



Community Empowerment for Peace and Development (CEPAD)

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TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

To Conduct a Research on Feminist Humanitarian Network- Uganda National Platform

Research concept

1. Overview

The Feminist Humanitarian Network is a global network of feminist leaders working together to transform the humanitarian system into one that is guided by feminist values. The network was established in 2017 and is composed primarily of frontline feminist organisations in the Global South, as well as the individual feminists and international organisations that stand behind them.

The FHN Uganda National Platform is the first FHN national platform to receive funding for its establishment and to support members to lead humanitarian action. The pilot phase of this project commenced in December 2024 and will conclude in November 2026.

The FHN in Uganda and globally are undertaking a research piece to document the establishment, challenges, and impacts of the Uganda platform in its pilot phase.

This concept note seeks to ensure that FHN members globally and in Uganda, and the Secretariat teams of the global network and the Uganda platform, are informed of and agree on the research concept and process for implementing it. It also serves to inform the Terms of Reference for researchers who will support the project.

This documentation will serve a number of purposes:

- To act as an evaluative tool and to inform the growth of the Uganda platform in its next stages
- To inform the establishment of FHN platforms in other countries (for example, in Kenya, Nigeria and Bangladesh)
- To provide a clear illustration of what a feminist humanitarian approach looks like in practise
- To provide evidence that can be used in advocacy and fundraising by the FHN Uganda platform, by the FHN globally, and by feminist allies



2. Background + context

From its conception in 2017 to 2021, the FHN grew from 19 members to 84 members, and established itself as a global network recognised by the global humanitarian system. It established collective, feminist ways of working that it applied to its structures, the development of policies, principles, and approaches, and to its advocacy work, and any programmatic work it supported its members to undertake on the frontlines.

From 2021 to 2023, WRO members of the Feminist Humanitarian Network drove a series of online sessions where they worked together to craft a model through which FHN members would organise and work collectively at the national level to deliver feminist humanitarian response and drive feminist humanitarian action. In 2024, the opportunity to apply for funding to resource a single FHN platform as a pilot came about, and FHN members agreed together that this country would be Uganda, and collectively appointed CEPAD (an existing FHN member) as the host of this platform.

In December 2024, the pilot was launched. CEPAD was selected by the Feminist Humanitarian Global Network (FHN) to establish and coordinate Uganda's first Feminist Humanitarian National Platform. The platform was designed to strengthen feminist leadership, advance locally led humanitarian action, and create an inclusive space where women-led, refugee-led, and other marginalized organizations could collectively influence humanitarian policy, practice, and funding.

The establishment phase focused on mapping and engaging feminist and women-led organizations across Uganda, developing a participatory governance structure, and creating mechanisms for shared learning, advocacy, and capacity strengthening. Guided by feminist principles of shared power, intersectionality, and accountability, the platform brought together 40 members and diverse actors to collaborate on localisation, influence humanitarian decision-making, and increase equitable access to resources for local organizations.

3. Overall Objective

To document, evaluate and generate learning from the establishment and implementation of the Feminist Humanitarian Network Uganda National Platform during its pilot phase.

Specific Objectives:

1. To document and analyze feminist approaches used by the Feminist Humanitarian Network Uganda National Platform in distributing small grants to WRO members, and to showcase the impact of using them for WROs
2. To assess the influence of feminist ways of working including collective action, shared leadership, mutual learning, solidarity, and accountability on humanitarian programming, policy engagement, and localisation outcomes achieved by the FHN Uganda National Platform during the pilot phase.
3. To showcase the collective impact of the FHN Uganda platform members, highlighting reach, how the collective effort of members has ensured the meeting of critical humanitarian needs, fulfilment of rights, protection, and advancement of gender justice



4. To identify and document the key lessons, good practices, and added value generated through peer learning, and collective action between the FHN Uganda National Platform and the Global Feminist Humanitarian Network during the pilot phase.
5. To generate evidence-based learning and recommendations, using a feminist evaluation lens, on the establishment, governance, resource distribution, and collective action of the FHN Uganda National Platform to strengthen the Platform's future development and inform the establishment and adaptation of Feminist Humanitarian Network platforms in other countries

4. Research Questions

The research will adopt a feminist evaluation approach grounded in:

1. How was the Uganda National Platform established?
2. What feminist principles shaped its governance and implementation?
3. How effective was the small grants mechanism?
4. What organisational changes occurred among member organisations?
5. How has collective action strengthened humanitarian outcomes?
6. What challenges emerged during implementation?
7. What lessons can inform future national platforms?

