



Mid-Term Evaluation 11th EDF ADGP (038031) & Formulation of Governance programme (MIP)

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

AGPG	Accountable Democratic Governance Programme
ADR	Alternative Disputes Resolution
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DPs	Development Partners
IECMS	Integrated Electronic Case Management System
EQ	Evaluation Questions
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
EUR	Euro
FA	Financing Agreement
FDG	Focus Group Discussions
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GoR	Government of Rwanda
HRBA	Human rights-based approach
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IL	Intervention Logic
JC	Judgement criteria
JRLOS	Justice, Reconciliation, Law and Order Sector
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAJ	Maison d'Accès à la Justice
MINECOFIN	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MINIJUST	Ministry of Justice
MIP	Multi Annual Indicative Programme
MPs	Members of Parliament
NAO	National Authorizing Officer
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NST 1	National Strategy for Transformation 1
ODAS	Online Declaration of Assets System
PE	Programme Estimate
PSC	Programme Steering Committee
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely
SSPII	Strategic Sector Plan 2
SWAP	Sector-Wide Approach
SWG	Sector Working Group
TAT	A Technical Assistance team
TC	Technical Committees (TC)
ToC	Theory for Change (ToC)
ToR	Terms of Reference

Executive summary

This report documents the **mid-term** evaluation findings of the “Accountable Democratic Governance Programme (ADGP) over the period from September 2017 until December 2021. The ADGP signed in 2016 was originally foreseen for 48 months, but in light of the late starting in 2017, two years after signing the Financing Agreement in 2016, it was extended by 18 months, i.e., until 16 June 2022.

The ADGP, with a budget of 14 million EUR, is funded under the EU National Indicative Programme 11th EDF (2014-2020). The Programme is grounded in the Rwanda Vision 2050 and the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) and its priorities aim to reinforce accountability of governance institutions towards citizens and to enhance citizen participation to hold duty bearers to account. ADGP encompasses two components: (i) Accountable Democratic Governance within the Office of the Ombudsman, the Parliament and the Ministry of Justice, and (ii) Aid management component focused on the National Authorizing Officer (NAO) Support Unit.

The overall evaluation process was led by a Reference Group (RG), comprising of representatives from the National Authorizing Officer (NAO), the Ministry of Economic Planning (Minecofin), Parliament, the Office of the Ombudsman, Ministry of Justice (MINIJUST) through the Access to Justice Coordination Unit, and a Technical Assistance Team (TAT). Each phase of the evaluation has been presented and discussed with the RG composed of key institutions.

Brief outline of the “Accountable Democratic Governance Programme (ADGP) ”

The ADGP aims is “**to enhance accountable governance by promoting citizen participation** and mobilisation for delivery of development, **strengthening public accountability and improving service delivery at national and local levels**”

The design of the ADGP Programme with a budget of EUR 14 million aimed to support the efforts of the Republic of RWANDA to support the role of accountable institutions for improving services delivery at national and local levels while at the same time increasing the participation of the citizens to hold duty bearers to account.

The ADGP is implemented under the decentralised management modalities with a Technical Assistance Team (TAT) management unit based in Kigali. The Financing Agreement was broken down by cost types and spread among several organisations (The Financing Agreement was broken down by cost and spread among several organisations (Ombudsman Parliament Ministry of Justice and NAO) and TAT. The ADGP key results are as follows:

- The Parliament capacity is enhanced to play a more active role in overseeing the Government of Rwanda policy implementation and legislative reform. (Accountable Democratic Governance-Component 1)
- The Office of the Ombudsman staff skills is strengthened in the prosecution and investigation of corruption cases, its role in terms of monitoring law implementation. Accountable Democratic Governance-Component 1)
- The capacity of the Access to Justice Coordination Unit is improved to coordinate the Abunzi mediation committees’ system and build up a functional reporting and monitoring mechanism. Accountable Democratic Governance-Component 1)
- The NAO unit staff is strengthened for an enhanced national mutual accountability of aid and efficient aid delivery (Aid Management- component 2)

An important feature of the ADGP design is that Institutions support outputs are not mutually supportive, and there is not specific mechanism designed to enhance participation of the citizens to hold duty bearers to account.

The purpose and structure of the evaluation

The overall purpose of the evaluation, as noted in the terms of reference, is to provide an independent assessment of the ADGP programme including whether it produced the intended outputs, and the reasons behind the observed successes and/or failures; to identify lessons learnt; and to make recommendations to inform the EUD, Rwandan Beneficiaries as well as EU future programming under the MIP 2021-2027. The midterm evaluation is conceived primarily as a **stocktaking and forward-looking exercise**. It aims to draw lessons from ADGP interventions against their outputs, and to provide recommendations to consolidate or guide current practices. This mid-term evaluation follows a **results-based approach**. The ADGP mid-term evaluation followed a standard Qualitative Evaluation design. The evaluation examined and re-constructed the ADGP underlying theory of change. Based on this, a set of six evaluation questions were developed in accordance with the Terms of Reference (ToR). As requested in the ToR, this evaluation was performed along the **five standard OECD/DAC** evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. The evaluation questions focused on the strategic relevance of AGDP's design against the Vision 2050 and Rwandan context. In addition, the evaluation assessed how closely it met institutional and citizens needs on the ground as well as its design coherence in *"promoting citizen participation and strengthening public accountability and improving service delivery"*. The cost effectiveness of the ADGP management and arrangements programme was examined against the expected results of the programme in particular the appropriateness of the decentralized management modalities used with the implementing partners (programme estimates – (PE) of the NAO, Office of the Ombudsman, the Parliament and Ministry of Justice). The performance and results obtained on the accountability services delivery by these institutions and the degree of citizens' participation demand on accountability were also assessed. In addition, a focus on the Mid-term impact and criteria is addressed, based on the lessons learned, sustainability mechanisms put in place, replication of best practices, and ownership of the ADGP action. Crosscutting issues – in particular, women and vulnerable groups – are integrated using appropriate judgement criteria (JC). The evaluation further assessed the importance of **context-specific factors in the ADGP contribution** to institutional services delivery, observed civil society changes, developments, and trends.

The evaluation follows a four **phased approach** of: Inception Phase → Desk Phase → Field Phase → Synthesis Phase. Using this approach, the evaluation team has triangulated, validated, or refuted preliminary findings through different data collection instruments. The evaluation is based on a review of 120 documents, 6 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), more than 100 semi-structured interviews and three field visits in Musanze, Jenda and Rurembo sectors in Nyabihu district in addition to remote interviews.

The report provides a summary of findings of ADGP contribution at the mid-term period leading to a synthesized set of conclusions and recommendations.

Main findings

Relevance

ADGP is a direct response to the Rwandan priorities outlined in the Vision 2050 and NST1 and to specific strategic plans of the implementing institutions. ADGP logic of intervention is relevant to address state institutions' needs. The ADGP expected outputs are directly aligned with each institution's strategy. However, desired outcomes and outputs are too ambitious, given institutions' current human resources capacities to manage ADGP funds. External constraints such as COVID and the lack of knowledge of the EDF Procurement (Services, Supplies and Works) procedures brought a

burden workload. Beyond the strategic plans, the complexity of institutional and operational context was not fully assessed during the design of the ADGP design. There was no risk analysis or assessment available neither in the Financing Agreement nor during the revision of the logframe. The overall ADGP management design and implementation was mainly based on institutional stakeholders' needs on functioning rather than improvements regarding citizens needs, in accordance with ADGP objectives. This is mainly due to the absence of official involvement of civil society stakeholders in the ADGP design. The team noticed a lack of coherent strategic thinking on how to engage with all institutions (Parliament, Office of Ombudsman and Ministry of Justice – Access to Justice Unit) as it would increase their visibility vis-à-vis citizens, and definitely impacted the effectiveness of the overall programme.

Efficiency

ADGP under each project is well managed both in financial and administrative terms. However, the slow absorption of funds demonstrates the institution difficulties to manage the programme in accordance with EDF procedures. NAO and Programme Estimates (PE) have made commendable efforts to operate in a timely and flexible manner for ensuring maximum institutional ownership, taking into consideration the impact of drastic COVID pandemic measures on activities. However, limitations were detected in modalities of the programme, within the decentralised management system. While the work achieved by the Imprest Administrators and the Imprest accounting Officers, in charge of verifying administrative and financial compliance against the initial planning, was unanimously recognised, these modalities have not created flexibility to address the *ad hoc* issues faced by these institutions to perform better in their mandates. Even though the work of the PE's was effective, there is a lack of internal monitoring and learning tool on how to address citizen participation in a cost-effective way.

The late arrival of the technical assistance team (TAT), one year after the start of ADGP activities was taken into account. In addition, the Terms of reference of the TAT, mainly focused on providing assistance to the NAO Support Unit. This created a fragmentation in the management of the programme as the modality was not effective for TAT to propose ADGP activity adjustments against the overall programme objective within the key stakeholders. It also does not give the TAT opportunity to provide adequate incentives and practical guidance tailored to the institutional needs, ensuring an effective mainstreaming of the overall strategy of ADGP aligned to key expected results. Administrative arrangements of the programme have been restricted to the implementation of activities, limiting the reflection and analysis to address necessary adjustments against the objectives. Those arrangements, focused on NAO and PEs, did not address the interrelated issues faced by these institutions against the ADGP objective, neither the potential bridges of cooperation towards civil society. There was no practical guidance on strategic reflections on how accountable institutions may act and interact better with citizens at different levels (national, district, sectors, and cells level). The beneficiary institutions did not fully benefit from the TAT as the management structure did not allow for direct interface and interaction between them. This can be explained by the disconnection between ADGP implementers, who did not receive sufficient support, higher political level. Ensuring close relationships between EU support and Rwandan institutions is critical to allow bespoke responses to changing contexts and institutions, and to capitalise on emerging opportunities.

The delayed start of the programme was not cost effective. Significant time was lost before the recruitment and arrival of the TAT team. National lockdown and interdiction of large gatherings hampered and brought to a halt all programme activities until the implementation of alternative measures were undertaken. ADGP management has not yet created ground for fostering both 'horizontal' and "vertical" communication and outreach cooperation among key stakeholders, without compromising their mandate at national level and information trickling down to the regions and district levels.

The programme requires a clear monitoring framework for the TAT, in their support to the NAO and stakeholders, to capitalize on good practices in order to boost citizen participation. A robust mechanism to involve civil society partners in demanding accountability from institutions is needed. Beyond joint technical committees and steering committees, there is no coordination mechanism among institutions to systematically document, monitor, analyse and integrate the accountable benchmarks into ADGP. This would have been a useful “entry point” to set up relevant joint communication plans without compromising the specific role of institutions.

The shift from in-person to online meetings for the Parliament was cost efficient. In addition, complete digitalisation of court systems, through the use of electronic information case management systems, is cost effective and a great value for money. The awareness campaign initiatives and the use of media to raise citizen awareness on public service delivery (TV, radio, online) for the Office of the Ombudsman and the Parliament were also an effective way of reaching out to a larger number of citizens.

Effectiveness with focus on projects' results and performance

ADGP performance, based on specific project activities, implemented stakeholders appears to be satisfactory. Each partner made strong inputs in institutional capacity enhancement in the area of access to justice at local levels, fight against corruption and Parliament operational capabilities in oversight through capacity building initiatives and awareness raising. During the pandemic, which had crippled the work of the implementing partners for up to 18 months, innovative tools of online/remote work were adopted.

The major achievements of ADGP to enhance the effectiveness of the beneficiary institutions at the mid-term period include the following:

- Upgrading and integrating (ongoing) of the Online Declaration of Assets System (ODAS) is a significant achievement from the Office of Ombudsman. The online system is publicly available and thereby engendering transparency and providing the opportunity for CSOs and citizens to have oversight and accountability of the system. In 2021, with semi – digitalized systems, the Office has been able to verify the declaration of assets of 1,754 persons (13.2%) and verified physically all 11 (100%) political organizations in Rwanda. ODAS integration within other relevant agencies in 2023, will enable a seamless verification to be done online allowing for audit of both public officials and the political organizations.
- Supporting access to justice at local levels through MAJ (Maison d'Acces à la Justice), the Abunzi mediation committees, are key achievements to handle citizens' complaints, to reduce the backlog of cases, providing a timely and low-cost justice. These home-grown solutions, without the intervention of formal courts, are valuable tools to enable conducive environments for social cohesion, citizens' confidence in the administration of justice and an entry point for facilitating access to justice and resolution of citizens' disputes.
- The parliament has made strong contributions to the development of tools to increase operational and functional capabilities as well as its ability to initiate good quality legislation and to better analyse proposed legislation.

Despite the above achievements and innovations, the programme has not yet contributed significantly to vibrant citizens' participation in governance or increased citizen's sensitization, organization, mobilisation and action to demand for more accountability from duty bearer-institutions. Accordingly, much remains to be done at the mid-term period in order to consolidate the achievements and fully embed operations, particularly in term of visibility and outreach at local (district) levels towards citizens. The accountability mechanisms put in place should be more sustainable and fully effective in order to make distinctions between capacity building and application of skills acquired. In addition, strengthening parliamentary committees to undertake robust oversight would bolster the enactment of policies. These policies would also benefit immeasurably from contributions of CSOs. There needs to be a focus on

advanced investigation techniques in the Ombudsman services. The enactment of the ADR policy will provide a uniform alternative dispute resolution for enhancing access to quality justice. Apart from MINIJUST, which has presence at the grassroots, citizen awareness on service delivery remains dispersed and may need to be leveraged in a way to enhance larger groups of citizen voices on the need for accountability, rule of law and governmental transparency. The evaluators are of the view that a mutual and common comprehension of civil society participation among key stakeholders, without compromising their mandate for improving service delivery and enhancing accountability demand, may be considered in the future.

Impact at the midterm period

There has been positive developments regarding the functioning of each institution in terms of service delivery. Nevertheless, the ADGP has been impeded from assisting each institution to adopt an integrated approach to enhance civil society awareness and knowledge about these institutions. Although Abunzi Committees and MAJ have registered impressive results in handling cases, reducing excessive costs and time usually required for litigation, arbitration and adjudication processes, a standardized way to mediate conflicts still lacks and should come through the enactment of an alternative dispute resolution (ADR). Without binding standards on resolution/mediation practices and without proper monitoring from the Abunzi¹, there is unfortunately room for uneven mediation/reconciliation practices, thus unresolved grievances, and the risk of injustices among potential justice seekers. Although the Office of Ombudsman has upgraded and integrated the online process of Asset Declaration System (ODAS), the Ombudsman investigation procedures, through progress and investigation results by typology of corruption cases, are still missing. Lastly, the Parliament has mainly implemented training activities without any link to the expected improvement of the parliamentary performance in the Oversight of the Government Actions.

