



Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action (GAGGA)

Final External Evaluation Executive Summary

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Executive summary

[The Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action \(GAGGA\)](#) was launched as a five-year programme in 2016 under the policy framework “Dialogue and Dissent” of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands (MFA). The programme is facilitated by a consortium led by [Fondo Centroamericano de Mujeres \(FCAM\)](#), based in Nicaragua, in collaboration with [Mama Cash](#) and [Both ENDS](#), both based in the Netherlands. GAGGA collaborates with different partners working at local, national and regional levels in more than 30 countries across three regions, i.e. Africa, Eurasia¹ and Latin America. GAGGA’s two Strategic Allies are [Global Greengrants Fund](#) and [Prospera - the International Network of Women's Funds](#). Partners include a wide range of other women’s rights and environmental justice funds (hereafter ‘Funds’); non-governmental organisations (NGOs); and grassroots groups (GG), either women-led or with a significant number of women as members.

With an overall budget of EUR 32 million, GAGGA’s long-term goal was to “*catalyse the collective power of the women’s rights and environmental justice movements towards realizing a world in which women can and do exercise their rights to water, food security and a clean, healthy, and safe environment*” (GAGGA Programme Document, 2016). Its main strategy was to strengthen the capabilities of grassroots groups and movements to lobby and advocate (L&A) with and for women at the intersection of women’s rights (WR) and environmental justice (EJ).

Between January and October 2020, GAGGA conducted a final external evaluation (FEE), led by an independent evaluation team. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess GAGGA’s impact, key outcomes and performance in its first four years of implementation (between 2016 and 2019), in relation to its Theory of Change (ToC). The agreed methodology for GAGGA’s FEE was conceived as a learning-focused evaluation. It was based primarily on the data collected by GAGGA’s Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system² and through the application of participatory mixed methods involving multiple GAGGA participants, including Alliance Members, Strategic Allies, Partners, representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and actors external to the Alliance. Below, key findings related to GAGGA’s performance³, delivery⁴ and achievements⁵ over the four years is provided.

GAGGA’s performance

GAGGA mobilised EUR 26,286,500 over a period of four years, with 74.5 percent of the total budget directly allocated to providing financial and non-financial support to an increasing number of GG (up to 418 in 2019), and strengthening the capacities of five Environmental Justice Funds, 14 Women’s Funds and 44 NGOs working on WR and EJ. Between 2016 and 2019, GAGGA Partners transferred 1,189 grants to GG in 30 countries in Africa, Eurasia and Latin America, totalling EUR 8,018,875.94 (on average, 297 grants of EUR 6,744 per year).

¹ Given that the volume of GAGGA actions in Europe is rather small compared to the other regions, for simplicity these two regions (Europe and Asia) are treated like one, denominated Eurasia. More specifically, this term refers to Georgia and the Asian countries where GAGGA has a presence.

² GAGGA monitoring cycles run annually, with 2019 being the last completed cycle at the beginning of the evaluation. For this reason, the FEE covers the first four years of programme execution (2016-2019).

³ Principal programme components that sustained the actions of the Alliance (budget, internal structures, Partners), and how these elements were combined to provide financial and non-financial support, through different engagement modalities, to Funds and NGOs for their work to support the GGs, and to the GGs themselves for their L&A actions at the Intersection of WR and EJ.

⁴ Delivery of outcomes, i.e. changes reported by GG, Funds and NGOs, as a result of the strengthening of their capacities and the support for their L&A work at the Intersection of WR and EJ.

⁵ Comprehensive reading of those changes reported by GG, Funds and NGOs in terms of the observed interactions and changes among GAGGA Partners and the external actors they influenced; and how these interactions and changes relate to GAGGA’s ToC.

It is estimated that for every 4 EUR that GAGGA spent, about 1 EUR was invested in running the programme (programme coordination and programme costs) and about 3 EUR were used for providing financial and non-financial support to the Funds, NGOs and GG in the Alliance (grantmaking and linking and learning). This ratio between programme management and programme execution costs is considered an indication of efficient programme management, given the complexity of GAGGA's intervention model (multi-level, multi-stakeholder, cross-movement).

Furthermore, GAGGA's grantmaking budget increased every consecutive year, with the budget in 2019 being 30 percent higher than the budget for 2016. Given that the total costs of programme operations remained almost constant, while the overall support going to GAGGA Partners increased every year, it can be concluded that GAGGA efficiency improved over the years.

The FEE identifies GAGGA's operational model as the most "significant factor" that contributed to the programme delivery. This model was highly appreciated by participants in the Alliance because of its flexibility to respond to GG agendas and context-specific circumstances, as well as for its ability to adopt complementary approaches to support L&A by GG at the Intersection of WR and EJ. These attributes are related to: (1) the possibility, inherent in the design of the programme, of channelling funds directly to GG; (2) the recognition, again inherent in the model, that they are the most appropriate organisation to implement solutions on the ground; and (3) the success of the model in mobilising and linking up actors working at different scales (local, national, regional and international) and assuming complementary roles to support L&A by GG at the Intersection.

GAGGA's delivery

The FEE concluded that GAGGA was effective in strengthening Funds and NGOs' capacities to support GG L&A at the intersection of WR and EJ, through complementary financial and non-financial support (e.g. L&A capacity building, direct support for L&A with and for women, and ongoing technical and political support). Both Funds and NGOs increased their knowledge and improved their understanding of the Intersection, with several becoming representatives in this topic in their countries and regions. They also report having explicitly incorporated the Intersection of WR and EJ in their organisational structures and strategies, thereby increasing the numbers of GG they support, as well as expanding the geographical coverage of their support.

