UN WOMEN
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

EVALUATION SERVICES FOR "ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN POLITICAL AND BUSINESS LIFE" PROJECT OF UN WOMEN TÜRKIYE (2021-2024)

Final Evaluation Report

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Evaluation commissioned by

UN Women Türkiye

Evaluation carried out by

Lattanzio KIBS

20/01/2025

Prepared by Lattanzio KIBS

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Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to express its gratitude for the continuous support and assistance provided by UN Women Country Office staff, particularly Ms Zeliha Ünaldı Ms. Duygu Arığ and Ms. Ülkem Önal, throughout the evaluation process. We would also like to thank all the Project partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries for their participation to our research and their collaboration in providing us crucial input for the preparation of this Report. Finally, we would like to thank Lattanzio KIBS for their availability and logistical support.

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List of Acronyms

AKP	Justice and Development Party
AMM	Ankara Metropolitan Municipality
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CHP	Republican Peoples Party
CO	Country Office
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DEM	Peoples' Democracy and Equality Party
DG	Directorate General
ECA region	Europe and Central Asia region
EMG	Evaluation Management Group
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
EU GAP	EU Gender Action Plan
EU IPA	EU Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GERAAS	Global Evaluation Report Assessment And Analysis System
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GRB	Gender Responsive Budget
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
KADER	Kadın Adayları Destekleme Derneği, Association for Supporting Women Candidates
KAGİDER	Türkiye Kadın Girişimciler Derneği Women Entrepreneurs Association of Türkiye
KEFEK/EOC	Kadın Erkek Fırsat Eşitliği Komisyonu, Turkish Grand National Assembly Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men
KII	Key Informant Interview
LEAP	Local Equality Action Plan
MM	Metropolitan Municipality
MPs	Members of Parliament
MSC	Most Significant Change

NDP	National Development Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
OECD-DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SMEs	Small-Medium Enterprises
ŞÖNİM	Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers
TESEV	Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation
TGNA	Turkish Grand National Assembly
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
TSMs	Temporary Special Measures
TÜİK	Turkish Statistical Institute
TURKONFED	Turkish Enterprise and Business Confederation
TÜSİAD	Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality
UA	Unstereotype Alliance
UN SWAP	UN System-Wide Accountability Framework
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
VAW	Violence Against Women
VAWiP	Violence against women in politics
WEP	Women Empowerment Principles
WPP	Women Political Participation
YSK	Supreme Election Council

Key Terms and Definitions

For the purpose of this Evaluation, the following definitions are adopted:

Activities are all the specific actions that make up an intervention. (Taplin, D.H., 2012: 6).

Beneficiaries are defined as the individuals, groups, or organizations, whether targeted or not, that benefit directly or indirectly, from the development intervention. (OECD/DAC Evaluation Network, 2019:7).

Confidentiality is the process of protecting an individual's privacy. It pertains to the treatment of information that an individual has disclosed in a relationship of trust, with the expectation that this information will not be divulged to others without permission. (UNICEF, 2015a:2).

Ethics is defined as the right or agreed principles and values that govern the behavior of an individual within the specific, culturally defined context within which an evaluation is commissioned or undertaken. (United Nations Evaluation Group, 2020:4).

An **evaluation** is an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. It analyses the level of achievement of both expected and unexpected results by examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality using appropriate criteria […]. An evaluation should provide credible, useful evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of organizations and stakeholders. (United Nations Evaluation Group, 2017:10).

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men but to the relationship between them. (UN WOMEN, 2014:46).

Gender equality entails the concept that all human beings, both women and men, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. (UN WOMEN, 2014:46).

A **human rights-based approach** is a conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights. It seeks to analyse inequalities which lie at the heart of development problems and redress discriminatory practices and unjust distributions of power that impede development progress. (UN OHCHR, 2006:15).

Impact refers to the positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effect produced by an intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. (OECD, 2002:24).

An **indicator** is a quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes connected to an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor. (OECD, 2002:25).

Intervention refers to the subject of the Evaluation. (OECD/DAC Evaluation Network, 2019:5).

Monitoring is a continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds. (OECD, 2002:27-28).

Outcomes are the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs. (OECD, 2002:28).

Outputs are the products, capital goods and services which result from a development intervention; may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes. (OECD, 2002:28).

Primary data are new data created via first-hand collection. (UNICEF, 2015a:4). A source of primary data can be a document written, or an interview/focus group discussion recorded during the field work; or a document obtained as raw data (i.e. which has not been analyzed, assessed or published) directly from the individual or organization that produced it (such as: statistics on victims of trafficking; eye-witness testimonies; legislative drafts: etc.)

Secondary data is information gathered from pre-existing sources or databases. (UNICEF, 2015a:4).

A **stakeholder** is considered as anyone who has the responsibility, capacity or opportunity to work on women empowerment and gender equality in Turkyie.

Theories of change are the ideas and hypotheses ('theories') people and organisations have about how change happens. These theories can be conscious or unconscious and are based on personal beliefs, assumptions and a necessarily limited, personal perception of reality. (Hivos, 2015: 12). In other words, a theory of change explains how activities are understood to produce a series of results that contribute to achieving the final intended impact. (UNICEF, 2014: 1). A theory of change as an approach is *a guiding framework for all stages of thinking, action and sense-making* when we intervene intentionally in social change processes. (Hivos, 2015: 12). In terms of product, a theory of change is intended as a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context (UNFPA, 2017:2).

Executive Summary

The Project *Advancing gender equality and Women's Leadership in Political and Business life* aimed to **enhance women's leadership and participation in decision-making roles across Türkiye**, focusing on the political and economic sectors and seeking to address systemic challenges and foster gender equality in these fields. The project was implemented by UN Women Turkyie and financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida).

The final evaluation of the project aims to provide an independent assessment of its progress toward its objectives and to identify lessons learned for future initiatives promoting women's political leadership and participation in decision-making processes in Türkiye. The evaluation used the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation criteria of **relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability** while applying a **cross-cutting human rights and gender equality perspective**. It was conducted from May to October 2024, covering the **entire project implementation period** and the **various locations** where the project's activities have been concentrated.

The evaluation was theory-based and **highly participatory,** involving **project partners and stakeholders at different levels,** such as the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye's Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (KEFEK), Association for Supporting Women Candidates (KA.DER), municipalities, the Women Entrepreneurs Association of Türkiye (KAGİDER), Municipalities of Ankara, Istanbul, Eskişehir Gaziantep, Adana, Bursa and private sector companies. Moreover, end beneficiaries included the municipality staff who benefit from the Gender Responsive Budget (GRB) and Purple Map initiatives, women who received training for local elections, and media staff who received gender-responsive media training. Among other relevant sakeholders/beneficiaries are civil society organizations (CSOs), academics and advocates of women's rights and gender equality.

The evaluation used a **primarily qualitative** approach. The team completed a thorough **in-depth desk review** to assess the importance of the various project activities, results areas and the various segments of beneficiaries involved. **Field missions** were carried out in Ankara, Eskişehir and Istanbul as well as other project locations such as Gaziantep, Adana and Bursa, which have been reached by online methods. A **total of 68 stakeholders** were involved: 48 key informants (42 women, 6 men) were interviewed (face to face or virtually) and 20 respondents (15 women, 5 men) participated in focus group discussions (face to face or virtually).

Data were triangulated by drawing on different sources of information to substantiate findings. **Challenges** that affected the evaluation included the limited reliability of quantitative data due to the unreachability of beneficiaries, their partial involvement in project activities, the political context, and the unrepresentativeness of the sample.

Main Findings of the evaluation

Relevance: The project was **highly relevant** to international norms, national priorities and the needs of beneficiaries, by employing a flexible and knowledge-based approach to address needs and challenges such as a pandemic and a major earthquake. UN Women, though not a field agency, has effectively responded.

Coherence: The project has created **significant synergies** with interventions by UNCT, UN Women, the Government, and other partners. It aligned closely with the UN Women's Strategic Plan and triple mandate, contributing directly to its Strategic Note and UNSDCF. While coordinating and complementing interventions by the Government and key partners, further collaboration opportunities with other UN agencies remained under-explored.