Sustainability

Although ADGP is embedded into NST1, sustainability is not addressed in programme design, nor in subsequent reporting, and there is not yet any exit strategy. There are some serious concerns about the sustainability of many aspects of the Programme. The most serious barrier to sustainability is related to higher-level political will and to some extent the degree of institutional will due the limited budget.

Conclusions at mid-term period

AGDP is in line with the Government of Rwanda (GOR)'s strategic priorities outlined in the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1), 2017-2024, all the institutions strategic plans flow from this national overarching strategy. ADGP programme has indeed contributed to building the capacity of institutions to undertake their core mandate. Key stakeholders' outputs are directly aligned with their own strategy, which requires a quick response and a comprehensive and integrated approach.

The overall conclusions across the different clusters of evaluation are summarised as follows:

1. The programme is highly relevant to the institutions' needs and the focus on ministry of justice, Ombudsman and Parliament, as they are involved in all citizen-centred activities at national and local level, is adequate. However, the programme design is not adjusted to the current context

¹ The total number of Abunzi is 17,941 (55.67% of them are men while 44.33% are women). The total Mediation Committees is 2,563, with 416 at Sector level and 2,147 at Cell level. Law N° 020/2020 of 19/11/2020 amending Law No 37/2016 of 08/09/2016 determining Organisation, Jurisdiction, Competence and Functioning of an Abunzi committee.

nor the institutional and human capacities of the implementing partners (IP), thus affecting its relevance. There are deficiencies in the design and formulation of the project, such as the lack of a sound problem analysis of those institutions (no analysis of the current functioning of institutions and workload). Desired outcomes and outputs are too ambitious, given human resources' current capacities and institutional external constraints. The intervention logic hardly encompasses civil society participation linking them with the performance of those institutions.

2. There is a disconnection between the global objective of the programme, which is to “enhance accountable governance for promoting citizen participation and mobilisation”, and the specific objective, centred on institutional outcomes rather than citizen participation processes. The lacking voice of CSOs in the programme design was found to be a major inconsistency of the overall programme.
3. The delivery of outputs has largely been demand-driven (based on each stakeholder's needs and capacity), to the relative detriment of the citizens awareness on the service delivery and to the reinforcement of coordination and synergies across institutions. The three institutions' components of the programme have, to date, acted largely separately. Outcomes are not yet fully achieved at the mid-term period and all opportunities were missed to build on joint approaches among institutions, to promote local citizen dynamics and institutional visibility. There is little evidence that various outreach interventions in the field have brought about the desired change by the institutions at the national level, or that those outreach activities have better linked local issues that cause national challenges. This definitely had an impact on the overall effectiveness of the ADGP.
4. The project was well managed in terms of financial and administrative output delivery. However, limitations were detected in the modalities of the decentralised management system which have created a slow absorption of funds. The focus was the compliance with EDF procedures for implementing activities rather than on objectives. In addition, the current arrangements within the PE's in terms of EU administrative and financial compliance have slowed the project progress because of lengthy institutional decision taking built into the system. The PE arrangement have not been able to integrate specific technical assistance needed by the implementing institutions, thereby causing a disconnection between the EU project activities and issues faced by stakeholders in upgrading their performance. The heavy responsibility fell on Imprest managers as main gatekeepers to implement the activities and act as bridge between institutions. The TAT and the EU are not efficient to tackle key issues faced by stakeholders, reflect on implementation, adjust activities according to the programme objectives and institutional mandate was an enormous task. In the process, their effectiveness was compromised.
5. The late mobilization of the TAT, which was supposed to support the programme estimates (PE's) with proper implementation according to procedures and good practice, had the PEs working on their own without guidance. The inadequate capacity of the implementing institutions on EDF procurement and contracting procedures, the insufficient consideration of the heavy bureaucratic hold-ups related to internal workings of government has resulted delays in ADGP implementation. The TAT's terms of reference limitations greatly hindering concrete issues faced by stakeholders for numerous reasons. For instance, the profile of experts and nature of support were limited and mainly projected as a means to implement and supervise the programme with NAO in accordance with EDF procedures, rather than an opportunity to advise the institutions on how to better improve their service delivery. The TAT was not proactive to adjust the ToR within the ADGP priorities. The TAT did not use short term expertise facilities to support institutions on *ad hoc* issues and did not act as a catalyst and facilitator for cooperation

and dialogue among institutions, in particular between the Office of the Ombudsman, the Parliament and other institutional stakeholders. As a result, the overall efficiency of the programme is impacted.

6. The project outcomes are not yet fully achieved at the mid-term period. The full EU potential to sustain an accountable service delivery and to promote civil society participation on accountability remained under-utilized. Opportunities were lost to build joint approaches among institutions, to promote local dynamics to structurally support drivers of change, and to promote civic voice.
7. Even though there was accrued focus on EU programme management and procedures, EU visibility was not adequately enhanced through the implementation of this project.

It is important to consider that, in its course of implementation this programme, was hindered by the Covid-19 pandemic from March 2020 to end 2021. All planned activities requiring large numbers of citizens had to be held in abeyance from 2020 to 2022, due to a national ban on large gatherings and the suspension of inter-district travel, making it difficult for the implementing institutions to visit action sites.

Recommendations at mid-term period

Based on the conclusions above, the evaluation team presents the following recommendations:

Recommendations to the EU

1. Extend the ADGP programme after June 2022 to give opportunities for key stakeholders to develop a common strategy on visibility towards citizens in order to inform them better about institutional services delivery and to enhance the citizen knowledge and citizen contribution on what can be expected from those institutions.
2. Set up an exit strategy by transferring some activities to mainstream staff and allocating resources. A Theory of Change for the ADGP Programme should be developed based on the work done and on the analysis in the present report. The extension of the Programme should benefit from momentum within society expectations relative to accountability, and what is expected from Ombudsman services, access to justice and Parliamentary oversights of public policies implementation.
3. Increase the visibility of EU and ADGP towards citizens to ensure that the EU can maximize the cost-effectiveness and value for the funds. There is a need to further prioritize communication aspects of each institution in the coherent ADGP communication plan. Doing this will lead to development of an integrated communication approach towards citizens. The development of concerted and joint strategy of communication towards citizens as well as the survey organised at district levels to assess what is expected from ombudsman services, justice and parliamentary oversights of polices implementation should be discussed as a matter of urgency, and integrated in priority into the programme approaches, and activities. Gender mainstreaming should be strengthened in ADGP, and gender-disaggregated indicators and data sources developed.
4. Enhance AGDP's role as a repository of experiences and practices. The TAT should act as a catalyst and facilitator for cooperation and dialogue among institutions, in particular the Office of the Ombudsman and the Parliament between NAO and other institutional stakeholders, and

as a knowledge management process facilitator, rather than being a mere NAO adviser. As originally planned, special attention must be paid to (i) visibility of ADGP actions (ii) data collection and management to facilitate the preparation of guidelines associated with citizen demand on accountability, (ii) the development and operationalization of a results-based monitoring and evaluation framework, including across-the-board impact assessments on gender (iii) the fostering of partnerships with traditional and non-traditional stakeholders (chiefs of villages, CSOs) to promote applied best practices in accountability demand and supply in specific sectors.

Recommendations for the key stakeholder institutions

1. Define more realistic ambitions, more concrete and specific approaches to address the needs of those institutions for the remaining period with better consideration of internal human resource capacity, administrative delays etc..;
2. A structured, pre-emptive exit strategy should be developed, whilst ensuring that this is in line with the institutional agenda. This will include a “closing period” of six months at the end of the implementation period, during which the activities will be concluded, final assessments conducted, and stakeholders’ supported in moving forward with their institutional agendas and capitalising on the Programme’s support.
3. Adjust the planning of activities including the exit strategy period to consolidate and sustain the achievements made thus far by MINIJUST, Ombudsman Office and the Parliament. Focused priority on application of skills and enactment / implementation of policies; enactment/adoption of the alternative dispute resolution policy ensuring uniform legal practices and implement the Information management System (MIS) for monitoring/adjusting the Abunzi learning system. Focus on investigation techniques other than ODAS will be not efficient; focus on the functioning of parliamentary house committees in particular the inquiries committees to be able to better perform its oversight role.
4. Realign expenses allocated to each institution, in order to monitor the effectiveness of institutional interventions in order to report on progress and follow-up of ADGP objectives and not merely on budget execution.
5. Bolster the link between institutional agenda/priorities and citizen expectations, scrutinize and consider local realities in greater depth. Institutions should adapt the services delivery tools, to specific local contexts. This would increase the generation of systematic evidence-based documentation. It would also provide a set of best practices on the communication tools and services required to create confidence between institution and civil society, further enhancing citizen participation.
6. Ensure that accountability services for citizens are drawn on political economy analysis (PEA), taking into consideration knowledge about the land issues, matrimonial issues among others.
7. Ensure visibility actions made by institutions at the local level are linked with local issues. Ensure institutional services are appropriately linked to grassroots communities’ empowerment and citizen’s needs. State institutions actions (Parliament and Ombudsman) should also be also drawn on more detailed consideration of grassroots communities’ empowerment on accountability demands.

8. Work on efficient processes for creating coordination between national and local levels create an Anti-corruption App, a Claim App or MAJ apps to facilitate collection of claims on grassroots communities' practices Calling on its strong presence in villages.

Recommendations for the TAT

1. Tailor the TA support towards institutional key priority needs and provide short-term expertise to work hand in hand on specific issues faced by stakeholders relating to their mandates. The ToR should be adjusted immediately against ADGP priority interventions during the extension period. Other specific support should be allocated to the TAT team, to assist in the implementation of priority activities.
2. Consideration should also be given to engage some of the short-term experts on a full-time, *in situ* basis, if possible, for the remaining programme period
3. Continue to work with the Imprest teams while enlarging the scope to cover other key institutional representatives, in particular with the involvement of higher political levels in the Steering Committee, to generate a strong political support. At operational level, continue solving structural issues, identifying and using the 'right mix' of modalities - institutional and operational support- in order to help not only the PEs achieve their objectives, but more essentially, for the beneficiary institutions to increase their performance on accountability service delivery.
4. Create and fund a joint mechanism between TAT and all institutions to document, share experiences and lessons learned across actions implemented on the ground. Training activities on service delivery *per se* are not sufficient for leveraging change and are a large-scale experiment that should be well documented, in order to understand better which measures, work and which do not work for boosting citizen demand on accountability and rule of law. A more effective knowledge management function focused on access to quality of justice should be integrated into the ADGP programming approach to its annual plan.
5. Monitoring and evaluating progress and results achieved throughout the ADGP objectives processes and not only the activities *per se*. This is essential to ensure the effective pursuit of ADGP objectives, as start-off initial benchmarks for the accountability demand and supply learning processes as well as measuring the tools and methods proposed for creating citizens' participation and civil society demand on accountability. The TAT should establish, in agreement with the institutions, a monitoring tool as learning mechanism to systematically monitor, analyse and integrate the accountable benchmarks to improve institutional performance. Beyond Imihigo process, previous experiences demonstrate limited technical capacity among staff to carry out monitoring and evaluation functions as learning tools thereby losing focus on expected results
6. Reposition AGDP as a repository of experiences and practices. TAT should act as a catalyst and facilitator for cooperation and dialogue among EU and institutions. In addition, TAT should act as a knowledge management process facilitator with special attention to a robust (i) visibility of ADGP actions (ii) data collection and management to facilitate the preparation of communication guidelines associated with quality of service delivery and citizen expectations on accountability, (ii) development and operationalization of a comprehensive results-based monitoring and evaluation framework, including across-the-board impact assessments on gender (iii) fostering of partnerships with traditional and non-traditional stakeholders (chiefs of villages, CSOs) to promote applied best practices in accountability demand and supply in specific sectors.

1. Introduction

The EU Delegation commissioned an evaluation team from B&S Europe, consisting of experts in governance and evaluation, to undertake a mid-term evaluation of the ADGP. The total ADGP budget is EUR 14 millions out of which 2.000.000 EUR was dedicated to the Parliament, 2.000.000 EUR for the NAO support office, 3.250.000 EUR for the ministry of Justice, 3.250.000 EUR for the Ombudsman Office and 1,750,000 EUR for the TAT. Although ADGP programme was signed on December 2016, the programme started effectively in 2017 and is scheduled to end in June 2022. ADGP was originally foreseen for 48 months, but in light of the late start of the programme, it was extended by 18 months, i.e., until 16 June 2022. The evaluation took place between December 2021 and mid-February 2022.

In accordance with the TOR, the main objectives of this mid-term evaluation are:

- **An overall independent assessment of the past performance** of the ADGP programme, paying particular attention to its results measured against its expected objectives; and the reasons underpinning such results.
- **An analysis of key lessons learned at the mid-term period, conclusions and related recommendations** with a view to improve current and future ADGP strategies and activities, and to inform the planning of future EU intervention under priority area 3 of the MIP.

1.1. Scope of the Evaluation

The scope of this mid-term review is to provide an independent assessment of ADGP and to identify recommendations to improve the performance of the NAO unit and beneficiary institutions all over Rwandan Territory.

The evaluation focuses on Theory of Change (TOC) in the logical hierarchy of expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. It is based on the TOC approach, using the five OECD/DAC criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and the sustainability at the mid-term period. The importance of **context-specific factors** and the contribution of Rwandan institutions to observed changes, developments, and trends have been considered. The design and management of the ADGP programme have been also considered against the Office of the Ombudsman, the Parliament, the Ministry of Justice and the NAO institutional, operational context.

Results-based approaches and Best Practices have been considered in the perspective of the next EU programming on good governance and rule of Law designed under the MIP 2021-2027.

1.2. Structure of the Final Report

The present Final Report is divided into **six chapters**:

1. Chapter 1 is the introduction.
2. Chapter 2 presents the state of play of Rwandan context and key stakeholders.
3. Chapter 3 presents the main features of the methodological approach as well as its challenges and limitations in light of the COVID-19 context.
4. Chapter 4 provides an overview and detailed answers to each of the evaluation questions.
5. Chapter 5 summarises the main lessons learned, conclusions and presents recommendations.
6. Chapter 6 presents the annexes.