5. Methodology

The evaluation will adopt a qualitative case study design, using multiple sources of evidence to assess the implementation, outcomes, and added value of the Uganda National Platform.

Data collection will include:

- Document review: Review FHN strategies, governance documents, policies, communication materials, monitoring reports, partnership agreements, learning products, and project reports to establish the evolution, theory of change, and implementation of the platform.
- Key Informant Interviews (KIs): Conduct semi-structured interviews with members of the Uganda Secretariat, Global Secretariat, Steering Committee members, platform partners, donors, and selected external stakeholders to explore implementation processes, governance, localisation, feminist leadership, collaboration, and influence.
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Facilitate discussions with FHN Uganda member organisations to explore collective experiences, perceived outcomes, challenges, and lessons learned.
- Member case studies: Develop organisational case studies through interviews with each Uganda platform member and review of project documentation to identify organisational changes, innovations, and contributions attributable to the platform.
- Triangulation: Compare evidence across documents, interviews, focus groups, and organisational reports to validate findings and identify converging and divergent perspectives.
- Participatory validation: Present preliminary findings to platform members and key stakeholders for reflection, verification, and refinement before finalisation.



Data will be analysed using thematic analysis, guided by feminist analytical frameworks and the evaluation objectives, with attention to patterns of power, inclusion, localisation, collaboration, and institutional change.

Sampling

Purposive sampling will be used to ensure representation from different stakeholder groups, including women-led organizations, refugee-led organizations, Secretariat staff, governance structures, donors and strategic partners.

Data Analysis

Data will be analysed using thematic analysis guided by feminist analytical frameworks and recognised evaluation criteria, including relevance, effectiveness, coherence, localisation, participation and sustainability.

Ethical Considerations

The research will adhere to ethical research standards by ensuring:

- Informed consent
- Voluntary participation
- Confidentiality and anonymity
- Secure management of research data
- Respect for participants' experiences
- Application of feminist ethics throughout the research process

Limitations

Potential limitations include recall bias, attribution challenges associated with evaluating a pilot initiative, varying levels of documentation across members, and time constraints for engaging all stakeholders.

6. Outputs

Research Outputs

1. An anonymised dataset comprising interview notes, focus group summaries, and document review matrices.
2. An inception report detailing the evaluation framework, methodology, sampling strategy, and work plan.
3. A draft evaluation report for stakeholder review.
4. A final evaluation report written in an accessible style suitable for governments, donors, and feminist partners, including:
 - Executive Summary
 - Findings
 - Lessons learned



- Good practices
- Recommendations

Knowledge Products

- Case studies illustrating the FHN National Platform model
- A presentation of findings to the Uganda National Platform and the Global Secretariat.
- A concise learning brief summarising key findings for advocacy, communications, and fundraising.
- A final report will be translated into French, Arabic and Spanish

7. Evaluation Framework

The study will assess the platform using the following criteria:

Evaluation Area	Key Focus
Relevance	Alignment with feminist humanitarian priorities and localisation agenda
Effectiveness	Achievement of intended objectives and outcomes
Coherence	Complementarity with national and global humanitarian initiatives
Localisation	Strengthening local leadership and decision-making
Participation	Inclusiveness and shared governance
Sustainability	Potential for continued impact beyond the pilot
Learning and Innovation	Generation and application of feminist knowledge and practices