Effectiveness: Remarkable progress was recorded toward the project's expected results, though progress was uneven across outcomes and outputs. The project has succeeded in building the capacities of partners and beneficiaries, including the EOC, municipalities, private sector, and civil society. Key factors contributing to the project's achievements include UN Women's engagement, expertise, supportive attitude and flexibility, and the adoption of an integrated approach to GEWE. **Positive strategies** adopted by the project included effective partnerships, networking and dialogue opportunities, and the diverse range of training programmes. However, **challenges** such as staff rotations in partner institutions, insufficient coordination among stakeholders, limited male engagement and slow dissemination of outcomes have reduced progress in some areas. Overall, more efforts were needed to promote effective monitoring and follow-up of activities.

Efficiency: The evaluation highlighted the **efficiency** of the project despite Türkiye's unstable economic and political conditions. Key strengths included UN Women's networking capacity, expertise mobilization, and flexible use of funds. The Project's management structure efficiently responded to emerging needs. However, a **high number of fragmented activities** affected synergy with other actions. A broader management framework and a more flexible timing approach would benefit partners and stakeholders, given Türkiye's rapidly changing context. Coordination between project counterparts and UN Women was efficient, but coordination among stakeholders could be improved.

Sustainability: Sustainability varies across outputs and activities, depending on intervention nature and stakeholder commitments. However, the project **significantly increased awareness and ownership** among stakeholders and beneficiaries, fostering long-term sustainability. Key results include the empowerment of local women political aspirants and enhanced media sensitivity among media partners through trainings, and increased gender-equality awareness in WEPs signatory companies. The project has opened significant entry points for gender equality issues on the public agenda, particularly through EOC partnerships. Platforms for experience sharing across outcomes are crucial to maximize impact, while actions like VAWiP and election analyses have the potential for wider appeal through better results dissemination.

Human Rights and Gender Equality: The project successfully integrated gender equality and human rights principles across its activities, enabling a **gender-sensitive and inclusive implementation**. This positions the project to drive transformative changes, although male engagement remained limited. A greater focus on including disability and other vulnerabilities would have been beneficial.

Conclusions

The project was **highly relevant** to international norms, UN strategy documents, and beneficiary needs. Despite challenges in public institutions and mixed societal attitudes toward gender equality, UN Women played a crucial role in **fostering collaboration** with the Turkish government and providing guidance. While the general political climate and uneven public attitudes led to minor non-achievements in the project, it successfully **built capacities** across various stakeholders, including the EOC, municipalities, civil society, and the private sector. However, the **project's fragmented nature** posed risks of resource inefficiencies. Nonetheless, the **flexible and inclusive approach** of UN Women Türkiye CO mitigated these issues, enabling efficient and coherent implementation. Despite **uneven long-term partner commitments**, the project created significant **opportunities for innovation**. Its most notable contribution lies in reiterating the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment as a significant dimension of human rights.

Lessons Learned

L1: Potential sustainability has to be assessed before inception, duly considering the multiplicity of factors that can potentially affect it.

L2: Male engagement needs more attention as it fosters the scaling-up of outcomes, leading to broader transformative changes.

L3: A limited number of outputs would be crucial for deepening the impact.

L4: Promoting actions that involve and appeal to all political spectrums and parties is important to address common problems.

L5: Dissemination is always paramount to ensure the project's sustainability.

Good practices

Training of women candidates due to its relevance to women's needs and empowerment in local politics.

Training of media on gender sensitivity as it favoured community pressure, collective understanding and checks system in the newspapers.

Introduction of a new entry point in promoting gender equality, namely Digital Violence, and the **innovative collaboration with the National Parliament.**

UN Women's **flexibility in response to crises,** such as COVID-19 and earthquakes, provided an impressive guide for the private sector and activates the tripartite collaboration for women entrepreneurs.

Recommendations

R1. Priority: High. UN Women should continue reinforcing its support for women's political participation in Türkiye, placing more focus on the local level.

R2. Priority: High. UN Women should continue supporting the private sector in promoting women's leadership in business, leveraging on the project's track record of successful activities.

R3. Priority: Medium. In the next phase of the project, a networking mechanism should be established where stakeholders from different components of the project can regularly gather together, preferably face to face, sharing experiences, best practices, problems, and related solutions, and promoting mutual learning processes and synergies to improve participation, visibility, and dissemination.

R4. Priority: High. The project's sustainability and its ownership by the stakeholders after UN Women's involvement ends is crucial. The sustainability aspect should be considered and ensured starting from the early phases of the project and throughout the implementation.

R5. Priority: High. Since the long-term impacts of small-scale projects can be limited, UN Women should design policy-oriented projects to ensure high impact, which will imprint the organization on gender equality and human rights in Türkiye.

R6. Priority: High. UN Women should leverage its recognized comparative advantage in designing and implementing projects/programmes/advocacy activities aiming to advance GEWE in Türkiye. The organization should capitalize on its capacity and know-how, facilitate the participation of stakeholders from all sections of society, and further strengthen its influence on the policy-making processes.

R7. Priority: High. UN Women should increase efforts to include all relevant stakeholders while pursuing the objective of promoting gender equality.

R8. Priority: Medium. UN Women should adapt to new trends and innovative technologies to reach a broader audience. Expanding media partnerships to engage a wider range of outlets and integrate digital platforms across projects can increase awareness of new forms of violence and discrimination (i.e. digital violence) and enhance dissemination across different stakeholders.

1. Object and Context of the Evaluation

1.1 Introduction

The objective of this Report is to compile the findings and recommendations of the final evaluation of the "Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Leadership in Political and Business Life Project" implemented by UN Women Türkiye with the financial support of Sweden through the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). The overall objective of the final evaluation, implemented between May and October 2024, is to assess the programmatic progress and performance of the project in terms of the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability, and human rights and gender equality, with a specific focus on lessons learnt throughout the implementation of the project. The evaluation aims to assess the progress made towards the achievement of the project's objectives and outcomes, as well as to analyse its results with a view to identifying best practices and main challenges / obstacles. The outcomes of the evaluation are expected to feed into advocacy, policy and decision-making processes.

Following the introductory part (Section 1), which includes the context and a description of the object of the Evaluation, the Final Report is divided into the following main sections: Section 2 provides an overview of the Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Scope of the assignment. Section 3 introduces the Evaluation Framework, Section 4 presents the Evaluation Methodology, including the overall approach, data collection tools and methods of analysis as well as limitations and ethical guidelines. Finally, Section 5 presents the Main Findings, Section 6 includes Conclusions, Lessons Learned, and Good Practices, while Section 7 refers to Recommendations.

1.2 Background and overview of the context

Türkiye is amongst the G20 countries in terms of economic development, while according to the 2024 Gender Gap Report of the World Economic Forum it ranks 127th out of 146 countries, specifically 133rd in economic participation and opportunities, 90th in educational attainment, 98th in health and survival, and 114th in political empowerment.[1]

Despite being one of the first countries where women gained the rights to vote and be elected, women are significantly **under-represented in decision-making positions** within the national and local executive and legislative branches of government. As of January 2023, only one female Minister in charge of Family and Social Services was present in the Presidential Cabinet among 17 Ministries. Türkiye thus ranks 173rd globally for Women Cabinet Ministries according to UN Women's Women in Politics Map.[2]

Türkiye still does not have compulsory temporary special measures to increase women's participation in decision-making. In 2018, 2019 and 2021, bills were submitted to incorporate the adoption of quotas and co-chairing in municipalities and political parties into the Election Law and the Political Parties Law. These bills remain in the Constitutional Committee of Turkish Grand National Assembly. On the other hand, there are parties that implement internal statutes that have clauses on special measures, such as DEM,[3] CHP.[4]

The ruling AKP does not have a special measures clause but[5] still has continually increased the representation of women in their parliamentary group since the 2002 elections. Despite such attempts, the representation of women in the parliament has not reached the target of 20% in 2023 as stated in the 11th

1 World Economic Forum, 2024, 'Global Gender Gap Report 2024', (available at Global Gender Gap Report 2024 | World Economic Forum (weforum.org)
2 https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2023/03/women-in-politics-map-2023
3 Halkların eşitlik ve Demokrasi partisi (Peoples' Democracy and Equality Party) has a parity rule. This Party entered the elections under the name of Yeşil Sol Parti - Green Left Party
4 Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican Peoples Party)
5 Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)

National Development Plan. At present, the overall women distribution of seats in the parliament is 19.87%.[6] The 12th Development Plan indicates that in 2023 female employment rate was 35.9%[7], confirming that temporary special measures are needed to improve the participation of women in all spheres of social life including politics and labour market.

