issue across the programme.</p> <p>FOS does try to avoid the funding gap in the beginning of the year by pre-financing at the start of the working year. Nevertheless, this</p>



remains a challenge during the start of a new programme.

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