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About the Programme

The EAW Regional Programme Phase II addressed gender-based discrimination and violence against women and girls (VAWG) across the Western Balkans and Türkiye. The programme's objectives encompassed creating an inclusive legislative and policy environment, shifting social norms, and empowering marginalized women.

The programme's three objectives were: Enabling legislative and policy environment (Objective 1) to eliminate VAWG and all forms of discrimination by establishing comprehensive legislative and policy frameworks aligned with international standards, including CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention; promoting favourable social norms and attitudes (Objective 2) to transform societal perceptions and behaviours by advocating for gender equality, preventing gender discrimination, and combatting VAWG; and empowering marginalized women (Objective 3).

Phase II built upon the achievements of Phase I and introduced a regional mechanism engaging governmental stakeholders, human rights institutions, justice and police entities, and civil society organizations (CSOs). This collaboration aimed to address Istanbul Convention implementation and enhance the capacity of organizations representing minority groups to support survivors through tools and theoretical frameworks.

About the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the programmatic progress and performance of the EAW Programme from the point of view of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, organizational efficiency, sustainability, gender equality and human rights, with a special focus on lessons learned and recommendations. The evaluation followed a participatory approach with Evaluation Management and Evaluation Reference groups.

The evaluation methodology followed a ToC approach and employed mixed methods of data collection and analysis. Evaluation evidence was collected through different methods: desk review of documents, reports, studies, secondary data, and primary data collected through semi-structured individual or group interviews, group discussions with representatives of beneficiary institutions.

Photo: Manjola Veizi, Executive Director of the National Network of Roma and Egyptian Women, receiving smartphones on behalf of Roma women beneficiaries, under the EU-UN Women regional programme on ending violence against women in the Western Balkan and Türkiye and Vodafone Albania Foundation. Photo: UN Women Albania



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Findings

Relevance: The EAW Regional Programme stands as a beacon of relevance, directly addressing the pervasive issue of VAWG in the Western Balkans and Türkiye. Its profound alignment with international standards such as CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention underscores its commitment to fostering gender equality and human rights. This alignment is not just a symbolic gesture; it's a strategic foundation that enables collaboration with influential bodies like the European Union (EU) and the Council of Europe. This collaboration amplifies its relevance by tapping into regional resources and expertise, making the Programme a powerful agent of change that transcends borders.

The Programme's emphasis on legislative alignment, advocacy, and cross-border cooperation underscores its indispensability in addressing VAW comprehensively.

Coherence and responsiveness: While the Programme's alignment with international standards is laudable, it holds the potential to elevate its coherence and responsiveness even further by adopting an intersectional approach. Such an approach would acknowledge the complex interplay of various forms of discrimination and violence, presenting a more holistic strategy. Nevertheless, the Programme's vertical coherence is evident through its strategic alignment with conventions like CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention, lending it credibility and a strong foundation. To enhance its coherence, efforts in horizontal integration are recommended, creating a more unified strategy across diverse aspects of its interventions. A hallmark of the Programme's approach has been its collaboration with stakeholders, often channeled through Technical Working Groups (TWGs). Additionally, for the efficient and effective delivery of survivor support services, a comprehensive capacity-building strategy for service providers is paramount.

Efficiency: The Programme's implementation showcases remarkable efficiency in resource allocation and budget management, guided by an agile and proficient operational team. This stewardship of resources is instrumental in translating strategic intentions into tangible outcomes. The Programme's resilience during the challenging COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with its strategic alignment with EU policies, demonstrates its ability to adapt to dynamic circumstances. This adaptability, coupled with its judicious resource utilization, enables the Programme to achieve optimal impact in combating VAWG and

advancing gender equality. In a world where resource constraints are the norm, the Programme's strategic utilization of resources stands as a testament to its commitment and effectiveness.

Effectiveness: The heart of the Programme's effectiveness lies in its rigorous alignment of activities with tangible outcomes. A key strength is its multi-pronged strategy, a testament to its deep understanding of the multifaceted nature of VAW. The Programme's regional approach has led to consistent shifts that align with international conventions and catalyze societal transformations. Its strategies, bolstered by strategic partnerships and collaboration, have yielded concrete improvements in addressing VAWG and promoting gender equality. Its approach is not just about advocacy but about creating pathways for empowerment, policy impact, and the reformation of societal attitudes.

Sustainability: The Programme's strides in fostering country ownership and nurturing stakeholder partnerships have laid a promising foundation for sustainability. Yet, challenges in policy implementation and the ever-evolving political landscape necessitate proactive measures to safeguard these achievements. The Programme's dedication to enhancing stakeholder capacities, particularly CSOs, is both evident and promising. However, the path to sustainability is not without hurdles. For the Programme to continue its transformative journey, it must address internal and external challenges with strategic fortitude and establish a robust underpinning for sustained progress.

Impact: The Programme's influence reverberates across policy development, policy decisions, and the empowerment of marginalized women. By recalibrating power dynamics and facilitating engagement of marginalized groups, the Programme has carved an inclusive and equitable platform. Its strategies, tools, and initiatives are the keystones of transformative shifts in societal attitudes, fostering better reporting mechanisms, and amplifying the scope and quality of survivor support services. Importantly, the Programme's contributions do not merely reside in the realm of theory; they manifest as practical platforms for women's empowerment, policy change, and a shift in societal perceptions. The ripple effect of these interventions spans across generations and societies, making the Programme a true catalyst for lasting and far-reaching impact.



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Recommendations

Strengthen Institutional Mechanisms: Continue providing technical assistance and capacity building for stakeholders, including law enforcement, judicial systems, healthcare providers, and social welfare organizations.

Comprehensive Response: Develop national action plans/strategies with defined roles and responsibilities for stakeholders to ensure a coordinated response to VAW. Establish a robust monitoring system and reporting practices to track achievements.

Targeted Capacity Building: Prioritize capacity building for government officials, civil society, and service providers to enhance knowledge and skills in addressing gender-based violence and promoting equality.

Evidence-Based Approaches: Encourage research and data collection on VAW to inform evidence-based policymaking and programme development.

Leverage Technology: Utilize digital platforms to broaden access to resources, training materials, and support networks for stakeholders working on ending VAW.

Disability Inclusion: Integrate disability inclusion across programme aspects, collaborating with women's organizations, entities representing women with disabilities, and relevant government bodies.

Enhance Coherence: Integrate interventions and foster synergy among programme components for a harmonized approach.

Cross-Sectoral Collaboration: Strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration to address root causes of gender-based violence and promote gender equality.

Adaptive Strategies: Continuously assess and adapt interventions based on evolving needs and challenges faced by women and girls.

Strengthen Networks: Foster partnerships through regular forums, conferences, and exchanges to facilitate dialogue, knowledge sharing, and joint learning among participating countries and stakeholders.

Engage International Entities: Collaborate with international institutions like the EU and the Council of Europe to leverage expertise and resources.

Country-Level Coordination: Strengthen coordination efforts and partnerships with other gender equality and VAW projects for a more comprehensive and sustainable approach.