2. The operating environment of key stakeholders

2.1. The ADG Programme

Rwanda has made remarkable progress in developing its governance structures, maintaining security, promoting reconciliation, and strengthening the justice system. The government of Rwanda recognises the enabling role of accountable and capable governance institutions, based on rule of law and accountability to its citizens. The country, through its Rwanda's Vision 2050² and the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1), recognizes the potential for greater results, if more emphasis is put on institutional accountability towards citizens and their participation in decision-making processes. Addressing gaps in these areas could accelerate gains in terms of poverty reduction and socioeconomic transformation.

ADGP is divided into two components as follows:

- Component 1 is related to strengthening Accountable Democratic Governance (ADGP) within the Office of the Ombudsman, Parliament and Ministry of Justice. This was divided into 3 projects aiming at improving access to quality justice by strengthening alternative dispute resolution mechanisms (FED/2018/404/622), strengthening the operational capacities of the Ombudsman in fighting against corruption and injustice (FED/2018/404-235) and, supporting the role of the Parliament outreach and its oversight role to the executive (FED/2018/404-240)
- Component 2 addressed Aid management, focused on the National Authorizing Officer (NAO) Support Unit staff, to monitor and coordinate the EDF programme as well as the capacity of the line ministries and institutions to implement EU programmes, strengthening aid management and aid delivery in Rwanda.

The Financing Agreement was broken down by cost and spread among three institutions the Ombudsman, Parliament and the Ministry of Justice. In addition, a Technical Assistance team (TAT) was established as a beneficiary of EU Service contract to assist and support in the implementation of the overall programme.

The TAT was designed to assist and support the implementation of the programme, including: a) strengthening technical committees (TCs) and support the PSCs; b) improving coordination capacities between institutions; c) provide overall supervision and ensure effective management of the programme; d) provide other short-term expertise as required; e) establish and carry out Communication and citizens participation plans, administrative support: preparatory and ancillary tasks relating to planning, monitoring, reporting on project components, procurement and financial management of the programme.

TAT and ADGP beneficiary work outputs are intended to be interlinked and mutually supportive, with a view to achieve ADGP' objectives.

The expected outputs are evaluated at the mid-term period and are the basis of the evaluation matrix.

² As stated in the ToR , the Vision 2050 is anchored on five pillars: i) Human Development, ii) Competitiveness and Integration, iii) Agriculture for wealth creation, iv), Urbanization and Agglomeration and v) Accountable and Capable State Institutions. The first years of Vision 2050, up to 2024, are operationalised through Rwanda's 7-year plan: The National Strategy for Transformation (NST1), which articulates policy priorities under three key areas: social transformation, economic transformation, and transformational governance.

ADGP Action	<p>Component 1- Aid management 1. Strengthen the capacity of National Authorizing Officer (NAO) Support Unit staff to monitor and coordinate the EDF programmes as well as the capacity of the line ministries and institutions contributing to strengthen aid management and aid delivery;</p> <p>Component 2- Accountable Democratic Governance 2. FED/2018/404-622 - improve access to quality justice by strengthening alternative dispute resolution mechanisms (MINIJUST); 3. FED/2018/404-235 – Strengthen the operational capacities of the Ombudsman in fighting against corruption and injustice (Ombudsman); 4 FED/2018/404-240 - Support the role of the Parliament outreach and its oversight role to the executive (Parliament);</p>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance accountable governance by promoting citizen participation and mobilisation for delivery of development, strengthening public accountability and improving service delivery”;
Main results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key Result 1 - To strengthen aid management and aid delivery (<u>Support to NAO Support Unit</u>) Key Result 2 - To reinforce justice delivery at local level by strengthening the alternative dispute resolution mechanisms (Support to the Access to Justice Coordination Unit). Key Result 3 - To enhance the capacity of the Office of the Ombudsman in providing and guaranteeing equal opportunities, economic freedom and competition and preventing and fighting all forms of injustice and corruption (<u>Support to the Office of the Ombudsman</u>). Key Result 4 - To build strong proximity between the elected representatives and the population in guaranteeing the respect for fundamental human rights, democracy and good governance (<u>Support to the Parliament</u>).
Expected outputs	<p>Under Key Result 1- NAO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> R 1: NAO Support Unit is more effective. R 2: Capacity of the NAO Support Unit staff and office ministries and institutions strengthened. <p>Under Key Result 2- MINIJUST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> R1: Develop a long-term vision for the Abunzi Mediation Committee system guiding the future work of the Abunzi, ensuring that the system is sustainable; R2: Capacity of the Access to Justice Coordination Unit for reporting on the activities of alternative dispute resolution mechanism enhanced to facilitate outreach and interaction between different levels of administration. R3: Awareness of the population raised with respect to the services delivered by the Ministry of Justice, the mediation committees and the Access to Justice Coordination Unit and demand for accountability increased. <p>Under Key Result 2- Ombudsman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> R1: Institutional capacity and individual staff capacity for investigating corruption cases and injustice complaints enhanced to strengthen the capacity of the Office for prosecutions and investigation of cases. R 2: Capacity of the staff strengthened and built to meet statutory obligations for more effective measures for monitoring and auditing public and semi-public institutions, including support to its mandate in relation to monitoring the implementation of access to information law and any relevant laws. R3: The internal management and planning capacity is strengthened. R 4: Public awareness about the fight against corruption and injustice risen to support public information about its other mandates. <p>Under Key Result 3- Parliament</p>

³ See the Financial Agreement

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ R1: Planning and implementation management skills of the administration staff of the Parliament is enhanced. ➤ R2: Oversight role of Parliament enhanced by encouraging and assisting its ability to play its oversight and accountability roles more openly and effectively. ➤ R3: Legislative drafting capacity developed thereby supporting the ability of Parliament to play a more active and critical role in evaluating, contributing and complementing the drafting of legislative bills. ➤ R 4: Public outreach increased by demonstrating the relevance of its role and its work to the general public (the Rwandan media, NGOs, civil society groups, trade unions and members of the public).
Budget	€14 millions
Dates and duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing Agreement signed on 16th December 2016 • Start: 2017 • End: 16/06/2022

ADGP is implemented under decentralised management modalities (programme estimate - PE). The NAO and the Ministry of Finance and Economy Planning are the contracting authorities of the overall programme. The management of the PE via decentralized operations is ensured by 2 persons appointed in each institution. An imprest administrator and imprest accounting officer were appointed in each institution to implement the programme activities in agreement with the EU Delegation. They draw up and implement consecutive PEs award contracts, commit expenditure, and make the corresponding payments. They submit their technical and financial reports to the Programme Steering Committees and to the NAO with a copy to the Head of the EU Delegation. The NAO imprest administrator and accounting officers are responsible for coordinating the overall programme.

The ADGP governance structure, through a programme Steering Committee (PSC), chaired by NAO and with representatives from the Senate representative, the Chamber of Deputies, the Ministry of Justice, the Office of Ombudsman, and the EU as observer, meets twice a year, to provide guidance on ADGP policy direction, the strategies and operational issues.

Technical Committees (TC) – which meet every quarter is also represented by Parliament, the Access to Justice Coordination Unit and the Office of the Ombudsman. This TC is responsible for all technical follow-up on programme activities and for overseeing implementation of activities. The TC monitors performance through financial and narrative reports submitted by the implementing institutions and agencies.

The table below shows the Financing Agreement breakdown by cost with various modalities:

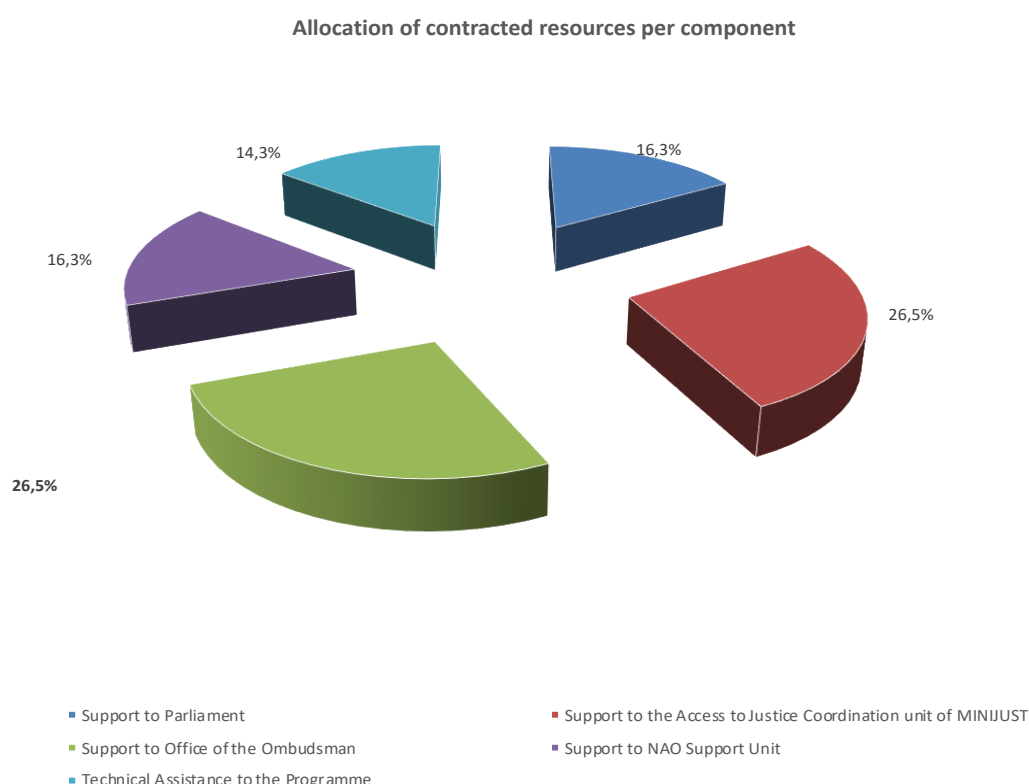
Table 1: ADGP budget Repartition of Funds among partners

Activity/objective/result,	Type of financing (Works, supplies, service contract, grant, PE)	ADGP Budget 14 millions EUR
Component 1: Accountable Governance		
Support to the Parliament	Programme estimate	2.000.000
Support to the Access to Justice Coordination Unit of the Ministry of Justice	Programme estimate	3.250 000
Support to the Office of the Ombudsman	Programme estimate	3.250.000

Component 2: Aid management		
Support to the NAO Support Unit	Programme estimate	2.000.000
Technical assistance (TA) for all programme implementation support (all PEs)	Service contract	1.750.000
Evaluation-audits	Service contract	500.000
Communication and visibility	Service contract	250.000
Contingencies		1.000.000

Source: ADGP Financing agreement

Figure 1. Repartition of funds allocated to each ADGP Beneficiary



2.2. The operating environment of ADGP stakeholders

ADGP is involved with stakeholders in order to create an enabling environment for accountability and citizen participation through better access to justice for vulnerable people, strengthen the Parliament’s role in overseeing the executive as well as outreaching to citizens to better monitor policy implementation, strengthen the role of the Ombudsman in its prosecution and investigation role and in monitoring implementation of laws. In addition to (MINECOFIN) the Ministry of Economic Planning through the NAO Support Unit, 3 main accountable institutions are directly involved in this programme which are the Parliament, the Ombudsman, and the Ministry of Justice to deepen their performance in their accountable role towards citizens.

The analysis of the key institutional stakeholders’ mandates demonstrate that they have differences in nature and composition, but these differences are complementary in the convergence of their key roles of accountability towards citizens. However, from the documents reviewed, coordination among the direct stakeholders towards citizens, is not explicit through the programme design. Even though the

programme does not explicitly indicate coordination, it can be deduced that, at the design stage of NST1, the overarching national plan was the starting point from where all institutions derive their strategic objectives and therefore all objectives and action plan complement each other.

ADGP design was mainly based on key institutions capacity enhancement, in order to perform better their mandate and increase participation of civil society. There was an assumption within ADGP design that the emphasis on institutional capacity strengthening at national level will serve as a mechanism for accountability dialogue between institutions and civil society at local levels. However, there was no real institutional capacity needs assessment of these institutions before the start of programme.

Beyond NAO support, it is essential to note that the citizens 'participation mechanism between those institutions acting mainly at the national level and the civil society was not detailed in the ADGP design. It was explained however by the NAO Support Unit⁴, that there was another programme directed specifically to the CSOs. The evaluators did not see the linkage between the ADGP and its partner programme on CSOs as indicated by the interlocutor.

2.2.1. Support to the Ministry of Justice (MINIJUST) to Improve Access to Quality Justice at the midterm period

From 2008, the Government of Rwanda established the Justice Sector Wide Approach as a structure for technical and inclusive policy engagement with all Justice Sector Stakeholders. In 2010, the Justice, Reconciliation, Law, and Order Sector (JRLOS) was legally established by the Prime Minister order N°43 of 25/10/2010. Justice, Reconciliation, Law and Order (JRLO) is as key priority area to Transformational Governance enshrined in Visions 2020 and 2050 and the National Strategy for Transformation (NST1) (2018-2024). All public institutions therefore derive their strategic objectives from this overarching strategic plan.

The Access to Justice Department was established in 2014 by the Prime Minister's order N°40/03 of 25/04/2014 determining the mission, functions, organizational structure, and summary of job positions of the Ministry of Justice/ Office of the Attorney General. The department deals with the provision of public legal aid and the coordination of Access to justice services to ensure proper functioning of JRLOs, Abunzi Committees and *Maison d'Accès à la Justice* (MAJ).

The Justice, Reconciliation, Law & Order Sector is a coordination structure which should enable Institutions In the sector to work together effectively towards common objectives, without compromising their operational or constitutional independence. The Institutions⁵ in the JRLO Sector are intended to provide justice-related services to the people of Rwanda with the aim of transforming Rwanda into a country marked by the rule of law, accountable governance and a culture of peace thus contributing to socio-economic development and poverty reduction.

The Justice Reconciliation Law and Order Sector's (JRLOS) strategic plan 2018/19 – 2023/24 expected impact is to “Enhanced rule of law to promote accountable governance, a culture of peace for poverty reduction”. The JRLOS Strategic Plan (2018/2019-2023/2024) builds upon the achievements of the previous Sector Strategic Plan (2013/2014-2017/2018) developed by the Ministry of Justice. The Strategic Sector Plan 2 (SSP II) has led to several achievements in access to justice such as the

⁴ Mr. Christophe Sirikari was indeed present and took active part in the design of the programme at formulation.