The participation of women in local politics has been even scarcer and seemingly more difficult. According to Turkish Statistics Institute (TURKSTAT) data on local elections results of 2019, only 41 females were elected as mayors and, while the proportion of female mayors was 10% among metropolitan areas, it was as low as 1.5% in district-town areas. In the 2019 local elections, only 2,284, or 11%, of the total 20,745 city council members were women. Of the 1,271 people elected as members of the Provincial General Assembly, only 48, or 4%, were women. There are a total of 50,215 mukhtars[8] in Türkiye, 32,019 of which are in 'urban districts' while 18,196 are in villages. 1,085 female mukhtars were elected according to the 2019 local election results which amounts to only 2% of all mukhtars. This proportion was 1% for rural areas.

As for the recent local elections held on 31 March 2024, UN Women[9] report that out of 81 provincial mayors, 11 were women, marking a growth from 4.9% to 13.6% from 2019. According to the same source, 67 women mayors were elected at district level increasing the percentage from 2.7% in 2019 to 5% in 2024. A significant increase is also expected in the election of mukhtars, although official data are not yet available.

Previous research has indicated that, besides the community and family discouraging women from participating in politics, women may face hindrances from the political parties and internal competition.[10] The high electoral threshold[11] was found to be one of the setbacks for more women to participate in elections. In March 2023, the threshold was lowered to 7%, but this did not have a significant impact. There have been several attempts coming from the opposition parties to introduce temporary special measures to encourage women's political participation. These were, however, rejected by the ruling coalition.

Women's Economic Empowerment[12]

In Türkiye, women's economic empowerment continues to face significant challenges. Women's labor force participation in 2024 is still very low at 36.1%, as against 71,5% for men[13]. Even this ratio cannot be considered as stable. Women tend to be first to lose jobs in any kind of crisis. For example, during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, women's employment rate regressed to its 2012 levels, and the female labor force participation rate fell to its 2013 level. According to TURKSTAT, in 2020, the employment rate for women above the age of 15 was 26.3% (compared to 59.8% for men). As of 2022, this ratio has risen to 30,4%; however, it is still significantly lower than that of men (65%). Part-time employment is higher amongst women (16,1%), compared to men (6,7%). In 2023, women's unemployment rate was 22.3% (compared to 14.3% for men). Unfortunately, the gender gap in unemployment is increasing with the economic crisis. The gender gap in employment is particularly high for women in the 25-49 age group who have young children.

In terms of women's business leadership positions, the picture that emerges is similar to the one above: the rate of women in the executive boards of top companies that are listed on Istanbul Stock Exchange only reached 17.5% in 2022, while only 29% of those companies have achieved the target of 25% suggested by the Capital Markets Board of Türkiye[14]. Globally, women members constitute only 20% of the boards of

6 https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/SandalyeDagilimi
7 12th Development Plan, p.173 (Table 38)
8 A mukhtar is an elected official serving in a neighborhood/village and acting as the smallest local government unit.
9 WPP-v3 (unwomen.org) .
10 The present Project has commissioned a report on Violence Against Women in Politics
11 Electoral treshold is 7% in Türkiye, which means in an election parties that have less than 7% of votes cannot enter the parliament.
12 The employment statistics have been taken from the TUİK figures of the relevant period unless otherwise stated
13 https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Isgucu-Istatistikleri-Mayis-2023-49387
14 Sabancı University Corporate Governence Forum, April 2023, 10th Annual Report: Women on Board, 2022 Türkiye, https://iwdT ŗkiye .sabanciuniv.edu/sites/iwdT ŗkiye .sabanciuniv.edu/files/2023-03/report-2022-4.pdf

largest listed companies, and thus continue to be excluded from highest levels of corporate leadership positions, having significant economic and societal consequences. On the other hand, contrary to the case of Türkiye, important achievements have been recorded in different country and regional contexts, as, for example, illustrated by a new European Union directive on gender balance on corporate boards requiring companies within the EU to have 40% of the underrepresented sex on their boards. According to TURKSTAT data, the rate of women in senior and middle management positions was 21% in 2021, which is also reflected in high-level and/or decision-making positions in other sectors, including ambassadors (27%) and professors (33%).

What this picture illustrates is that the Turkish government has a mixed approach to women's empowerment. On the one hand, a specific section of the 12th Development Plan[15] has been directly allocated for women's empowerment, with a special emphasis on economic development. The Plan also contains a commitment to carry out Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB), and Türkiye has been pointed as one of the few countries that have recently introduced GRB as part of their performance budgeting frameworks, and working on measures to track its progress[16]. Moreover, while training programmes were carried out in 2022 to increase awareness of gender budgeting among Members of Parliament (MPs) and government executives, and to provide technical assistance to public officials, GRB has so far been taken up by certain local governments. In addition, there have been many measures implemented by the state, including incentives given to employing female workers, encouraging women farmers through specially designed low-interest credits and cooperatives, and providing cash transfers to education of the girl children. On the other hand, however, the government refrains from using the concept of gender, even equality, and prefers to use equal opportunity, which provides legitimacy to refer to women's role as mothers and care takers. On similar grounds, cash benefits have been provided to women that are stay-at-home care takers. A similar course of conduct can be observed on issues related to violence against women. On 22 March 2021, Türkiye withdrew from the Istanbul Convention on the grounds that it does not agree with the Convention's wording (specifically on the concept of gender), resulting in officially not being longer a party to the Convention as of 1 July 2021. On the other hand, the internal law No. 6284 has been retained, although it includes most of the provisions of the Convention. The implementation of the law itself has become controversial. Even though the official discourse of the government is very strict on following the criminal cases and taking preventive measures, there are still arguments within the ruling party to amend the law as to relax the measures on perpetuators.

In summary, Türkiye's gender equality record is not compatible with the level of its economic development and the state has an ambivalent attitude towards taking measures to ensure gender equality. In this context, the project comes forward as a crucial initiative to tackle the root causes of this inequality in a variety of spheres and to promote women's participation in leadership in political and economic life.

1.3 Object of the Evaluation

The **Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Leadership in Political and Business Life Project** aims to advance women's leadership and participation in decision-making in Türkiye by focusing on key stakeholders and actors in the fields of politics and private sector development. The specific objectives of the project include the following:

- To provide support for **increasing women's leadership in political decision-making**, establishing a cadre of interested, diverse and capable women to run for political office at the local level, increasing solidarity and gender equality awareness among women from different political affiliations and with women from outside government, advancing the national and policy legal framework and strengthening gender-sensitive governance at the local level;