8. Timeline

July	Finalise concept, develop TOR and begin recruitment of researcher
August	Finalise recruitment and onboard researcher
September	Data gathering
September	Data gathering + analysis
October	Report writing, review and sign off
November	Report design + communications production, dissemination planning
December - February	Report dissemination



9. Roles and responsibilities

Who	What
FHN Uganda Secretariat (CEPAD)	Recruitment and management of researcher, general research coordination (connecting researcher with members, etc)
FHN members in Uganda	Review and agreement to concept note and process, participation in research, validation of and agreement to final research piece
FHN Global Secretariat	Report review (and editing?), layout, communications materials and global comms plan, support to FHN Uganda Secretariat
FHN Uganda Platform Global Advisory Group	Review and agreement to concept note, and review of draft report?
CEPAD and FHN Uganda SC	Final report signs off

10. Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Question	Indicator	Source	Method
How effective was the Platform?	Member satisfaction	FGDs	Qualitative
How inclusive was governance?	Diversity of participation	KIIs	Interviews
Did grants strengthen WROs?	Organisational capacity changes	Case studies	KIIs
Was localisation strengthened?	Evidence of local leadership	Documents	Review

11. Required person specifications

Qualifications

- Master's degree (minimum) in Gender Studies, Social Sciences, Development Studies, Peace and Conflict Studies, International Development, Sociology, Political Science, Public Health, Monitoring and Evaluation, or a related discipline. A PhD is an added advantage.
- Specialized training in qualitative and quantitative research methods, gender analysis, or humanitarian research is desirable.

Professional Experience



- Minimum of 5 years of demonstrated experience conducting social science research, particularly in humanitarian and development settings.
- Proven experience designing and implementing mixed-methods research, including:
 - Key Informant Interviews (KIs)
 - Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
 - Surveys
 - Desk reviews
 - Case studies
- Experience in data analysis using qualitative and quantitative software (e.g., NVivo, Atlas.ti, SPSS, STATA, R, or Excel).
- Demonstrated experience producing high-quality research reports, policy briefs, and publications for donors, NGOs, or academic institutions.

Technical Expertise

- Strong understanding of:
 - Feminist localization
 - Gender equality and women's rights
 - Humanitarian action
 - Refugee protection and displacement
 - Civil society strengthening
 - Organizational capacity assessment
 - Intersectionality and inclusive research approaches
- Knowledge of participatory and feminist research methodologies.
- Excellent analytical, writing, and presentation skills.

Humanitarian Experience

- Experience conducting research in refugee and host community settings, preferably in Uganda or East Africa.
- Familiarity with localization agendas, Grand Bargain commitments, and locally led humanitarian action.
- Experience working with women-led, refugee-led, and grassroots organizations is highly desirable.

Ethical Competencies

- Strong understanding of research ethics, informed consent, confidentiality, safeguarding, and the Do No Harm principle.
- Experience conducting gender-sensitive and trauma-informed research with vulnerable populations.

Personal Competencies

- Excellent interpersonal and facilitation skills.



- Ability to engage diverse stakeholders, including community leaders, civil society organizations, government officials, and donors.
- Ability to work independently while coordinating effectively with a multidisciplinary team.
- Strong organizational and time management skills with the ability to meet tight deadlines.

Language Requirements

- Excellent written and spoken English.
- Knowledge of relevant local languages used in the research locations is an added advantage.

12. Application Procedure

Interested consultants/firms should submit:

- Technical proposal (understanding, methodology, work plan)
- Financial proposal (detailed cost breakdown)
- CVs of key personnel

Any interested firm or individual should send a Technical and financial proposal with other required attachments to the email address: cepad@cepadwestnile.org and copy hr@cepadwestnile.org or hand deliver to the CEPAD head office at the address above note later than **August 21st 2026**. CEPAD is an equal opportunity organization and encourage women to apply. **Only Ugandans living within Uganda are eligible to apply.** CEPAD does not ask for money for this consultancy and so nobody should pay money to any CEPAD staff in relation to this service.