⁵ The Government member institutions of the JRLOS are the following: The Institute of Legal Practice and Development, the Judiciary, the Kigali International Arbitration Centre, the Military courts, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Internal Security, the Rwanda National Police, the National Commission for the fight against genocide, the National Commission for Human Rights, the National Law Reform Commission, the National Public Prosecution Authority, the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, the Office of the Ombudsman and the Rwanda Correctional Services.

Integrated Electronic Case Management System (IECMS) and increased access to legal aid through Legal Aid Week, Maison d'Accès à la justice (MAJ) and Abunzi committees.

Nevertheless, there are still challenges that have to be overcome. Whilst the policy plans are often there, in practice there are persistent problems on access to justice that affect the quality of justice system in particular at district levels (see Table 2).

Table 2: JRLOS stakeholders' analysis at the district levels

JRLOs	JRLOs members analysis at district levels	Challenges faced
<i>District JRLOS committees</i>	<p>The JRLOS District Committees were put in place in 2014 with a mandate to oversee the justice sector issues that may rise at local level (district) and to reinforce access to quality and affordable justice. They are comprised of one representative of the Ministry of Justice, Rwanda National Police, Rwanda Correctional Services, National Public Prosecution Authority, Rwanda Investigation Bureau, Rwanda Bar Association and of professional bailiffs. The committee is also comprised of two representatives of the district in charge of legal affairs, justice and governance, two representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations which deal with the justice sector, reconciliation and human rights operating in the district, one representative of National Commission for the Fight against Genocide (CNLG) and one representative of National Rehabilitation Centre. The committee is responsible for monitoring and coordinating the implementation of activities of the justice sector in the district of operation, raising and reporting issues that hinder the development of justice and proposing solutions to such issues and submitting them to the national level.</p> <p>Members of JRLOS Committees facilitate dialogues on topics such as the services delivered by MAJ, Prosecution, CSO operating in justice sector, services delivered by the Police and other relevant security sector operators. Members of JRLOs provide citizens with legal information/education, through radio talk shows. Representatives from other institutions (e.g prosecution office, police, Rwanda bar association, local NGOs, district representatives) are also invited to the talk show.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities of JRLOS Committees at district levels are still not as frequent as intended. • The referral system among Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) institutions to strengthen coordination of Legal aid provision is not yet established due to delay in approval of the ADR Policy by the Cabinet. • Legal aid law is not yet enacted. • Judgement execution and reporting on judgments' execution does not reveal the number of enforcement actions that may or may not be taking longer than the legal maximum. • Judgement execution methods are not uniform and differ from one district to another.
<i>Maison d'Accès à la Justice (MAJ)</i>	<p>The Ministry of Justice established Access to Justice Bureaux (MAJ) at every district level with three lawyers per district as a decentralized service to assist citizens to access legal aid at no cost. Their major responsibilities are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) To advise people on law related issues. b) To disseminate laws and regulations; c) To advise specifically Abunzi in legal matters and procedures, monitor and follow-up their activities; d) To coordinate the execution of court judgments and execute judgments for poor and vulnerable people; e) To provide legal assistance and legal representation in Courts for poor and vulnerable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAJ are not able to adequately monitor Abunzi committees' performance at district levels. As a consequence, MINIJUST may not be able to effectively monitor all activities and report on the Abunzi Committee performance in terms of quality of justice. • There is no adequate mechanism in place to coordinate the supply of legal services with MAJ. Additionally,

JRLOs	JRLOs members analysis at district levels	Challenges faced
	<p>people;</p> <p>f) To handle all issues related to G</p> <p>g) To assist people in conflict resolution through mediation (between themselves) or between them and other relevant organs.</p>	<p>the non-governmental legal aid providers are not well coordinated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Information System (MIS) for Abunzi is not yet operational
<i>Abunzi Mediation Committees</i>	<p>Mediation Committees played an important role in bringing justice closer to the poor, contributing to the education of citizens about their rights, while reducing the backlog of cases brought before the Courts. However, as legal aid policy considers Mediation Committees as an aid provider and as the three representatives of the MAJ have to report to the Ministry of Justice, there is an opportunity to develop and agree on a common M&E scheme for all legal aid services (and not only the work of the Mediation Committees).</p> <p>It is noted that Abunzi mediation committees are a home-grown solution with the primary objective of making justice affordable, timely, restorative, participatory and closer to people. Mediation Committees (Abunzi) were reintroduced in 2004⁶, supervised and coordinated by MINIJUST through MAJ. They exist at cell and sector level (appeal) in every District and its members are elected by their community. Abunzi are persons known within their communities due to their personal integrity and asked to intervene, free of charge, in the event of conflict. Members of the Mediation Committee are elected by the Cell and Sector's Council respectively, from among non-members of staff of local administrative entities or judicial organs. The law stipulates that at least thirty percent (30%) of members of the Mediation Committee must be women⁷.</p> <p>The total number of Abunzi currently stands at 17,941 members (55.67% of them are men while 44.33% are women). The total members of Mediation Committees is 2,563, with 416 at Sector level and 2,147 at Cell level. The Law No 020/2020 of 19/11/2020 amending Law No 37/2016 of 08/09/2016 determining Organisation, Jurisdiction, Competence and Functioning of an Abunzi committee provides more details on the functions of Abunzi. The Abunzi are the primary beneficiaries of the PE MINIJUST.</p> <p>Even though the main activity of Abunzi is to resolve community disputes and contribute to reduce the number of people going to formal courts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abunzi system suffers from smooth communication between the various levels (national, district, sector and cell levels) Ability/capacity to monitor data indicating what occurs in the Mediation Committees in terms of mediation and adjudication (decisions). The currently collected data is more concerned with quantitative rather than qualitative elements. Abunzi Committees still have little knowledge in conciliation procedures and in laws relate to (1) basic knowledge of law, (2) lack of conciliation skills, and (3) poor logistical infrastructures (stationaries and working space). No uniform approach on resolution of citizens' disputes.

In line with the challenges identified on access to justice, the expected results of the MINIJUST were defined as follows:

⁶ <https://www.gov.rw/services/mediation-committees-abunzi>.

⁷ Ibid.

- 1) A sound long-term alternative dispute resolution policy is developed and implemented;
- 2) The capacities of central and decentralized justice entities (Access to Justice Coordination Unit, the MAJ, District JRLOs committees and the Abunzi mediation committees) are enhanced;
- 3) Strong monitoring, reporting and coordination system of the Access to Justice Coordination Unit, the MAJ, District JRLOs committees and the Abunzi mediation committees' activities is in place;
- 4) The MINIJUST gets closer to the citizens and the latter are better aware of their rights and of the access to justice services.

2.2.2. Strengthening the Ombudsman services and accountability to Rwandan citizens

The strategic plan of the Office of the Ombudsman is aligned with national policies (MDGs, Rwanda Vision 2020, EDPRS 2, Seven-year program (2011-2017) of the Government as well as the sector policy, and the Justice sector JRLOS, the National Policy for fight against corruption). The Office of the Ombudsman is the leading institution for the prevention and the fight against corruption and injustice. It also contributes to strengthening mechanisms of legal aid in order to promote access to justice for all and plays an important role in protecting citizen's rights.

Law n. 25/2003 of 15/08/2003 establishes the organisation and functioning of the office of the Ombudsman. The Office has a complex mandate: 1) To prevent and fight injustice and corruption; 2) To instil in the Rwandan values that consist in resisting, preventing, avoiding and fighting injustice and corruption; 3) To review and decide on injustice and corruption complaints that are not resolved by relevant organs; 4) To receive and verify asset declarations; 5) To advise the Government on the establishment and promotion of policies and strategies to prevent, fight and punish injustice and corruption; 6) To monitor the implementation of policies and strategies aimed at preventing and fighting injustice and corruption; 7) To establish contacts and cooperate with regional and international institutions having similar responsibilities.

The Office is therefore tasked to be at the frontline of the prevention against corruption through daily close contact with citizens. The Office is a relatively unique institution in Rwanda as it combines the responsibilities of a traditional ombudsman institution with those of an independent anti-corruption agency. One of the main functions of the Office of the Ombudsman is to build citizens' awareness on corruption and on their rights and responsibilities in fighting it. The four main areas of intervention are therefore the following: (1) awareness and mobilization of the population, (2) reduction and eradication of corruption and injustice (3) monitoring of the implementation and respect of the leadership code of conduct and principles of good governance by the authorities of public institutions, and (4) operationalization of the institutional and regulatory framework of the Office of the Ombudsman.

However, it is noted that the Ombudsman services suffer from (i) procedures manual not adjusted to current organization and functioning of the Office of the Ombudsman, (ii) insufficient human resource capacity related to advanced investigation techniques for investigating sophisticated corruption, embezzlement and money laundering crimes, and (iii) inadequacy of infrastructure in particular at the district levels, (iv) weakness in reporting of corruption and (iv) lack of a strong monitoring system for the enforcement of its decisions. In addition, the Office of the Ombudsman could do with more awareness raising of citizens on access to information law provisions.

ADGP interventions took into consideration the mentioned weakness in its support to the Office of the Ombudsman as elaborated in its Strategic Plan 2014/2015-2018/2019.

2.2.3. “Accountability and outreach support” to the Parliament of Rwanda

By virtue of the Constitution of 2003 revised in 2015, and especially Article 64, legislative power in Rwanda is vested in the Parliament which is composed of two Chambers: The Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. Parliament debates and passes laws. It also contributes to ensure efficiency in management of public affairs through oversight of the Executive. As a legislative body and people’s representative organ, the Chamber of Deputies ensures that the laws it passes reflect aspirations of the population and are responsive to their basic needs. The Senate, as laid down in Article 84 of the Constitution, has specific responsibilities to ensure respect for fundamental principles referred to under Articles 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, as well as monitoring of the organization and functioning of political organisations. The Parliament of Rwanda is therefore a key governance institution. By virtue of the NST1, all accountability, transparency and governance institutions are called to collaborate.

The challenge⁸ for administrative staff of both chambers of Parliament is to improve their skills for implementation and monitoring the strategic plan. The committees do not have the necessary resources to undertake economic and social studies in specific areas and the few researchers assigned to Parliamentary oversight committees lack the required skills to undertake their activities. In addition, a general lack of human resources puts the Staff of the Parliament under pressure to perform its mandated functions. The Parliament also needs to be supported in its outreach activities in order for it to engage with the public, the civil society and other interest groups who may be consulted as part of the law-making process.

⁸ Those challenges have been identified through the identification formulation report of the ADGP, June 2015

3. Methodological Approach

The evaluation addresses learning as well as accountability objectives. This mid-term evaluation duly considers that ADGP is strongly embedded in and influenced by the socio-economic context and political economy on the ground. This evaluation approach focused on reviewing changes/developments and trends, rather than assessing achievements against fixed targets.

The methodology for this evaluation followed the European Commission Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO)'s methodological guidelines⁹, which are based on the OECD/DAC approach.

3.1. The evaluation plan

The evaluation has been structured along with four main phases: inception, desk, field, and synthesis phases. Four key deliverables were produced: (i) inception report (ii) final report covering the mid-term evaluation findings with a presentation at the end of the field phase (i.e. Figure 1):

Figure 2: Phases of the Evaluation



3.2. Intervention Logic and Evaluation Questions

The Evaluation Team reconstructed the project Intervention Logic (IL) in accordance with the original financing agreement (FA) and described the key expected results. The IL constituted the basis for formulating a set of Evaluation Questions (EQs) and served as the reference against which the programme's Theory for Change (ToC) was reconstructed. EQs reflected areas of interest of the EU Delegation through the terms of Reference (ToR), and the preliminary interviews conducted during the Inception Phase. Accordingly, a set of six EQs (i.e. Figure 2) was elaborated to facilitate data collection as well as the production of answers. Judgment Criteria (JC) are developed to specify the type of success to be evaluated under each EQs.

Table 3: Evaluation questions

Issues and themes	Proposed Main EQS
AGDP Context	To what extent is the ADGP relevant with respect to the Rwanda governance context?
Actors/ civil society	How and to what extent have the AGDP intervention towards PE, Ombudsman and Ministry of justice project contributed to promoting citizen participation and strengthening public accountability and improving service delivery”,
Modalities	How and to what extent have organizational modalities of the ADGP management and arrangements ensured an appropriate use of aid delivery?

⁹ http://capacity4dev.ec.europa.eu/evaluation_guidelines/

Capacity development/	To what extent has ADGP achieved the outcomes set in the programme, and how to better achieve them in future? What are the corrective actions to consider?
Value for money	How and to what extent has ADGP support translated to cost-efficient results?
Theory for change and lessons learned	What are the lessons learnt from ADGP that could inform the future programme under the MIP?

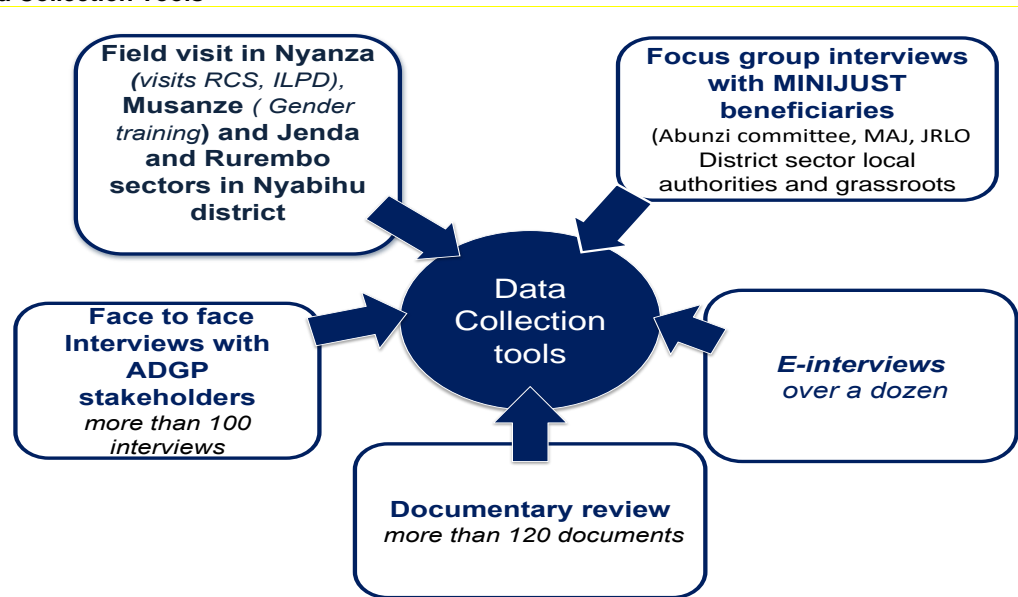
3.2. ADGP Tools and methods

It is important to highlight that the choice of method for data collection and analysis was determined by a careful balance between:

- Utility;
- Credibility;
- Reflection of the level of aggregation corresponding to various programme activities delivered for strengthening the institutional capacity and for enhancing citizens participation without losing solidity and objectivity of the evidence.