- To promote **women's leadership and influence in the private sector;**

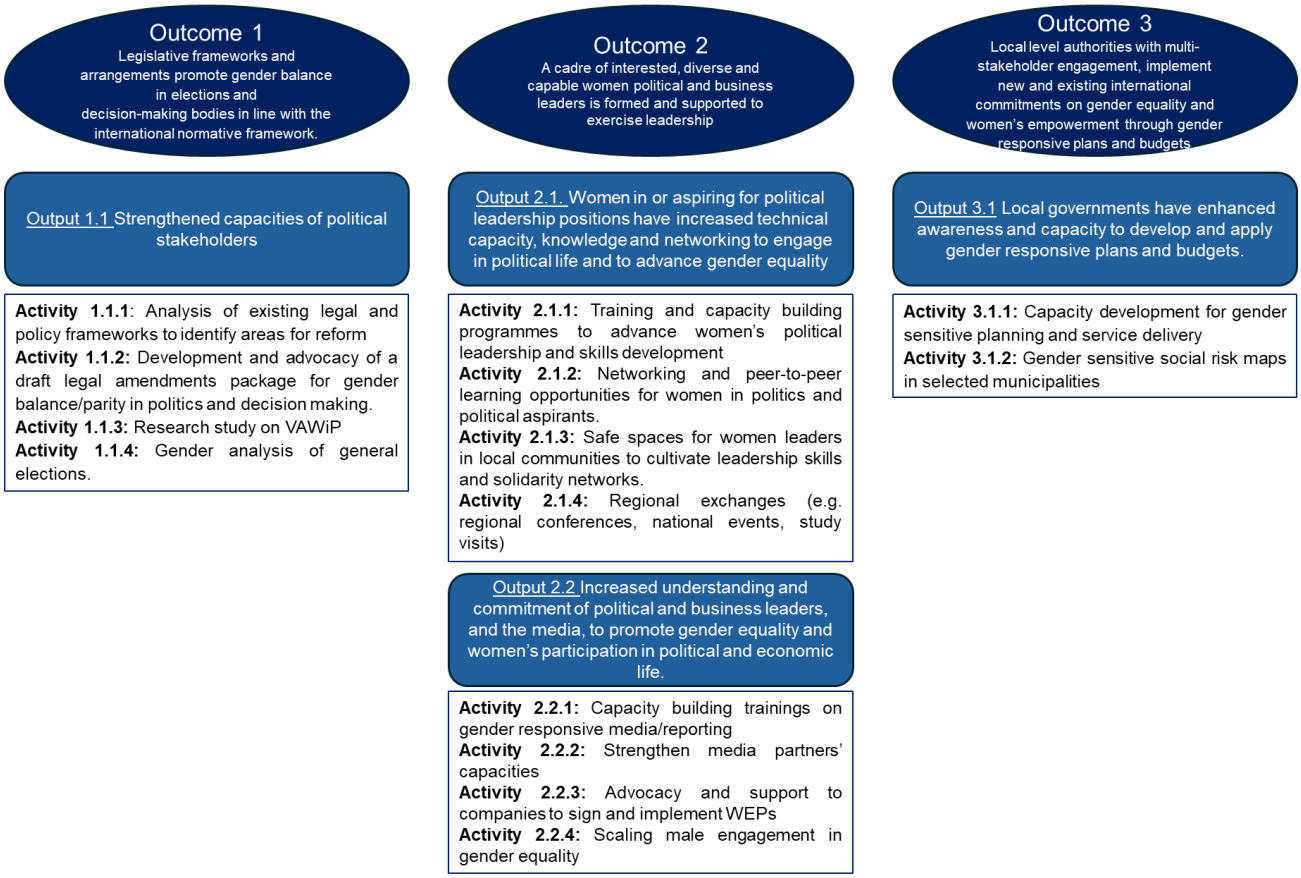
15 Onikinci Kalkınma Planı 2024-2028, TC Cumhurbaşkanlığı Strateji ve Bütçe Başkanlığı, October 2023. Available at: https://onikinciplan.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/On-Ikinci-Kalkinma-Plani_2024-2028.pdf

16 OECD (2023), Gender Budgeting in OECD Countries 2023, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/647d546b-en.

- To strengthen the **engagement of political and corporate male leaders** in advancing gender equality;
- To work with current and future media professionals and media outlets to advance the **non-stereotypical portrayal of women in media** as political and business leaders and;
- To practice **gender-sensitive practices** internally and externally.

The project has **three interrelated components** that involve partnering with key stakeholders, institutions and actors in order to increase women's political participation and leadership in Türkiye: i) adoption and implementation of legal frameworks that promote gender balance in elections and decision-making bodies; ii) development of skills in order to support women political and business leaders; and iii) promotion and support of gender-responsive measures (plans and budgets) within relevant institutions.

Figure 1 Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Leadership in Political and Business Life Project's components



The project was implemented nationwide, with a duration of three years, between May 2021- April 2024 with a total budget of 29,000,000 Swedish Kronor (SEK).

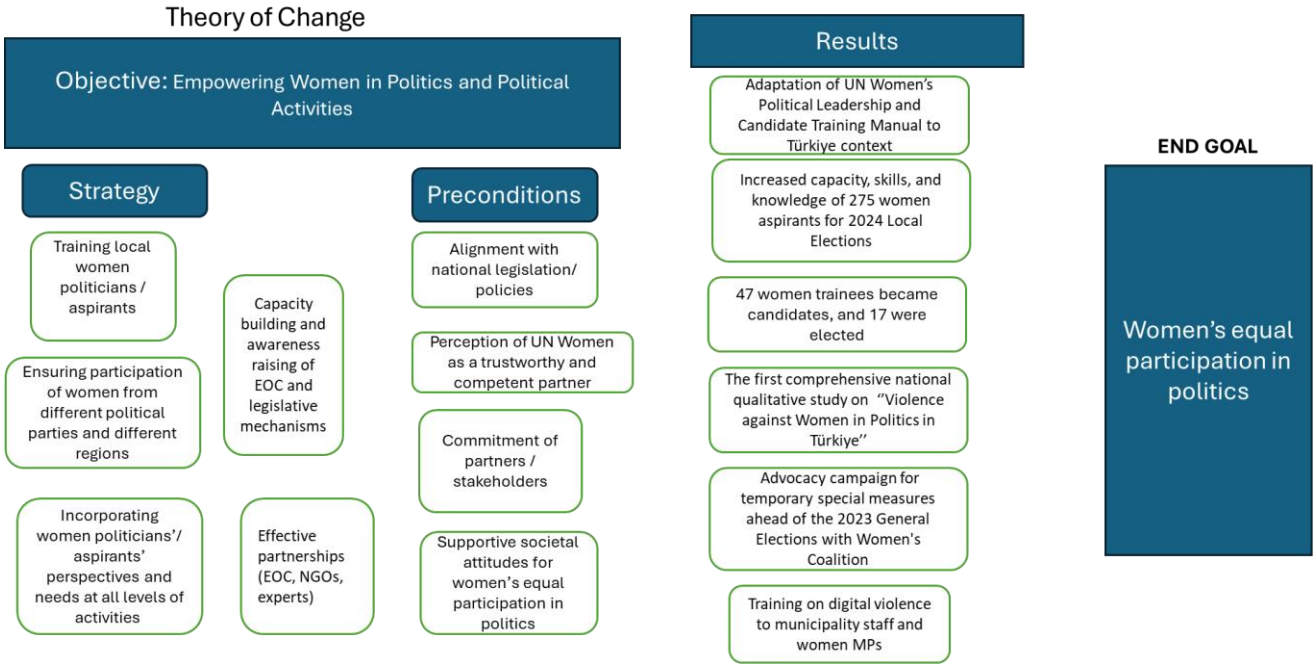
As **main stakeholders** of the project, the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye's Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (KEFEK), Association for Supporting Women Candidates (KA.DER), municipalities, The Women Entrepreneurs Association of Türkiye (KAGİDER), Municipalities of Ankara, Istanbul, Eskişehir Gaziantep, Adana and private sector companies that have committed themselves to Womens Empowerment Principles by signing to WEPs agreement.

End beneficiaries are the municipality staff who benefit from the GRB and Purple Map[17] initiatives, women who received training for local elections, and media officials who received gender responsive media trainings. Specifically, during the implementation of the project, 275 women aspirants for the 2024 Local Elections from various provinces of Türkiye received candidate training, and around 100 representatives of municipal councils, municipal staff along with women's departments of political parties and civil society organizations increased their knowledge of gender-responsive municipal services, including gender responsive budgeting.

Among other revant sakeholders/beneficiaries, there are civil society organizations (CSOs), academics and advocates of women rights and gender equality.

As part of the final evaluation of the project, the Evaluation team has reconstructed its Theory of Change (ToC), in line with a comprehensive review and analysis of data obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The ToC has been revised along with the actual outputs and results achieved (and non- or under-achieved) throughout the implementation of the project, which do not necessarily and fully overlap with the three main outcomes / components, but rather underline the project's actual contribution to the achievement of its major objectives in the field. The revised ToC, while articulating the main strategies, preconditions and actual outcomes of the project's interventions, also underlines the key elements that remained mainly under-achieved and which thus require further attention (in red boxes), as represented in Figures 2, 3 and 4 below.

Figure 2 Women's equal participation in politics and political activities



17 The Purple Map is an interactive website developed to respond to the different needs and priorities of women, men, the elderly, and all segments of society through gender-responsive policies and to enable municipalities to develop their gender-responsive services accordingly.