The FEE also concluded that GG have greatly improved their capacity for L&A at the intersection of WR and EJ. Through peer-to-peer interaction and exchange, capacity building, and participatory action research, GG (including women participants and community members with whom they interact) gained a deeper understanding of the links between the environmental impacts of extractive industries and large infrastructure projects, and their gendered-differentiated impacts, i.e. violations of women's rights. GG also reported significant improvements in their knowledge of laws and regulations protecting women's and environmental rights, in their communication strategies for L&A, and in their capacity to participate in multi-stakeholder dialogues on common agendas for joint L&A.

GAGGA offered a platform for strategic collaboration between WR and EJ Funds, NGOs, civil society organizations and movements for joint L&A at the Intersection of WR and EJ at different levels (local, national and international). This permitted the adoption of more systemic and effective L&A approaches, compared to working in silos.

GAGGA's achievements

Successful cases of cross-movement collaboration to challenge the societal norms underpinning the exclusion, threats and violations of women's rights were identified at the local level in the three regions where GAGGA intervened (Africa, Eurasia, Latin America). Changes in this regard referred to women's self-recognition as rights-holders, and increased recognition and support by communities of women as rights-holders and agents of change for environmental protection and the defence of communities' lands. This enabled women to influence community decision-making spaces and actions that affect women's access to a clean and safe environment and the use of natural resources.

The most frequently reported outcomes in this regard referred to community actions supporting women's access to productive land, forest resources and water; communities actively participating in women-led, sustainable livelihood initiatives contributing to women's food security and economic autonomy, mitigation of climate change impacts, and the well-being of the community in general; and communities participating in women-led restoration and conservation initiatives contributing to women's rights to a clean, healthy and safe environment. Other outcomes included community collaborative efforts to improve infrastructure and access to basic services (e.g. drinking water, roads, health services); and support from community members and organizations for women-led L&A for policy design and implementation concerning the intersection of WR and EJ.

The FEE also identified a variety of successful cases of cross-movement collaboration to influence decision makers at local, national and international levels. At the national level, policymakers took action to: restrict or ban the granting of mining licences and/or establish mining-free areas; guarantee the safeguard of women's rights to water, land and forests; and introduce new policies and regulations related to food security. Other affirmative actions by government authorities in favour of environmental protection, and the well-being of women and the community in general included: the facilitation of registration of community land titles; the adoption of gender equity principles at the municipal level; and the provision of drinking water for the community. GAGGA participants also reported instances of favourable judicial decisions in cases of potential or actual violation of women's rights and environmental degradation (e.g. the suspension of hydroelectric projects licences; endorsement of the communities' rights to information and prior consultation; release from custody of wrongfully accused community members), as well as intervention by state agencies for the favourable resolution of land conflicts affecting women (e.g. distribution of land ownership certificates; police enforcement of the protected community forests; declaration of mine-free municipality and water protection area, etc.). With respect to private companies, a type of actor not considered in GAGGA's original ToC, a number of unexpected positive outcomes were reported. These included instances of private companies taking preventative and corrective measures to avoid damaging the environment and the violation of women's rights; and the payment of compensations for negative social and environmental impacts caused by their operations.

At the international level, joint L&A actions targeting international donors, international financial institutions (IFIs), and the Green Climate Fund (GCF), successfully influenced these actors to become more responsive to WR and EJ.

Targeted IFIs responded to joint advocacy by environmental NGOs and women's rights organisations by taking steps to strengthen and improve the implementation of gender and environmental policies and integrate binding safeguards. In other cases, IFIs acknowledged the weaknesses of current policies to safeguard women's rights and the environment and, in some cases, adopted higher standards for project

implementation. Evidence of these changes can be found in the adjustments made by targeted IFIs to their Policies on Public Information, Grievance Redress Mechanisms, and Environmental and Social Frameworks.

The L&A strategy developed by GAGGA targeting bilateral and private foundations succeeded in awakening their interest in the Intersection of WR and EJ. This led, in some cases, to donors specifically including the Intersection in their policies and funding mechanisms, thereby increasing the availability of funding for work on WR and EJ and for GG.

It is important to note that the criminalisation, the defamation and the threats to the safety of women human rights and environmental defenders, due to their activism and L&A, are ever more common in areas where there is large-scale capital investment in resource extraction, industrial agriculture and large infrastructure projects. This situation has highlighted the need to continue to fund and support the adoption of security protocols, holistic self-care and collective care practices, as well as the rapid response mechanisms for the protection of women human rights and environmental defenders.

Conclusions

This FEE concludes that:

- GAGGA's key issues, women's rights and environmental justice (in the context of widespread environmental degradation and the global climate crisis) remain central topics in contemporary political, social and environmental discourse, and highly pertinent.
- In this context, the strengthening and cross-movement work that GAGGA does and supports, its focus on the intersection of women's rights and environmental justice, and its L&A intervention from local to international levels are highly relevant and innovative.
- The actions implemented by the Alliance have contributed to achieving varied and valuable outcomes in a diversity of social actors, who have power and/or influence over decisions concerning the management and use of natural resources, and over the distribution of environmental costs and benefits; as well as those concerning the defence and protection of women's rights.
- The FEE found that GAGGA made significant progress towards achieving its 5-year goals, as set out in the ToC. In the process, GAGGA was able to validate, adjust and improve its intervention model. In summary, the GAGGA intervention has proved to be **pertinent**, **relevant** and **innovative**; moreover, its actions were **effective** and **efficient**.