The different below-mentioned tools were used to collect primary and secondary data and allowed the team to triangulate the information from different sources in order to validate the Evaluative Judgments criteria (JCs). Our main sources and tools for data collection are outlined in the diagram below (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Data Collection Tools



The evaluators conducted a broad range of face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions during the field phase. The ADGP field phase was correlated with the field phase of the future identification formulation on rule of law under the MIP 2021- 2017 with special emphasis on rule of law and governance accountability and civil society voice. Field visits on the ground in Musanze (Gender training) and Jenda and Rurembo sectors in Nyabihu district were kindly arranged by the TAT and the MINIJUST imprest administrator. The Evaluation Team interviewed staff from the JRLOS district committee, MAJ representatives, community-based organizations (CBOs) including local authorities’ representatives, youth representatives, village facilitators, Abunzi representatives. The Evaluation Team recorded the information on the organization, the position held, and the contact details of each

informant (see Annex 1). The views of all stakeholders were compared by triangulation. On the ground, the Evaluation Team was able to better understand the socio-economic and political challenges those accountable institutions are facing.

3.3. Challenges and Limitations

The challenges encountered mainly relate to: (i) the sheer scope of the ADGP programme objectives addressing issues such as access to quality justice, the performance of those institutions and the accountability towards citizens in the relatively short programme implementation ; (ii) the diversity of institutional capacity needs linked with the necessity to engage with civil society (iii) the lack of proper definition of what ADGP was intended to achieve regarding the Theory of Change (ToC) due the lack of proper civil society mechanism enhancing the oversight role of the institutions on the ground (Office of the Ombudsman and the Parliament) (iv) the dichotomy of the intervention logic of the 3 project centred mainly on the strengthening capacities of these institutions rather than civil society participation.

The team faced with a few limitations with regard to data collection and measuring analysis against the ADGP objectives. These included:

1. The monitoring, evaluation and learning system of the programme does not present a robust results-based framework which is a real limitation for capitalizing on each the knowledge management needs of the programme. Given those limitations, the evaluation team had to close the gaps by triangulating the assessment of primary and secondary documents and Key informant (individual and group) interviews.

2. The volume documents some of which were in Kinyarwanda, other not directly related to capitalisation of experiences and best practices of Abunzi mediation committees. This made it difficult to see the extent to which mediation activities have been useful for enhancing access to justice at the grassroots.

3. It took the evaluation team over 10 days to set the first evaluation meeting with key beneficiaries in order to have access to the institutions. It took the evaluation team over one month to have all relevant documentation from the key institutions. Those bureaucratic blockades related to internal workings of those institutions demonstrates that trust and long-time relationships are critical for working with Rwandan institutions.

4. Meetings with the final beneficiaries were very superficial. It was not possible to meet Rwandan citizens who made a claim to the ombudsman services nor those who have participated in the MINIJUST and Ombudsman outreach activities. Beyond the Pes, the evaluators met the Ombudsman, MINIJUST and Parliament who were directly involved in ADGP programme. Although the evaluation team attended Abunzi mediation committee session and met JRLOs representatives and grassroots communities, the benefit of the ADGP programme at the mid-term on the citizenry participation was not made explicit by the final beneficiaries.

4. Responses to the evaluation questions

This section is structured according to the evaluation criteria and related questions set out in the Inception Note (Annex 1). The findings are based on evidence from the desk review of documentation received from programme managers as well as from information obtained during the field phase.

4.1. Relevance

EQ.1. To what extent is the ADGP relevant with respect to the Rwanda governance context?

JC. 4.1.1 Has the project design been tailored against the Rwandan context?

The ADG programme supporting the capacity of accountable institutions, access to justice as well as public awareness of laws and rights for access to justice is aligned with the overarching goal for the Rwandan Transformational Governance Pillar which aims to consolidate good governance and justice as building blocks for equitable and sustainable national development.

National Strategy for Transformation (NST1), 2017-2024, doubling the Seven-Year Government Program (7YGP), and which is built on 3 pillars: Economic Transformation, Social Transformation, and Transformational Governance, with an overarching goal for the Transformational Governance Pillar to consolidate good governance and justice as building blocks for equitable and sustainable national development, is the national mechanism that holds all the institutions together as it is from this strategy that all the institutions draw their sector specific strategic plans. As the ADGP is in line with NST1 among other strategical development plans, the EU ADGP support enhanced the Ownership of the programme

The design of the “Accountable Democratic Governance Programme (ADGP), is relevant to tackle Rwanda’s priorities, reinforcing the performance of accountable institutions and the economic and sustainable development of the country.

The design of the ADGP is also in line with the strategical plan of those institutions:

- The ADG programme renders operational, in part, the objectives of the NST1 through its support to Parliament to deliver on its oversight in ensuring accountability, democratic governance and citizens’ participation.
- The ADGP support the Office of the Ombudsman in its contribution to establish a safe environment of rule of law, towards free and competitive economic development, with appropriate measures for promoting good governance, transparency and accountability and eradicating injustice and corruption. Specifically, the EU ADGP support was to help the Office of the Ombudsman in its public education programmes within districts, upgrading and integrating the Online Declaration of Assets System for transparency and enhanced accountability, Installation of call centres for easy channel of reception and handling of injustice complaints, awareness campaigns against corruption and injustice sustained towards different audiences.
- The ADGP support through the MINIJUST, Justice, Reconciliation, Law and Order are the corner stone of Rwanda’s economic, social and Governance transformation enshrined in Vision 2020 and 2050. This is enshrined in the JRLOS strategic plan 2018/2019 – 2023/2024 which is to guide and ensure effective implementation and delivery of the NST targets¹⁰.

¹⁰ JRLOS strategic plan 2018/2019 – 2023/2024.

JC 4.1.2. Is ADGP design coherent with to the expected result?

One of the key issues of ADGP programme is the disconnection between the global objective which is to “enhance accountable governance for promoting citizen participation and mobilisation” and the specific objective which are centred on institutional outcomes rather than citizen participation processes. These concerns are even more critical due to the disconnection between ADGP objective and expected objective of each institution project, which does not refer to citizen participation processes. As a result, the focus was more on institutional outcomes rather than citizen participation processes. There was an assumption that better service delivery will leverage citizen participation without any involvement of civil society organisations. CSO involvement was only perceived as “users” of public services delivery rather than civil society education, knowledge on what could be expected from those institutions.

In addition, the programme as a whole is, from a structural and hence results perspective, highly compartmentalised, in the sense that different sets of expected results and operational modalities target individual institutions on the basis of their specific needs and not on ADGP global objective. The delivery of outputs has largely been demand-driven (based on each stakeholder’s needs and capacity), to the relative detriment of the reinforcement of coordination and synergies across institutions. The three components of the programme have, to date, acted largely separately.

JC 4.1.3. Is the ADGP logic of intervention adapted to the Ombudsman, Parliament and MINIJUST present institutional, human, financial capacities and civil society needs?

While the ADGP was relevant to address the strategy of those institutions and the institutional ownership, ADGP it is not explicit on how the ADGP design takes into consideration the institutions’ current state of play including their organizational, financial and operational capacities. Beyond the strategic plans, the complexity of each institutional and operational context of each institution was not fully assessed during the design of the ADGP design. There was no risk analysis assessment available neither in the contract nor during the revision of the logframe. There was no indication on communication plans and how each institution will address communication with citizen participation.

4.2. Efficiency

EQ2. How and to what extent have the organizational ADGP management and arrangements ensured an appropriate use of Aid Delivery?

JC.4.2.1. How and to what extent have ADGP modalities of decentralised management translated to cost efficient results?

Bureaucratic delays, combined with a fragmentation of ADGP management was not effective to enhance the ADGP efficiency.

Aid management is the purview of the National Authorizing Officer (NAO) Support Unit. While the decentralized modalities did not facilitate a smooth absorption of funds resulting from cumbersome EDF procedures application. Bureaucratic delays between the office of the NAO and the EUD made smooth implementation a challenge.

The project was implemented through a decentralised modality of Four Programme Estimates (PEs). Under the modality, an Imprest Administrator and the Imprest Accounting Officer in charge of verifying the implementation of activities in terms of administrative and financial compliance against the initial

planning. While it is unanimously recognised by all stakeholders interviewed that the imprest officers have well performed, these modalities have created somehow a disconnection between the administrative and financial management focussed mainly on the implementation of activities and the ADGP expected results of those institutions to perform better their mandates. For instance, the Parliament clerks deplored the functioning issues faced by parliamentary committees to create intelligence even though their work is fundamental to overseeing the executive policy implementation. According to a majority of stakeholders, including the TAT interviewees, the modalities as planned have slowed down the overall process of implementation.

JC. 4.2.2 To what extent are financial resources corresponds to institutional needs? To what extent are financial resources available on time in accordance with the timeframe?

The financial resources made available to the ADGP seem adequate, as confirmed by the institutions. The equipment provided by the programme was of immense assistance to the implementers – particularly during the nation-wide lockdown, related to the pandemic. However, manpower resources and technical skills at the institutions (NAO, Parliament and Ombudsman) impacted the programme implementation and the timely achievement of results.

The implementation of the Programme is behind schedule with budget consumption rates¹¹ standing at 72% for Ministry of Justice, 43% for Parliament and 41% for Ombudsman with 6 months to the end of the programme. Additionally, beyond the number of activities realized, it is difficult to gauge what activities have impacted the institutional functioning. The slow absorption of funds demonstrates the institution difficulties to manage the ADGP programme in accordance with the EDF procedures. The ADGP management was mainly concentrated on EDF procedures compliance to the detriment in somehow of the expected results

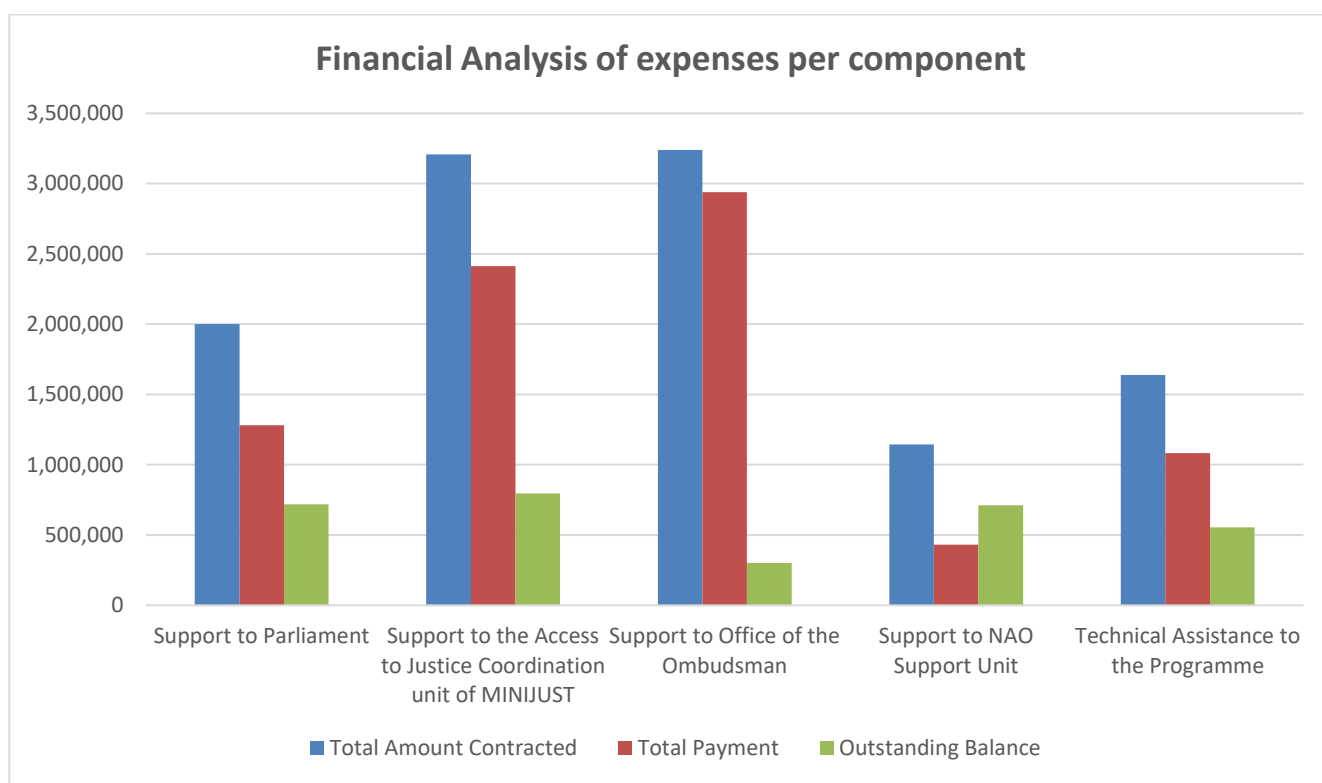
Table 4: Percentage of Stakeholders expenditures against amount contracted

Title	Planned amount	% of overall programme	Total Amount Contracted	Total Payment	Outstanding Balance	% Of Expenditures against amount contracted
Support to Parliament	2 000 000	16,3%	2 000 000	1 281 934	718 066	64,1%
Support to the Access to Justice Coordination unit of MINIJUST	3 250 000	26,5%	3 208 430	2 412 615	795 815	75,2%
Support to Office of the Ombudsman	3 250 000	26,5%	3 240 161	2 939 370	300 791	90,7%
Support to NAO Support Unit	2 000 000	16,3%	1 144 433	432 765	711 668	37,8%
Technical Assistance to the Programme	1 750 000	14,3%	1 639 210	1 083 915	555 295	66,1%
Total	12 250 000	1	11 232 234	8 150 599	3 081 635	72,6%

Source: NAO – information provided on 1st week of February 2022

¹¹ Information provided by the NAO Support Unit.

Figure 5: Percentage of stakeholders expenditures against amount contracted



Source: NAO – information provided on 1st week of February 2022

The decentralized modalities within the beneficiaries management of EDF procedures did not facilitate the smooth absorption of funds. At the end of the first quarter of 2022, more than 70% of the Parliament, Ombudsman and MINIJUST funds were disbursed. MINIJUST and the ombudsman have seen more traction over the last 6 months.