Figure 3 Increasing gender awareness and promoting gender responsive measures at the local level

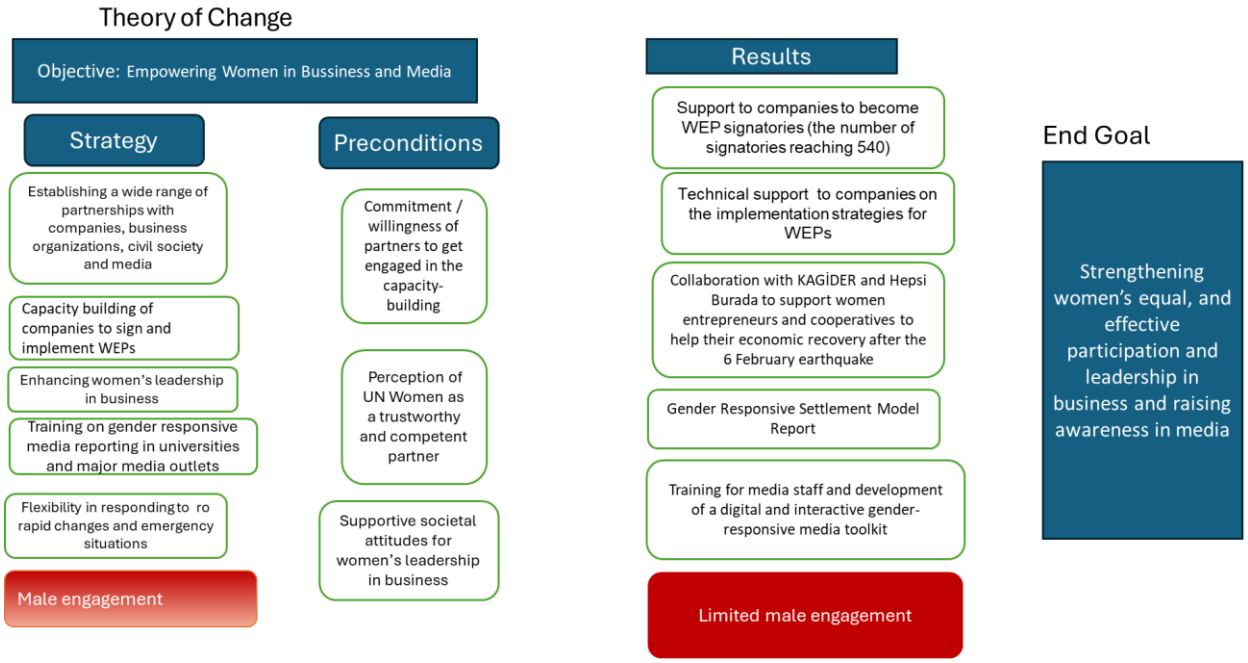
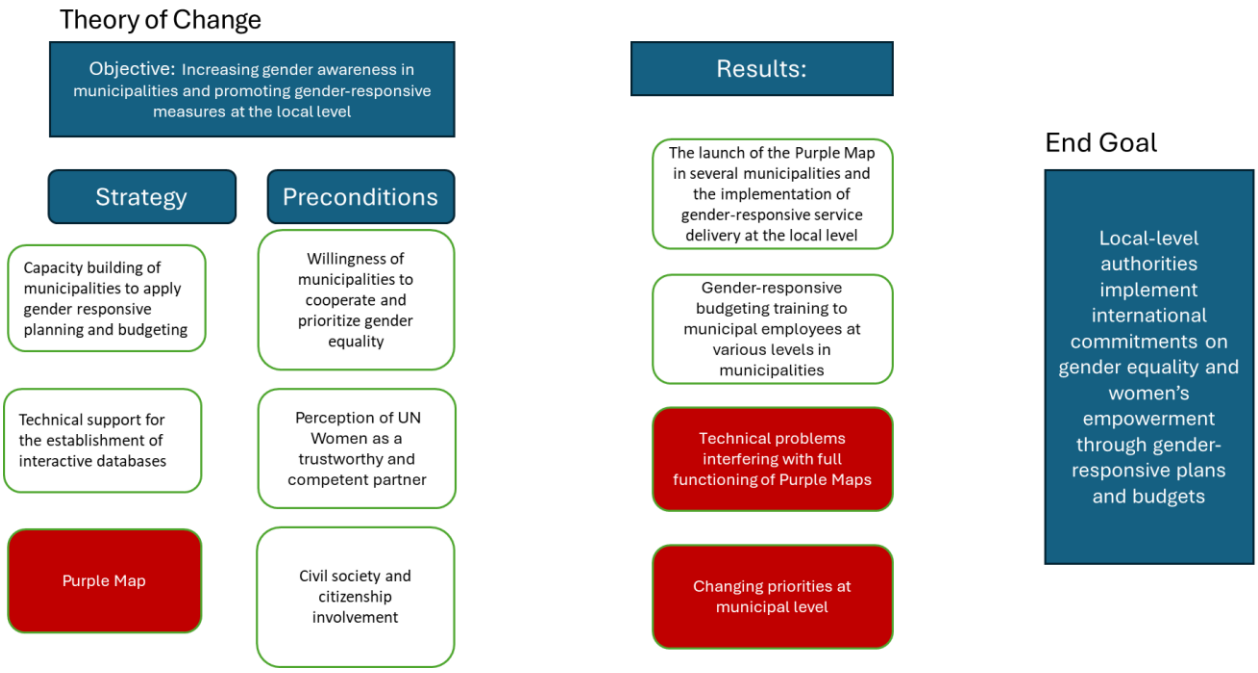


Figure 4 Empowering Women in Bussiness Life and Media



2. Purpose, Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation

2.1 Evaluation purpose and intended users

This evaluation aims at providing an independent assessment of UN Women Türkiye project "**Advancing gender equality and women's leadership in political and business life**," which builds on the strategies put in place by UN Women, aiming at changing behaviours and social norms to promote women's political leadership and participation in decision-making processes.

As mentioned above, the project aims to achieve its objective to promoting women's leadership in politics and businesses through its three outcomes, through a *multi-dimensional strategy,* aimed at addressing the root causes of gender inequality by tackling negative attitudes, behaviours and social norms within communities, promoting gender-responsive institutional practices, and strengthening advocacy for policy and legal change.

In this context, the purpose of this evaluation is twofold:

- On the one hand, the evaluation answers to the major need for **accountability** to both donors and beneficiaries in order to assess the progress made towards the expected outputs, outcomes and impact of the project;
- On the other hand, the evaluation bears an important **learning** function, identifying lessons learned stemming from the in-depth examination of the three components and drafting recommendations that will inform both the project's activities already in place and the remaining activities, as well as any future operations of UN Women in Türkiye in the field of GEWE.

The findings and recommendations of the evaluation aim to support the strategic learning and decision-making processes of UN Women Türkiye, its implementing partners and national stakeholders, who are the **end users of the evaluation**.

2.2 Evaluation objectives

The **specific objectives of the evaluation** are the following:

- To assess the **relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability** of the project. While assessing the project, the evaluation specifically identifies what worked well and what did not work, so as to identify its actual contribution to the original project's objectives. This assessment deals with the actual results and outcomes of the project and with its operational and working arrangements, including a focus to elements of strategic partnerships, synergies and effective coordination. The analysis also aims to highlight any **unexpected** positive or negative **outcomes of the project** with regards to the processes, strategies, and activities implemented.
- To assess the extent to which the project has incorporated in its design, implementation, and monitoring, the cross-cutting criterion of **human rights and gender equality,** as well as specific vulnerabilities, including disabilities.
- To **identify any good practices and lessons learned** coming out from the implementation of the project.
- To investigate how successfully the project has **adapted to changes in the country context** by formulating adequate responses. Specifically, the evaluation team has carefully analysed each phase of the project to understand how its strategies and specific activities have been proactively modified to address unexpected contextual changes, such as the February 2023 earthquakes and the volatile political environment surrounding two elections, in May 2023 and March 2024.

- To formulate **actionable recommendations** on how UN Women can further enhance their support for women's political participation in Türkiye, thereby strengthening their **advocacy efforts** to improve women's political and business leadership.