JC.4.2.3. Is the project adequately monitored?

An established Technical Committee meets quarterly to monitor programme implementation in addition to the Steering Committee, meeting twice a year. The TAT in the company of the SPIU from Minecofin carried out a joint field monitoring mission of the programme from September to October 2021. Staff from the implementing institutions – Minijust and Ombudsman – were part of the monitoring as well. It which was carried out by the TAT according to its TOR and was focused on identifying bottlenecks to smooth implementation of the programme. The ADGP monitoring was more focussed on activities rather than on expected outputs and outcomes. This weakness could be explained by the absence of proper monitoring of those institutions that are busy with quantitative data collection rather than monitoring as learning tool. For instance, all beneficiaries reports are focussed on activities implemented rather than on monitoring the changes occurred during the ADGP programme in accordance with the expected results. It is not clear for the evaluators, if there is a coordination mechanism among those institutions outside the TC and SC, to systematically document, monitor, analyse and integrate the accountable benchmarks into ADGP on how accountable institutions may improve their performance against citizens expectations/participation at different levels (national, district, sectors and cells level). This would have been a useful “entry point” to set up relevant joint visibility initiatives and joint communication strategy towards citizens.

Also worth noting is the late arrival of the Monitoring and Evaluation expert in 2020 which impacted the adequate monitoring of the programme. The pandemic also put a halt to activities implementation and monitoring of the same.

EQ3. How and to what extent did ADGP support translated to cost efficient measures?

The fragmentation of ADGP management hampered the overall efficiency. The first TAT member arrived in November 2019, much later after the start of ADGP activities. Delayed recruitment and arrival of the Technical Assistance Team, to supervise the ADGP overall process support the stakeholder institutions and NAO/ line Ministries with EDF procedures and processes, was between 3rd (TL) and 5th (C&V) November 2019. The late arrival of the TAT also created misunderstanding and mistrust among beneficiaries. In addition, the health pandemic in 2020 hit the country barely 4 months after the arrival of the TAT. This caused serious disruption of the programme with the national lockdown and restriction of movements and interdiction to have large gatherings. The partner institutions started implementing the programme without adequate knowledge of EDF procedures which backfired and further delayed implementation of the activities of the programme.

Trust and harmony as well as relationship building are of utmost importance in the seamless implementation of any development programme. It took the Technical Assistance team over a year to build and win trust and establish relationships with key persons within stakeholders in order to have access to the institutions and provide the needed technical assistance. The evaluation team is of the view that this trust and relationship building needs to be built into the inception (longer) phase in order for doors to be opened for any technical assistance team. This situation had a huge impact on the programme implementation from the beginning.

Another issue that emerges on the ADGP overall efficiency is the gap between the thematic needs of the institutions and the limited scope of the TOR of the TAT. They were explicit on "assisting the beneficiary institutions in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the programme estimates' activities". However, the ToRs were not explicit on how the Technical Assistance Team (TAT) should realistically support the mandates of those institutions in terms of the operational and institutional support for fulfilling the ADGP objectives set for each institution. Except training Needs Analysis which contained the priorities demanded by the PEs, the TAT was more attached to NAO and the Programme Estimates (PEs) providing technical assistance on management of EU/ EDF procedures, rather than providing tailored institutional capacity building to support those institutions to deliver on their mandate effectively (i.e., see ToR of the TAT insert).

While the limited scope of TAT is recognised, the evaluation team considers that the ToR were not set in stone and it would have easily been adjusted to ADGP key objectives and institution's needs. Although the ToR specify that "Other short-term expertise shall be provided in this contract", it is surprising that no short term expertise was appointed. Even though clerks of Parliament, during the interviews, expressed specific needs, all key stakeholders have been informed on this potential facilitation support services.

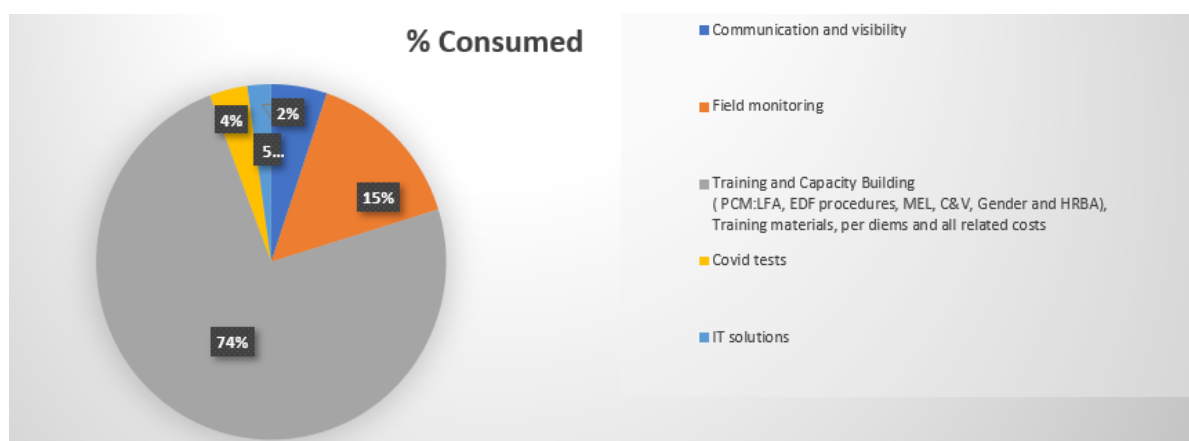
In conclusion, while the ADGP management support was effective on EDF procedures within NAO and key stakeholders, this support has not created a ground for fostering reflection among key stakeholders' institutions on how to engage civil society at the district levels, without compromising their operational or institutional independence. Also, most of TAT expenses demonstrates a focus on trainings (see Figure 5) on EDF procedures, EU rules on procurement processes, gender trainings, visibility, monitoring rather than specific support on institutional needs. This mid-term evaluation is of the view that a course correction may be appropriate in order to achieve the global objective of the ADGP.

"A Technical Assistance (TA) team as a beneficiary of EU Service contract with the budget of € 1,750,000.00 was designed to assist and support in the implementation of the programme. The TAT commenced activities from November 2019 providing strategic oversight in the management of ADGP programme. TAT and ADGP beneficiary work outputs are intended to be interlinked and mutually supportive, with a view to achieving the ADGP objectives. As a beneficiary of EU Service contract the TAT was designed to assist and support in the

implementation of the programme, including the provisions of Technical expertise tasks, including: a) strengthening the technical committees (TCs) and support the PSCs; b) improving coordination capacities between the institutions; c) provide overall supervision and ensuring effective management of the programme; d) provide other short-term expertise as required; e) establish and carry out Communication and citizens participation plans, Administrative support: preparatory and ancillary tasks relating to planning, monitoring, reporting on projects components, procurement and financial management of the programme. “

Terms of Reference of the Technical Assistance Team in the Financing Agreement

Figure 5: Repartition of TAT expenses



Source: NAO – information provided on 1st week of February 2022

4.3. Effectiveness

EQ4. To what extent has AGDP achieved the outcomes set in the programme, and how to better achieve them in future?

Beyond the delays due to COVID 19, the ADGP programme is effective in the sense that it contributes to translate strategical plans into concrete actions by delivering a key set of outputs in particular in access to Justice.

ADGP ensured the continuous functioning of the institutions during COVID pandemic (i.e. Parliament) and generated innovative ideas of online/remote work, even though the pandemic crippled the work of the implementing partners for a good 18 months. In addition, even though the shift from physical to remote working for Parliament has been beneficial cost wise. This was not the same for the Office of the Ombudsman due to the decreased number of complaint cases registered – mainly because of the time slot provided to the audience to interact with the Office.

However, some of the indicators in the programme logframe, for all the implementing institutions, revised 3 years into the programme, were still problematic. For instance, Ombudsman Office has 4 result areas, and it is not clear how some of the set indicators are to practically help the Office in its effectiveness. For example, it is assumed that the indicator for output 1 - *% of project's activities that have been implemented by the end of the project* – is able to enhance or strengthen the operational capabilities of the Office. Although there is an already very high existing baseline, some of the indicators in the Ministry of Justice revised logframe are also qualitatively problematic. Under output 2 for example the capacities of central and decentralized justice entities¹² (Access to Justice Coordination Unit, the MAJ, District JRLOs committees and the Abunzi mediation committees) are enhanced: the two indicators (a) *% of cases received and resolved by MAJ staff* and (b) *% number of cases received and*

¹² Logframe MINIJUST.

resolved at sector level. This does not capture how the quality of justice delivered is taken into account. The indicators listed in the revised Parliament logframe are not particularly SMART. An example is Result 2 indicators are as follow: *Performance in the oversight of the government action by Parliament; Citizens hold authorities accountable of their actions; and Number of field visits carried out by standing committees.* It is not clear how these indicators would lead to a strengthened oversight capacity of the Parliament. These seem more related to the expected impact of the actions performed by the Parliament rather than indicators.

The evaluation team is of the view that the presence of the Ministry of Justice in all the districts, sectors and cells makes access to justice more readily available to the people in remote villages. This is not the same situation with the Parliament and the Office of the Ombudsman who need to physically move from the state capital to the districts to meet the people for awareness raising on laws and receiving complaints of corruption or injustice directly from the people. The innovation of using online, TV and radio facilities greatly eased the pressure on the performance and achievement of targets for those two institutions.

JC 4.3.1. Has the Ministry of Justice achieved its outcomes as set in the ADGP?

The Ministry of Justice has been able to effectively manage its activities through the Access to Justice Coordination Unit which have yielded important results worth building upon. This was mainly facilitated by the decentralized mechanisms which give it a strong presence in the field, up to the grassroots level, of those responsible for justice dispensation.

The enhanced capacities of decentralized justice entities within the MAJ, the Abunzi mediation committees are key achievements. All activities related to provision of means of transport (bicycles) to the Abunzi members, other equipment, legal knowledge trainings and trainings on knowledge on basic techniques of counselling, basic techniques of conflict resolutions, training on filing system and report writing skills reinforce the organizational skills of the Abunzi Committees members, MAJ and district JROs. Abunzi committees are seen as valuable home-grown solutions and learning process on resolution of citizens' disputes without the intervention of formal courts. The MAJ and Abunzi Committees are effective in handling more than 99% of citizens complains and have thus contributed to reduce the backlog of cases, providing a timely and costless justice. Qualitative and quantitative data¹³ demonstrate effectiveness of Abunzi Committees, and MAJ as valuable mechanism for enabling conducive environment for social cohesion and citizen confidence in justice system as entry point for facilitating access to justice for vulnerable peoples. However, the key expected outputs are not yet achieved for improving the access to quality justice which in a way impacts the overall effectiveness of the Ministry of Justice Access to Justice Coordination Unit.

Expected Result 1: A sound long-term alternative dispute resolution policy ADR but not yet enacted

- The alternative dispute resolution policy which is key for ensuring uniform legal practices is developed but not yet approved nor implemented. This put into question the quality of justice and judgement rendered by Abunzi Committees. The enactment of an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) is a core component of Abunzi system and access to justice. Without binding standards, there is a room for uneven mediation/reconciliation practices, thus unresolved grievances, and the risk of injustices among potential justice seekers. This quantitative baseline and the non-harmonized system of justice delivery form the main weaknesses in the alternative resolution system to which particular attention needs to be given, going forward. It is essential

¹³ See MINIJUST progress reports.

for the Alternative Dispute Resolution policy to be approved by the cabinet, so that other activities linked to the policy may be undertaken.

Expected Result 2: The capacities of central and decentralized justice entities (Access to Justice Coordination Unit, the MAJ, District JRLOs committees and the Abunzi mediation committees) need to be more robust

- Building capacities of MAJ and Abunzi members do not represent a sustainable performance if they are not well coordinated among each other, and the information is not relayed to the Ministry of Justice. To date there is no evidence of strong coordination between JRLOs, MAJ (Maison d'Accès à la Justice) and Abunzi committees.
- There was no explicit evidence the coordination activities of JRLOS Committees are effective at the districts level. The JRLOs interviewees in Nyabihu district mentioned that imihigos/performance contracts prevent them to be proactive in the JRLOs. This is mainly because this is an additional task to their contractual duties. While those members are supposed to organize (i) quarterly two-day monitoring visits in all prisons and police stations per district, (ii) quarterly two-day awareness campaigns in secondary schools to sensitize students on how to avoid teen pregnancy, drug trafficking and human trafficking GBV and (iii) a semester coordination meeting between JRLOS Districts Committees members Steering Committee in order for discussing main issues affecting justice in the district and propose solutions, it is not clear how often they meet and what solutions have been proposed at the Nyabihu district level. It is essential to highlight that a mid-term review of the JRLO Sector was carried out by ONCG in November – December 2021, with the support of UNDP. This report identified some limitation such as, many uncoordinated actors in legal aid which may result in their interventions to be conflicting with the Justice Sector in increasing backlogs in the Judiciary. More and better coordination of these service providers needs to be considered for the continuation of the programme or for future interventions.

Expected Result 3: A strong monitoring, reporting and coordination system of the Access to Justice Coordination Unit, the MAJ, District JRLOs committees and the Abunzi mediation committee's is not yet in place

- The development of management Information System (MIS) for Abunzi monitoring is not yet operational. To date there is no explicit information of the MIS design to see the extent to which it will be useful for adjusting the Abunzi learning system, identification and exchanges of Abunzi best practices or a collection of Abunzi Committee quantitative data. In addition, there is no information on how the Ministry of Justice intends to monitor a huge number of Mediation Committees, 2,563 at district levels, 416 at sector level and 2,147 at cell level. There is no additional information on how Abunzi monitoring data will be used in the perspective of JRLO sector.
- The MINIJUST has deployed many efforts to enhance citizen awareness on access to justice services. Despite community dialogues with citizen's representatives, Radio talk shows organized on justice service delivery in various districts there is not yet an implementation of the structured Justice communication strategy towards citizens.

The presence of the Ministry of Justice (Access to Justice) is felt at the grassroots level even if the quality of access to justice still needs to be verified. The evaluation team noticed that, where justice

actors are not present, the community has taken up the roles of JRLO in the form of Abunzi, Community Policing Committee¹⁴, anti-crime clubs and Youth Volunteers¹⁵.

JC4.3.2. Has the Ombudsman achieved the outcomes set in the ADGP?

The contribution of the Office of the Ombudsman to the achievement of Government goals is to establish a safe environment of rule of law, towards free and competitive economic development, with proper measures of promoting good governance, transparency and accountability and eradicating injustice and corruption. This was done through a mix of activities combining the enhancement of the services delivered by the Ombudsman and civil society awareness as follows:

1. Public education within districts
2. Upgrading and integrating the Online Declaration of Assets System (ODAS)
3. Installation of call centres for easy channel of reception and handling of injustice complaints
4. Awareness campaigns against corruption and injustice within different audiences
5. Upgrading and integrating of the Good Service Delivery System (GSDS) and
6. The Electronic Documents and Records Management System (EDRMS)
7. Training of investigators

The most important achievement of the Office has been the upgrade and integration (ongoing) process of the online Asset Declaration System (ODAS). The declaration of assets which commenced in 2004, was done manually with booklets until 2011 when the Online Declaration of Assets System (ODAS) was initiated. The evaluation team notes that assets declaration has been received online, and the verification of those assets was done electronically to some extent and physically/manually for other assets.

In 2021, during the integration to other public agencies automated systems, the Office of the Ombudsman received¹⁶ online declarations of 13,276 (99.7%) Public Officials, as determined by law and declarations of 11 Political Organizations were received physically. With Semi - automation, the Office has been able to verify declaration of assets of 1,754 persons (13.2%) and physically verified all 11 (100%) Political Organizations. Six (6) cases were identified during the verification process.

The Office believes that by 2023 when the ODAS will be integrated with RLMUA, MIFOTRA, RDB, RRA, NIDA and financial institutions, the Office of the Ombudsman expects to receive declaration of assets of 15,461 Public Officials and 11 Political Organizations using the integrated system. This single result of ODAS is the greatest achievement of the Office towards enhanced transparency, accountability and integrity. Verification will be done seamlessly online using the integrated ODAS, increasing the verification process and audit of both public officials and political organizations. The online system is publicly available and thereby engendering transparency and providing the opportunity for CSOs and citizens to have oversight and accountability of the system.

The total number of court judgment review cases submitted to the Supreme Court by the Office of the Ombudsman from 20/12/2012 to 30/06/2021 (541) including the total cases analyzed by the Inspectorate-General of Courts. From the analyzed cases, the President of the Supreme Court found grounds for injustice (325 cases equivalent to 70%) and 117 cases equivalent to 26% where no grounds for injustice was found. The diminishing number of cases recorded in subsequent years seems to confirm the RGSC rates of less corruption in Rwanda.

¹⁴ JRLO Strategic Plan Mid-term review report.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Information received from the OoO 23 Feb 2022.

Table 5. Court judgment review cases submitted to the supreme court by the office of the ombudsman¹⁷ from 2012 up to 2021

Cases	20/12/2012 to 30/06/2019	01/07/2019 to 30/06/2020	01/07/2020 to 30/06/2021	Total cases 20/12/2012 to 30/06/2021
Cases submitted to the Supreme Court by the Office of the Ombudsman	451	62	28	541
Cases already analyzed by the Inspectorate – General of Courts	295	50	98	443
Cases where the President of the Supreme Court found grounds for injustice	216	36	73	325
Cases where the President of the Supreme Court found no grounds for injustice	78	14	25	117
Cases decided through the mediation carried out by the Inspectorate-General of Courts	1	0	0	1

However, the Ombudsman investigation techniques are still not optimal. The evaluation team was informed that training on basic investigation techniques had been carried out in the period under review. However, the time and depth of the training is yet to be deepened to enable investigation techniques of complex corruption, money laundering and terrorist financing cases. It is crucial to highlight that upgrading the capacity of investigators is essential in investigating cases of corruption and injustice. Under output 1, it is mentioned that a tender for 3 trainings have been completed (Study tours in Botswana, on Conciliation and mediation and operational audit); only 1 Training of 28 investigators and 2 prosecutors in investigation techniques on corruption cases was undertaken; 1 training (Training on asset tracing and recovery) failed to get successful bidder: contract signed on 1st December 2021¹⁸. In addition, based on the new technologies and crime trends, relevant staff need to be trained on investigation of cyber-crimes (crypto-currency and other dark and deep web activities).

The performance of the Office of the Ombudsman outreach activities towards citizens through online, radio and TV programmes is seen as a positive step to enlarge citizens awareness about Ombudsman services. Table 5 above shows that during 2020/2021, outreach programmes were carried out through online, radio and TV programmes. Even though this reached more audiences, the number of complaints received was less than before. This is attributed to the time and number of phone lines open for the public to lodge their complaints. The installation of call centres for easy channel of reception and handling of injustice complaints is still ongoing.

Table 6. Visits to the communities

Year	Number of districts visited	Number of complaints received	Average number of complaints received in each district	Resolutions to be followed up	Resolutions followed up within that year
2017-2018	4	1316	329	651	501= 76.9%

¹⁷ Reference : The Supreme Court Annual Report 2020-2021, p.39.

¹⁸ Ombudsman presentation to the TC.

2018-2019	10	2984	298	1501	1256=83.6%
2019-2020	7	2033	290	993	819=82.4%
2020-2021	10	444	44	297	245=82.4%

JC4.3.3. Has the Parliament achieved the outcomes set in the ADGP?

Table 7. Development partners of the Chamber of Deputies

Partner	Area of intervention
European Union-EU	Funding of the Oversight Mission, Institutional Capacity Building and citizen participation
UNWOMEN, UNICEF, Plan International Rwanda	Funding the activities of FFRP
UNFPA, IPU, USAID	Funding the activities of RPRPD

There are four output areas under the support to Parliament component. Under Output 1 however, the indicator is the *% of activities implemented*¹⁹. It is not clear how the % of activities implemented – mainly training - can ensure the increase of Parliament operational capability. This is to say that training *per se* – without the necessary tools – may not increase or enhance the operational capability of the Parliament. Under output 2, the indicator states *Performance in the Oversight of the Government Actions by Parliament*. The evaluation team did not see activities directly related to training or upgrade Parliamentary Oversight committees' activities. The Clerks indicated that activities pertaining to strengthening the capacity of the oversight committees were missing or not addressed in the programme. In particular, the activities of the ADGP omitted the fact that young parliamentarians needed to be mentored in order to undertake their parliamentary activities with confidence. Additionally, the research unit of the Parliament need capacity in carrying out socio-economic research which should form the basis for initiating, amending or analyzing laws. Interlocutors informed the evaluation team that Parliament spends most of its time reviewing hundreds of laws annually, coming from the executive. This does not leave them enough time to deal with the core mandate of the Parliament i.e., appropriately representing the citizens and the ability to reflect and articulate the people's individual and collective concerns. The Logframe of the Parliament has 4 result areas: (i) Strengthened and increased operational capabilities; (ii) Strengthened Oversight functions; (iii) Initiation of quality legislation and better analysis of proposed legislation; (iv) Getting closer to the citizens and a strengthened ability to reflect and articulate the individual and collective concerns.

Activities of the Parliament under the ADGP

The parliament undertook activities in line with its programme which are focused on the following areas:

- a) Political parties' registration and operations
- b) Participation and inclusiveness of Citizens
- c) Civil society participation
- d) Power-sharing
- e) Independence of Parliament
- f) Transparency and accountability.

The Parliament received 9 trainings under the ADGP, 2 of which are still in progress, 243 people have been trained (Including MPs and staff) on:

- a) information gathering and report analysis in oversight function,

¹⁹ Revised logframe- Parliament.

- b) legal advisory to bills and legislative drafting,
- c) Leadership and Management,
- d) Public expenditure and financial accountability and
- e) Visibility.

Following the trainings received, Parliament undertook the activities below under their mandate and in line with ADGP – getting closer to the people and explaining their work in addition to reviewing and analyzing laws.

- **6** Awareness campaigns conducted targeting various groups of people (Universities, high learning Institutions, Local leaders).
- **5** Education/Sensitization provided on Laws and fundamental principles, Using Radios address to different interest groups (Youth, Farmers).
- **3** Talk shows on Government programs and visions, explained to people through different platforms (Community Work, consultative meetings, visits by MPs to their respective constituencies).
- Members of Government have attended 29 meeting sessions to provide the explanations on how the Senators and Deputies work and what they do.
- **12** Field visits conducted under this funding on Agriculture, Budget, Energy, Habitations/Housing sectors (EUD joined two of such visits in the agriculture sector).

Additionally, 195 Laws were analyzed during the period between January 2020 and December 2021, during the period of the funding. Various equipment that was acquired under the funding facilitated debates and discussions, particularly during the national lockdown.

Even though these activities will be helpful for the Parliament, more focus is needed in areas of particular weakness. A capacity needs assessment is critical in determining the human capacity needs of the parliament that will enable the parliament to perform its mandated role. In particular, consideration needs to be given to the capacity of the 9+1 Standing Committees of Parliament in line with the Strategic Plan of the Chamber of deputies 2020-2025 where a detailed analysis of the strengths and weaknesses are highlighted. With regards to the Senate's 2021-2026 Strategic plan, reference has also been made to the main challenges and lessons learned from the 2016-2021 strategic plan, which could feed into the ADGP activities in a very focused manner, going forward.

The Parliament confirmed that there is need for technical skills and capacity in parliamentary functioning parliamentary committee, inquiries committees, oversight committees on political social and economic research studies that would serve as a basis for overseeing the executive policies implementation, enacting or reviewing/analyzing laws and making amendments where applicable. The evaluation team is of the view that this aspect of parliamentary duties needs to be seriously enhanced going forward i.e. the remaining period of the programme in order to achieve the overall objective of the programme and enable the Parliament to work more towards achieving its own mandate.

EQ 5. To what extent have ADGP intervention towards the Parliament, Ombudsman and Ministry of Justice contributed to promoting citizen participation and strengthening public accountability and improving service delivery ?

While ADGP was relevant to address the strategical needs of those institutions, its design was not explicit on how civil society participation was addressed by those institutions for creating an enabling environment among the institutions and citizens. Due to Covid, public gatherings in the districts were converted to and delivered through media. On its part Parliament had senators and deputies suspend interactions with citizens through field visits. Instead, they utilized the period to review bills through virtual engagements. Several joint outreach activities were realized by MINIJUST and the Ombudsman.

However, there is no joint communication/ visibility plan towards citizens. As far as the civil society organisations were not involved officially in ADGP, the visibility or activities towards citizens implemented by those institutions is critical against the ADGP objective (to mobilise the civil society

The understanding of ADGP was mainly considered as a means to strengthen the capacity of institutions rather than an opportunity to strengthen the civil society knowledge on service delivery. There was no information on what the civil society actors are expected from those institutions in term of transparency and accountability.

4.4. Impact

There has been positive developments regarding the functioning of each institution in terms of service delivery. Nevertheless, ADGP has been impeded from assisting each institution to adopt an integrated approach for enhancing civil society awareness and knowledge about them. Although Abunzi Committees and MAJ have registered impressive results in handling cases, reducing excessive costs and time usually required for litigation, arbitration and adjudication processes, a standardized way to mediate conflicts still lacks and should come through the enactment of an alternative dispute resolution (ADR). Without binding standards on resolution/mediation practices and without proper monitoring of the Abunzi²⁰, there is unfortunately room for uneven mediation/reconciliation practices, thus unresolved grievances, and the risk of injustices among potential justice seekers. Although the Office of Ombudsman has upgraded and integrated process of the Online Asset Declaration System (ODAS), the Ombudsman investigations procedures, through progress and investigation results, by typology of corruption cases, are still missing. Lastly, the Parliament has mainly implemented training activities that are not directly linked with the expected improvement of the parliamentary performance in the Oversight of the Government Actions.

Due to the missing alternative voice of civil society in the ADGP design, ADGP has been impeded from assisting each institution to adopt an integrated approach for enhancing civil society knowledge on the services delivered and on what can be expected from those institutions.

4.5. Sustainability

Although ADGP is embedded into NST1, sustainability is not addressed in the programme design, nor in subsequent reporting, and there is not yet any exit strategy. There are some serious concerns about the sustainability of many aspects of the Programme. The most serious obstacle to sustainability is related to higher-level political will and to some extent the degree of institutional will due the limited budget

²⁰ The total number of Abunzi is 17,941 (55.67% of them are men while 44.33% are women). The total Mediation Committees is 2,563, with 416 at Sector level and 2,147 at Cell level. Law N° 020/2020 of 19/11/2020 amending Law No 37/2016 of 08/09/2016 determining Organisation, Jurisdiction, Competence and Functioning of an Abunzi committee.

5. Conclusions & recommendations

5.1 Conclusions at mid-term period

Based on the evaluation findings, the team concludes the following:

The programme is highly relevant to the institutions needs and the focus on ministry of justice, Ombudsman and Parliament as institutions involved in all citizen-centred activities at national and local level are adequate. However, the programme design is not adjusted to the current context nor the institutional and human capacities of the implementing partners (IP) affecting its relevance. There are deficiencies in the design and formulation of the project, such as the lack of a sound problem analysis of those institutions (no analysis of the current functioning of institutions and workload). Desired outcomes and outputs are too ambitious, given human resources' current capacities and institutional external constraints. The intervention logic hardly encompasses civil society participation linking them with the performance of those institutions.

One of the key issues of ADGP programme is disconnection between the global objective which is to “enhance accountable governance for promoting citizen participation and mobilisation” and the specific objective centred on institutional outcomes rather than citizen participation processes. The missing civil society voice through civil society organisations in the programme design was found to be a major inconsistency of the overall programme.