The evaluation has taken a **systemic / integrated approach**, reflecting the project's multidimensional nature, and entailing multiple layers of analysis and lines of evidence. The evaluation has been conducted with a thorough awareness of the complexity of the issues to be analysed and the available time/resources.

2.3 Evaluation scope

The evaluation has a specific **temporal scope** corresponding to the total implementation of the project between May 2021 and July 2024, following its amendment.

As for its **geographical scope,** as specified by the ToR, the evaluation covers **the various locations where the project activities have been concentrated,** including Ankara, Eskişehir and Istanbul, where field missions have been carried out, as well as other project locations such as Gaziantep, Adana and Bursa, which have been reached out by online methods.

As stated, the ToR originally included Ankara, Eskişehir, Istanbul and Gaziantep among the evaluation locations. However, preliminary contacts with stakeholders located in Gaziantep revealed unavailability of different typology of stakeholders to be interviewd. Indeed, key project staff would have been the only available informants to be interviewd through online KIIs due to recent changes in municipality staff following local elections held in March 2024 as well as changing local priorities and agendas. To mitigate this limitation, the geographic scope of the evaluation expanded to Adana and Bursa, where stakeholders were involved using the online interview technique, in accordance with the Programme Teams at UN Women.

Thematically, the evaluation covers **all the activities** funded and implemented under the project, its diverse set of implementation, at both national (Government and relevant Ministries, NGOs, CSOs, women associations, arrangements, as well as its key stakeholders business partners) and local levels (municipalities, NGOs, local entrepreneurs), along with its main beneficiaries.

Furthermore, since the project has a wider impact on society, including male politicians, business leaders and the general public, the evaluation considers these implications from a larger perspective. The evaluation thus covers a **complex system**, which has been tackled with the design and application of an **integrated evaluation framework**, entailing multiple lines of evidence and interlinked levels of analysis, aiming at being **fully participatory and inclusive**.

3. Evaluation Framework

3.1 Evaluation Criteria and Key Questions

The evaluation has been conducted within the framework of the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. It has also addressed the core UN cross-cutting priorities of human rights and gender equality, as per UNEG guidance. Considering the UN Women mandate to incorporate human rights and gender equality in all its work and the UN Women Evaluation Policy, which promotes the integration of women's rights and gender equality principles, these dimensions have taken a special attention throughout the evaluation. In particular, the gender dimension, as the core dimension of the project, has been considered as a cross-cutting concern throughout the approach, design, methodology, deliverables and outcomes of the evaluation.

The criteria that have been addressed by the evaluation, along with key questions and relevant sub-questions under each criterion, are outlined in the full Evaluation Matrix in Annex 4 and are also reflected in the data collection tools provided in Annex 5. It should be noted that the interview and FGD guides provided in the Annexes simplify and cluster the questions in a clear and concise way to guarantee a common understanding of questions with relevant stakeholders / beneficiaries of the project.

4. Evaluation Methodology

4.1 Overall Approach to the Evaluation

As stated above, the twofold purpose of the evaluation is to answer to the major need for **accountability** to both donors and beneficiaries and to be **utilisation-focused**, with a clear emphasis on generating lessons learned for future planning and programming at local and country level.

In line with the first point, the evaluation has been conducted with a **summative approach**, intended to understand the extent to which and how the interventions have been actually implemented, highlighting what has worked and what has not. This analysis has led to the identification of the actual degree of synergy and complementarity among stakeholders, shedding light on the strengths and weaknesses emerging from the project's interventions.

Moreover, the analysis has adopted a **formative approach,** focusing on gaps and bottlenecks in the project that need to be addressed. Attention is given to lessons learned and good practices in order to capitalise on the recommendations provided by the evaluation. As indicated by the ToR, these recommendations aim to contribute to knowledge management on women's leadership in politics and in the private sector. They should also guide UN Women and implementing partners in engaging policymakers and other stakeholders at local and national levels in evidence-based dialogues, advocating for increased women's leadership at both the local and central levels. With this regard, the extensive engagement with the primary intended users of the evaluation, involved in the whole process including the validation of findings, conclusions and recommendations, is expected to be beneficial for later **ownership** of the results of the evaluation, which will subsequently influence the usability of this evaluation exercise.

The evaluation has incorporated a **human rights and gender equality based approach** along the whole duration of the exercise, in accordance with both UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation and 2020 Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation.

This means that the evaluation approach, as integrated and inter-sectoral as possible, has placed central importance on ensuring the equal rights and participation of both men and women. This includes interviews and FGDs with **gender-disaggregated beneficiaries** and the assessment of the use of **gender participatory planning and participatory monitoring and evaluation** while designing and implementing interventions and initiatives. The key guidances have thus been provided by the UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation, together with the 2018 UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator and its related scorecard.

The evaluation has also been conducted in accordance with the UN Women Evaluation Policy and the United Nations Evaluation Group Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the United Nations system. It integrates **gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE)** in the analysis conducted within the scope of the evaluation, and ensures the collection of GEWE-related data through the design of the evaluation criteria and questions. It also pays utmost attention to employ a gender-responsive methodology throughout, including the methods and tools, along with data analysis techniques that are used for the purposes of the evaluation. Finally, the evaluation is based on a thorough gender analysis in terms of its background, findings, conclusions and recommendations.

In this specific context, the **gender-responsive approach** aims to reach two main and equally important purposes that together support the overall delivery of results: i) it is a useful means to demonstrate results and accountability to stakeholders by providing information to stakeholders, participants and donors about the project's approach to promoting women's political participation; ii) it helps provide credible and reliable evidence for decision-making by providing information about local and country-level initiatives helping and supporting women in the political and business activities.

Equity dimensions, namely the involvement of most disadvantaged groups, have been duly analysed. As per the GERAAS criteria, disability inclusion has been considered throughout the methodology and recommendations of the evaluation.

Finally, the evaluation of the Project has been conducted under a twofold **evaluation governance structure**, consisting of:

- the Evaluation Management Group (EMG), comprising the senior management of UN Women, Evaluation Task Manager and Programme manager in charge of overseeing the evaluation process, providing guidance and quality assurance of the different deliverables; and
- the UN Women Regional Evaluation Specialist for the ECA region, who is a member of the UN Women Independent Evaluation Service, to ensure the quality assurance of the evaluation, and the designated UN Women focal point acting as the evaluation task manager responsible for the day-to-day management of the evaluation.

4.2 Methodology

In addition to the **theory-based approach**, which has entailed **reconstructing a comprehensive Theory of Change (ToC)** around the three interconnected field-level outcomes, the evaluation is based on data collection from both primary and secondary data sources. Due to the limitations detailed in section 4.5, the evaluation has primarily adopted a **qualitative method** in order to reach an in-depth and full-fledged picture of the progress of the project. Therefore, in addition to the analysis of secondary data through a comprehensive **desk review**, the evaluation team has collected qualitative primary data through two main axes, including:

- **Key Informant Interviews** (KIIs) with project stakeholders;
- **Focus Group Discussions** (FGDs) involving implementing partners, relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Using different research techniques and data sources ensures that a variety of perspectives are taken into consideration, which is fundamental for this multidimensional evaluation exercise. The analysis of the qualitative data has helped to explain the causes of any successes or failures of the project.

The evaluation has thus adopted a **transparent and participatory approach** by engaging the stakeholders and beneficiaries at different levels and ensuring their opinions about the implementation of the project, and their views and contribute to the dissemination process. Opinions revealed by the stakeholders and beneficiaries have served to improve and clarify the data obtained from the project documents. As mentioned above, the participatory nature of the evaluation is expected to contribute to the sense of ownership among stakeholders, while at the same time enhancing the interpretation of the evaluation team of the real situation on the ground, which is not possible to assess merely on the basis of the documented work. With this regard, the evaluation team adopted the **Most Significant Change (MSC)** method, which is a participatory tool that involves the collection of significant change stories at different levels of the project (see Annex 6).

The evaluation is articulated in the following three phases:

- **Inception Phase**: it has involved consultations between the evaluation team and the EMG, programme portfolio review, finalization of stakeholder mapping, inception meetings with the ERG, review of the result logics, preliminary review of documents and information relevant to the initiative, finalization of evaluation methodology and preparation and validation of inception report. These activities were completed by May 2024.
- **Data collection Phase**: it has focused on an in-depth review of the project documents and monitoring frameworks, online and field KIIs and FGDs (see 4.3).

- **Analysis, Validation and Synthesis Phase**: it has involved the analysis of the primary and secondary data collected in the previous phases, the interpretation and triangulation of findings to reach a synthesis of the data, issuing recommendations, and drafting and validation of the Final Evaluation Report and other communication products.

Following the completion of these three phases, dissemination and follow-up of the evaluation under the responsibility of UN Women, will follow.

4.3 Data collection tools

Secondary Data

As indicated above, the evaluation has built on an **in-depth desk review** of project documents and data available through other studies and research conducted on the theme. The **objective** of the desk review was to assess the importance of the various project activities, results areas and the various segments of beneficiaries involved.

The analysis provided an overview of **UN Women's broadest efforts**, and helped the team further define the focus of the evaluation, feeding into the overall drafting/answering of the evaluation questions. Furthermore, it was crucial **to identify data gaps** to be addressed and to assess the project's progress thanks to the analysis of financial, budget and human resources data, as well as data on the results framework indicators. Moreover, the review of the documents of all project components allowed to screening the **knowledge management activities** embedded in the project. It also served as a basis for the **reconstruction of the ToC**. Finally, it provided a basis to **identify relevant interventions** to be studied in-depth during the field visits in selected project locations.

This review was undertaken through a **gender equality lens**, and entailed the mapping of the project activities specifically focusing on the different target groups.

Specifically, the **document review** was based on a comprehensive and systematic screening of the documents made available by the project team, including the periodic progress reports, annual reviews, evaluations, logframe, financial documentation, documentation related to the mandate, procedures, monitoring of the project, as well as various outputs such as surveys and research studies. Moreover, the team reviewed the documents related to all project components, such as identification and formulation reports, logframe, results-based framework, annual reports, joint sector review reports etc. as well as previous evaluations and studies.

Additionally, a **complementary literature review** was carried out to analyse secondary data from UN Women corporate policy documentation, previous studies and research conducted on the issue. The review continued by including additional stakeholders' documents which are relevant to the scope of the evaluation, such as intervention documents, annual reports, monitoring reports, evaluations etc.

The list of documents reviewed can be found in Annex 1.

Primary Data Collection

The qualitative data collection has been the main pillar of the evaluation exercise, consisting of **KIIs and FGDs** with implementing partners and key project stakeholders and beneficiaries, who have provided the main insights of the evaluation. This allowed for an in-depth and comprehensive account of the main achievements and best practices of the project, along with its bottlenecks, challenges and obstacles, from the perspective of various actors.

Prior to field missions, a **stakeholder map** containing contact details and positions of key project stakeholders was produced by UN Women during the inception phase (see Annex 2). All stakeholders on the map were contacted by the evaluation team, to get a full picture of the project outputs and outcomes, as well as impact, dissemination and sustainability implications. While the key stakeholders and implementation partners of the project across different locations were consulted via KIIs, the FGDs mainly targeted the end beneficiaries to the extent that they were tracible and reachable.

As the stakeholder map highlighted a low number of implementing partners and stakeholders in each province, additional stakeholders were also consulted through KIIs, as perceived need occurred during the consultations and as several respondents referred the evaluation team to further stakeholders.

Regarding the KIIs and FGDs, the evaluation team elaborated the following themes with a view to expanding the focus of the questions:

- information on the design and implementation of specific activities;
- collaboration with UN Women;
- most significant points of achievement / innovative aspects of the project;
- its key challenges, weaknesses and main points of resistance;
- any unintended / unexpected outcomes / results;
- impact of changing social, economic and political context of the country on the objectives and activities of the project.

There were no individuals with disabilities among the interviewees.

Moreover, the evaluation team determined the key themes for each FGD, providing instructions to the partners on the composition of the groups. The FGDs lasted between 60-120 minutes, with a maximum of 8 participants each. Participation to the FGDs was voluntary and confidential and strict guidelines were followed.

FGDs contributed to shedding light on the impact of the project as well as to grasping relevant factors on effectiveness, especially when it comes to analyzing the processes, structures, and systems put in place. Aspects related to cross-cutting issues – gender, disabilities, human rights – were also investigated.

It is important to underline that the lists of questions provided in Annex 5 were adjusted to the different stakeholders who were consulted as part of the evaluation on the basis of their roles and responsibilities in the project.

The **qualitative data collection** of the study took place in Ankara, İstanbul and Eskişehir, as required by the ToR and as discussed during the inception meeting[18]. The provinces were selected based to the extent of activities implemented, in particular the development and use of the Purple Map as a key project activity, mainly with a view to grasping the local implications and ownership of the project.

Table 1 below summarizes the main information related to primary data collection.

Table 1 Primary Data Collection

Locations	Dates	Activities	Stakeholders	N° of Women Respondents	N°of Men Respondents

18 As indicated above, while Gaziantep was originally included in the selected provinces of field visits by the ToR, the initial communication with the main implementing partner revealed that the high staff rotation in the municipality following the local elections and thus the difficulty to reaching face-to-face correspondents in the province necessitated a revision of the original plans and the consequent data collection activities via online techniques in Gaziantep, along with Adana and Bursa.

Ankara	June-July 2024	19 KIIs	Main implementation partners and central-level stakeholders of the project, including EOC, Women's Coalition, Ankara Metropolitan Municipality, private sector partners, experts involved in various stages / activities of the project, along with Sida as UN Women staff.	18	1 (EOC)
Istanbul	June-July 2024	16 KIIs	KADER, KAGİDER, TÜSİAD, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, media and private sector representatives, and experts	13	3 (Media and KADER training experts)
		1 FGD	İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality staff	5	3
Eskişehir	July 2024	7 KIIs	Metropolitan Municipality staff and experts	5	2 (Local government staff experts)
Online through Microsoft Teams and Zoom applications.	July 2024	6 KIIs	Other stakeholders	6	
		2 FGDs (6 participants for each FGD)	Project's end beneficiaries, namely, participants of KADER and Milliyet trainings	10	2 (Milliyet)
Total number of people consulted by the evaluation team: 68				**57**	**11**

4.4 Methods of data analysis

The data analysis started during the data collection and expanded through its completion, with a view to identifying the key findings and evaluating the main outcomes of the evaluation. The KIIs and FGDs were voice recorded, upon the approval of the respondents, or notes were taken which were then transcribed for analysis. The management of the data has been totally confidential.

In order to identify the main themes, data were coded through the development of detailed description of each code and identification of inclusion and exclusion criteria. The analysis used these codes and disaggregated the data in order to identify key concepts along with the connections and cross-cutting issues among different codes. The codes and themes were further compared and contrasted in order to develop a common framework of analysis. The analysis aimed to identify key needs, concerns, challenges, and priorities expressed by the project stakeholders and beneficiaries.

As outlined above, a variety of sources have been used as part of the evaluation to allow the triangulation of findings related to the promotion of women's political and business leadership in Türkiye, where much of the available data is qualitative and strongly interlinked with the perceptions of relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries. The data collection from stakeholders / beneficiaries has aimed to enrich the qualitative perspective of the evaluation, increasing the validity and reliability of the findings of the desk review, and ensuring a participatory process, as well as to efficiently incorporate the personal feedback of relevant stakeholders directly involved in the interventions. The obtained data have been disaggregated by sex to the extent that it was possible and appropriate, during the data collection, presentation and analysis phases. The

evaluation has also paid attention to ensure the responsiveness of data to human rights and gender equality principles.

The evaluation has used various forms of triangulation:

- Data triangulation, involving time, space, and persons;
- Evaluator triangulation, involving evaluators sharing their individually and jointly collected data;
- Methodological triangulation, involving the use of more than one option to gather data.

The triangulation of data and sources has thus been a continuous process, which represents the **foundation of a strong evidence-based evaluation** and is thus crucial for the formulation of solid and consistent findings. The process described above has allowed the team to identify findings and consequent conclusions that represent **rigorous and complete answers to the evaluation questions** to the extent possible. Lessons learned have been identified on the basis of their potential to concretely provide a link between the results of the evaluation and future interventions to be planned by UN Women.