The project was well managed in terms of administrative and financial output delivery. The MINIJUST through MAJ and Abunzi have contributed to provide timely and costless justice. The upgrade and integration process of the Online Declaration of Assets System (ODAS) initiated by the Ombudsman. Is a key achievement to receive assets declaration online. The Parliament outreach activities get closer to the people and 195 laws have been scrutinized during the programme period. However, limitations were detected in the modalities of the decentralised management system which have created a disconnection between the core needs of those institutions and the priorities given of the compliance with EDF procedures for implementing those activities. The current arrangements within the PE's in terms of EU administrative and financial compliance have slow down the project progress because of the lengthy institutional decision taking processes built into the system. The PE arrangement has not been able to integrate the specific technical assistance needed by the implementing institutions thereby causing a disconnection between the EU project activities and issues faced by those institutions in upgrading their performance with regards to their institutional mandates. The connection between the Imprest managers as main gatekeepers to implement the activities and act as bridge between institutions, the TAT and the EU is not efficient to tackle the key issues faced by those institutions and to create reflection, flexibility to adjust activities according to the programme objectives and institutional mandate which is a weakness in addition to the absence of a robust results-based monitoring and learning mechanism;

The late mobilization of the Technical Assistance Team tasked with supporting the programme estimates (PE's) with proper implementation according to procedures and good practice, had the PEs working on their own without guidance. The inadequate capacity of the implementing institutions on EDF procurement and contracting procedures, the insufficient consideration of the heavy bureaucratic hold-ups related to internal workings of government has resulted delays in ADGP implementation. In addition, the limited scope of the TAT Terms of reference particularly in terms of the profile of experts and nature of support which was mainly projected as a means to implement and supervise the programme with NAO in accordance with the EDF procedures rather than an opportunity to advise

those institutions on how to better improve their service delivery towards citizens has greatly hindered the concrete issues faced by those institutions; The TAT was not proactive to adjust the ToR within the ADGP objectives. The TAT did not use short term expertise facilities to support the institutions on Ad Hoc issues and did not act as a catalyst and facilitator for cooperation and dialogue among institutions in particular the Office of the Ombudsman and the Parliament between NAO and other institutional stakeholders, and as a knowledge management process facilitator, rather than being a mere NAO adviser. This situation has reduced the overall efficiency of the programme .

The delivery of outputs has largely been demand-driven (based on each stakeholder's needs and capacity), to the relative detriment of the citizens awareness on the service delivery and to the relative detriment of the reinforcement of coordination and synergies across institutions – The three institutions components of the programme have, to date, acted largely separately. Outcomes are not yet fully achieved at the mid-term period and any opportunities were missed to build on the joint approaches among institutions, to promote local dynamics. There is little evidence that various outreach interventions in the field have brought the desired change by the institutions at the national level, or that those outreach activities have better linked local issues that cause national challenges. This had an impact on the overall effectiveness of the ADGP. The programme did not explicitly contribute to the enhancement of greater inclusiveness of women.

It is important to consider that this programme in the course of implementation was hindered by the Covid-19 pandemic from March 2020 to end 2021. All planned activities that required the assembling of large numbers of citizens had to be stood in abeyance from 2020 to 2022, due to a national ban on large gatherings and inter-district travel was suspended, making it difficult for the implementing institutions to visit action sites.

5.2. Recommendations at mid-term period

Based on the conclusions above, the evaluation team recommends the following:

5.2.1. Recommendations for European Union

1. Extend the ADGP programme after June 2022 to give opportunities for key stakeholders to develop common strategy on visibility in order to better inform better citizens about institutional services delivery and to enhance their knowledge and contribution.
2. Set up an exit strategy by transferring some activities to mainstream staff and allocating resources. A Theory of Change for the ADGP Programme should be developed, on the basis of work done and on the analysis in the present report. The extension of the Programme should benefit from momentum within society expectations relative to accountability, and the expectations regarding Ombudsman services, access to justice and Parliamentary oversights of public policies implementation.
3. Increase the visibility of EU and ADGP towards citizens to ensure that EU can maximize the cost-effectiveness and value for the funds. In addition, there is a need to further prioritize the communication areas of each institution in the coherent ADGP communication plan. Doing this will lead to the development of an integrated communication approach towards citizen. The development of a concerted and joint strategy of communication towards citizens is necessary, as well as surveys organised at district levels to assess what is expected from ombudsman services, justice and parliamentary oversights of polices implementation should be discussed between Ombudsman, Parliament and MINIJUST. These discussion should be held urgently

and integrated in priority into the programme approaches, and activities. Gender mainstreaming should be strengthened in ADGP, and gender-disaggregated indicators and data sources developed.

4. Reposition AGDP as a repository of experiences and practices. The TAT should act as a catalyst and facilitator for cooperation and dialogue among institutions in particular the Office of the Ombudsman and the Parliament between NAO and other institutional stakeholders, and as a knowledge management process facilitator, rather than being a mere NAO adviser. As originally planned, special attention must be paid to (i) visibility of ADGP actions (ii) data collection and management to facilitate the preparation of guidelines associated with citizen demand on accountability, (ii) development and operationalization of a results-based monitoring and evaluation framework, including across-the-board impact assessments on gender (iii) fostering of partnerships with traditional and non-traditional stakeholders (chiefs of villages, CSOs) to promote applied best practices in accountability demand and supply in specific sectors.

5.2.2 Recommendations for the ADGP institutions

1. Define more realistic ambitions and more concrete and specific approaches to address the needs of those institutions for the remaining period with better consideration of internal human resource capacity and administrative delays.
2. Develop a structured, pre-emptive exit strategy, whilst ensuring that this is in line with the Institutional agenda. This will include a “closing period” of six months at the end of the implementation period, during which the activities will be concluded, final assessments conducted, and stakeholders’ supported in moving forward with their institutional agendas and capitalising on the Programme’s support.
3. Adjust the planning of activities including the exit strategy period to consolidate and sustain the achievements thus far made by MINIJUST, Ombudsman Office and the Parliament: focused priority on application of skills and enactment / implementation of policies; enactment/adoption of the alternative dispute resolution policy ensuring uniform legal practices and implement the Information management System (MIS) for monitoring/adjusting the Abunzi learning system; focus on investigation techniques otherwise ODAS will be not efficient; focus on the functioning of parliamentary house committees in particular the inquiries committees to be able to perform better its oversight role.
4. Realign expenses allocated to each institution, in order to monitor the effectiveness of institutional interventions for reporting on progress and follow-up of ADGP objectives and not only on budget execution.
5. Establish a better link between institutional agenda/priorities and the citizens expectations and scrutinize and consider the local realities in greater depth. Institutions should adapt the services delivery tools, to specific local contexts. This would increase the generation of systematic evidence-based documentation. It would also provide a set of best practices on the communication tools and services required to create confidence between institution and civil society and enhance citizen participation.
6. Ensure that accountability services for citizens are drawn on political economy analysis (PEA), taking into consideration knowledge about the land issues, matrimonial issues among others.

7. Ensure that the visibility actions made by those institutions at the local level is linked with local issues. Ensure that institutional services are appropriately linked to grassroots communities' empowerment and citizen's needs. The state institutions actions (Parliament and Ombudsman) should also be also drawn on more detailed consideration of grassroots communities' empowerment on accountability demands.
8. Work on efficient processes for creating coordination between national and local levels create Apps such as Anti-corruption Apps or a Claim Apps or MAJ apps to facilitate collection of claims on grassroots communities' practices Calling on its strong presence in villages.

5.2.3. Recommendations for the TAT

1. Tailor the TA support towards institutional key priority needs and provide short term expertise to work hand in hand on specific issues faced by those institutions.
2. Continue to work with the Imprest teams while enlarging the scope to cover others key institutional representatives for identifying and using the 'right mix' of modalities - institutional and operational support- in order to help not only the PEs achieve their objectives, but more essentially for the beneficiary institutions to increase their performance on accountability service delivery.
3. Create and fund a joint mechanism between TAT and all institutions for documenting and sharing experiences and lessons learned across actions implemented on the ground. Activities on service delivery per se are not sufficient for leveraging change and are a large-scale experiment that should be well documented, in order to understand better which measures, work and which do not work for boosting citizen demand on accountability and rule of law. A more effective knowledge management function focused on access to quality of justice should be integrated into the ADGP programming approach to its annual plan.
4. Monitoring and evaluating progress and results achieved throughout the ADGP objectives processes and not only the activities per se. This is essential to ensure the effective pursuit of the ADGP objectives, as start-off initial benchmarks for the accountability demand and supply learning processes as well as measuring the tools and methods proposed for creating citizens' participation and civil society demand on accountability.
5. Reposition AGDP as a repository of experiences and practices. TAT should act as a catalyst and facilitator for cooperation and dialogue among EU and institutions and as a knowledge management process facilitator with special attention to a robust (i) visibility of ADGP actions (ii) data collection and management to facilitate the preparation of communication guidelines associated with quality of service delivery and citizen expectations on accountability, (ii) development and operationalization of a comprehensive results-based monitoring and evaluation framework, including across-the-board impact assessments on gender (iii) the fostering of partnerships with traditional and non-traditional stakeholders (chiefs of villages, CSOs) to promote applied best practices in accountability demand and supply in specific sectors.

6. Lessons learnt

EQ 6. What are the Lessons learnt from ADGP that could inform the future programme under the MIP?

Lesson 1. ADGP design missed a multi-dimensional approach to address both the institutional immediate needs, as well as a comprehensive and integrated approach among those institutions for boosting civil society voice and creating an ‘enabling environment’ on citizen accountability demands. Problems are often interrelated. Complex problems request cooperation between different institutions in order to be solved.

Lesson 2. There is no coherence regarding the concept and ADGP operationalisation of what accountability really mean in term of institutional performance supply and civil society voice demand. Due the shortage of human resources capacities, there was a clear disconnect on operational approaches and strategic positioning, resulting in a limited intelligence gathering in-house, and no enactment of policies, no institutional mechanism for strengthening the Parliament, Ombudsman and MINIJUST communication policy development towards citizens. Citizen participation must go beyond sensitization. To date there is no specific reflection and policy on gender.

Lessons 3. There is no results-based performance-monitoring plan to track progress against key strategical plan requirements. The Programme Estimate arrangement does not go beyond “ticking boxes” on the number of activities achieved, rather than using the feedback from beneficiaries to adapt their work and support greater effectiveness. The Imprest officers had inadequate capacity to implement a M&E system, focusing on human resources capacity performance.

While stakeholders have demonstrated a strong focus on how to manage AGDP projects, more consideration should be put on how those institutions can perform their mandates in line with their strategical plans and implement and external communication systems, and a more explicit approach on coordination on cross-cutting issues and policies (, gender, youth civil society, and media), on peers to peers exchanges of experiences, specific practices on investigation, legal aid, reconciliation etc.

Lesson 4. There is a need for a mix of approaches. Major bottlenecks persist in the stakeholders’ institutional framework. The provision of equipment and reinforcement of staff capacity with various trainings is not enough to ensure effective implementation of important institutional reforms. Establishment and implementation of policies defining norms and processes; coordination mechanisms among institutions involving in accountability issues, Rwandan stakeholders’ exposure to international standards and practices on specific issues/sector approach_etc.

Lessons 5. Although there is decentralized management, stronger mentoring and guidance to better use the potential added value of EU support should be considered. A longer inception report phase should be envisaged to identify the gaps between strategical objectives and the current state of play of those institutions. In this respect the use of Rwandan long term local expertise skilled on board is critical to open doors more seamlessly. The Steering Committee should also involve Higher Political level²¹ to generate a strong political support at the operational level of project implementation. Mentoring approach within key stakeholders rather than delivery of “ready-made products” is critical as well as the development of joint guidelines based on the benchmarks and the “performance criteria “against the concrete objective of those institutions.

²¹ In many Governance programmes in ACP countries, High level of officers are invited to attend the Steering Committees to be update of the programme progress. This often helps to have an overview of the institutional position and to adjust activities against the institutional mandates.

Lessons 6. Be specific and less ambitious. The relative attempt by ADGP to adopt a vague and general objective on “governance and accountability“ has resulted in a fragmentation of ADGP into 4 distinct projects undertaken by the Ministry of Justice, the Ombudsman, the Parliament and the NAO. The projects focused mainly on institutional and internal capacity building of each institution as well as the NAO. It is not clear how the ADGP institutions actions refer to the common and general ADGP objective to perform better on service delivery.

Annex 2. Documentation reviewed

1. Formulation of Accountable Democratic Governance Programme support to Rwanda under the 11th EDF. Letter of Contract N°2015/358722
2. A journey to Prosperity: Rwanda's Vision 2050 & National Strategy for Transformation (NST1)
3. 2019 Rwanda voluntary national review (VNR) report
4. Financing Agreement N° RW/FED/038-031
5. Civil Society and Accountability in Rwanda K4D – Knowledge, evidence and learning for development
6. Mapping of the civil society and project identification of a support programme to the civil society in Rwanda – Letter of Contract N° 2013/328195 – Final Report Mapping
7. Final Report. Civil Society Mapping (UNDP Rwanda) RFP-58951-2010017
9. Rwanda Governance scorecard 8th Edition. The State of Governance in Rwanda
10. EU Roadmap for engagement with civil society in Rwanda
11. Justice, Reconciliation, Law and Order sector Strategic Plan 2018/19-2023/24
12. Project Logframe
13. Sida Helpdesk on Human Security and Humanitarian Assistance – Mapping of social cohesion, trauma healing, and reintegration programmes in Rwanda.
14. Assessment of media self-regulatory system in Rwanda
15. Assessment report on the current status of freedom of expression and access to information in Rwanda
16. Technical Assistance to the EU Delegation to Rwanda. Media Institutions as Drivers of Democracy. Assessment Report, Strategic Planning & External Stakeholders' Workshop
17. ADGP Project Monitoring Report Format
18. ADGP-Results based Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Report May – June 2021
19. Rwanda MIP 2021-2027
20. Office of the Ombudsman – Individual Financing Commitment FED/2018/404-253 Annex 2: Logical Framework table
21. MINIJUST Individual financing commitment FED/2018/404-622
22. ADGP – Project Accountability and Outreach support. Individual financial Commitment no FED/2018/404-240. Logical framework for Parliament
23. ADGP – CRIS Reference No. RW/FED/2015/038-031 Revised Logframe
24. ROM Report
25. JRLOS Backward Looking Joint Sector Review, 2020/218
26. Assessment of Abunzi Committees activities from 2004-2018. Final Report
27. Abunzi Capacity Building Strategy (ACBS) 2020-2024
28. United Nations Joint Programme Document. Promoting Access to Justice, Human and Peace Consolidation in Rwanda 2013-2018
29. Annex1.1 NST 1 Monitoring and Evaluation Matrix
30. UNDP Project Document. Strengthening the Rule of Law in Rwanda: Justice, peace and security for the people
31. ToR for the Preparation of FY2020/21 Backward looking Joint Sector reviews (JSRs)

32. Mid-term review of the JRLOS strategic plan 2018/2019 – 2023/2024
 33. TAT Meeting Minutes
 34. Judicial Strategic Plan 2018-2024
 35. Legal Aid Forum - LAF Report of the Colloquium
 36. National Commission on Human Rights – Laws
 37. Letter to DPs Request
 38. Consultation on Governance with CSOs – Jan 2021
 39. Project portfolio NL Embassy. Rule of Law -Justice Decentral funds
 40. Piloting a structural approach to addressing backlogs in the Rwandan National Public Prosecution Authority. RCN
Justice and Démocratie - GIZ
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