4.5 Limitations

Even though the project has been implemented in a volatile context due to the political and economic changes in Türkiye, the evaluation team has carried out the evaluation process in a relatively stable atmosphere since the general and local elections were completed.

Minor limitations have been experienced but mitigated according to the measures stated in the inception report.

Among these, one of the most important limitations concerned the inability to conduct **online surveys** within the framework of the evaluation exercise. As per the ToR, an online survey was originally planned to be conducted with the beneficiaries of the trainings for local political aspirants and activities for the municipal employees. Based on the desk review and consultations with UN Women Programme Teams and relevant stakeholders, it was decided that the online survey would not yield the expected inputs for the evaluation thus resulting inappropriate for the purposes of the evaluation for the following reasons:

- **Unreachability of beneficiaries**: It was observed that while women's political leadership component of the project has accessible beneficiaries throughout the municipalities and the trainings for local women politicians / aspirants, the business leadership component's beneficiaries are not easily identifiable nor reachable as most of them have been reached through the business partners of the project and are scattered through different locations.
- **Partial involvement of beneficiaries in the project activities**: Reachable beneficiaries of the political component partially participated to relevant activities of the project, thus not being able to provide an accurate understanding of the impact, beyond a brief evaluation of the activity concerned. It was observed by the evaluation team that the application of a survey to the training participants would rather serve as a 'satisfaction survey'.
- **Political context:** To spread the survey among project beneficiaries, close collaboration with implementing partners (most notably, KADER and municipalities) was needed to reach out to the project beneficiaries. The capacities of the intermediary organizations were not suitable to facilitate this due to high staff rotation at municipalities and the completion of the local elections in March 2024.
- **Unrepresentative sample:** Finally, the beneficiaries of KADER trainings and activities with municipalities do not constitute a large population group, resulting in approximately 250 participants to trainings and additional limited number of beneficiaries at each municipality. As it is estimated a response rate to be around half to one-third of all participants, the online survey would have not reach a representative sample, resulting in non significant results.

To ensure that the objectives of the evaluation would not be jeopardized due to the removal of the online survey from its scope, and that the evaluation's effectiveness and reliability would be maintained by collecting in-depth data from the end beneficiaries, three FGDs were conducted with different groups.

Another minor limitation was related to the data collection **period** which coincided with Bayram and holiday season. To overcome delays in the data collection, the team adopted a flexible approach by conducting either online or face-to-face interviews with all key informants indicated by UN Women. Moreover, to avoid missing necessary project information, the evaluation team used the snowball techique to extend stakeholders' interviews.

4.6 Guidelines and other tools

Ethical Considerations and Evaluation principles

In accordance with the UNEG 2020 Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and the UN Women Procurement principles, given the direct involvement and participation of the project's rights holders and final beneficiaries, the evaluation has observed the following two important **ethical elements**:

- *Confidentiality:* The evaluation team respected people's right to provide information in confidence and make participants aware of the scope and limits of confidentiality. They ensured that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source so that the relevant individuals are protected from reprisals. The evaluation team members also ensured that all contributors and participants give genuinely free, prior and *informed consent.*
- *Avoidance of Harm:* The evaluators sought to minimize risks to, and burdens on, those participating in the evaluation; and maximize the benefits and reduce any unnecessary harms that might occur from negative or critical evaluation, without compromising the integrity of the evaluation.

More generally, the evaluation bears the **following principles**:

- *Independence, impartiality, and absence of conflict of interest*: The evaluation team members have made utmost efforts to ensure independent, impartial, and unbiased judgements. The absence of conflict of interest has been duly checked. The evaluation team members were required to report any real or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise during the course of the evaluation to be assessed by Lattanzio KIBS and addressed appropriately and transparently to evaluation management group (EMG);
- *Competence, accuracy and reliability*: the evaluation ensures that all evidence is tracked from its source to its use and interpretation. All evaluation questions have been answered through triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data from multiple sources and processed using multiple analytical tools. A comprehensive Evaluation Matrix has been developed to link each evaluation tool, stakeholder and question. All findings and conclusions are explicitly justified and substantiated, and the recommendations are based on findings and not biases. The Quality Assurance system of the company has ensured that the team carries out the analysis in line with these principles and highlighted any challenge and constraint for the accuracy of the final deliverables;
- *Integrity and transparency:* the evaluation team members have capacity to clearly communicate to different stakeholders the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria applied and the intended use of findings, as well as for their personal integrity and capacity to respect the stakeholders' right to provide information in confidence and also respect the vulnerable groups;
- *Respect for dignity and diversity, fair representation:* the evaluation team members have clearly communicated to different stakeholders the purpose of the evaluation, the criteria applied and the intended use of findings. Within the evaluation, vulnerable groups, irrespective of their age, gender, disability, racial origin, religion, belief and sexual orientation, have been involved and their rights to protection and safety fully respected. The evaluation team has worked with EMG to identify vulnerable groups prior to field visits, and to ensure and encourage their involvement and processes

and evaluation questions are responsive to their needs. FGDs, meetings and interviews facilitators have set a tone of informality and openness;

In accordance with the above, all information gathered through consultations with the project's ultimate beneficiaries (i.e. rights holders) have been duly guided by the utmost confidentiality of the company and its evaluation team. The practical implications of their active participation have been discussed with EMG at the outset of the evaluation, not only in order to better define the data collection sampling approach, but also in relation to more practical questions.

In line with the above, all subjects involved in the evaluation have been offered an informed consent agreement whereas the evaluation team of experts signed the Pledge of Commitment to Ethical Conduct in Evaluation included in the revised version of the 2020 UNEG Ethical Guidelines.

5. Main Findings

5.1 Relevance

Q1. Is the design of the project and its results relevant to national and international strategies, UN Women priorities, and needs and priorities of target groups?

This section discusses two interrelated questions. The first is the compatibility of the Project "Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Leadership in Political and Business Life" with Türkiye's laws and policies on gender equality as well as the international norms and UN strategies and priorities to enhance gender equality in Türkiye. The second is the project's compatibility with the demands and needs of the target groups. Thus, the findings from the desk review of the documents and the strategy documents of Türkiye and UN, as well as findings from the fieldwork, are compiled to shed light on the relevance of the outcomes and activities on Türkiye's and stakeholders' needs as well as international norms.

SQ1d To what extent is the project aligned with international agreements and conventions on gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of women's leadership?

Finding 1: The Project is in line with the international agreements and conventions on gender equality and women's empowerment ratified by Türkiye.

These agreements and conventions and the Project's alignment are discussed in the following paragraphs:

CEDAW:

CEDAW[19] convention can be considered as the most significant guideline relevant to women's political and economic empowerment. CEDAW, in articles 7 and 8, directly refers to women's political participation and right to be represented and to represent others. Although CEDAW does not directly address women's leadership enhancement in business, it includes provisions to secure women's equal participation and leadership capacity in business through articles 11 and 13, which relate to women in employment.

The project supports these goals through actions involving the Equal Opportunities Committee of the Parliament (KEFEK/EOC) and trainings for local elections to promote women's leadership in politics. Additionally, women's leadership in business is promoted through partnerships with KAGİDER and TUSİAD as well as through implementing WEPs, aligning with project Outcomes 1 and 2, along with Outputs 2.1 and 2.2.

During the project implementation, concluding observations from the CEDAW committee on the 8th reporting period highlighted gender-based violence and political participation. Specifically, paragraph 29[20] draws attention to the prevalence of gender-based violence, and need to take precautions, while paragraph 38b[21], emphasizes improving women's capacity in political leadership and campaigning skills. Paragraph 38a- c[22]

19 https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/cedaw.pdf

20 Recalling its previous recommendations (CEDAW/C/TUR/CO/7, para. 33) and in line with its general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19, and with Sustainable Development Goal 5.2 on the elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, the Committee recommends that the State party enhance mechanisms to monitor the enforcement of laws criminalizing gender-based violence against women. To examine in detail the paragraph 29, please check the following: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2FC%2FTUR%2FCO%2F8&Lang=en

21 Recalling its general recommendation No. 23 (1997) on women in political and public life, as well as target 5.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party: (b) Provide capacity-building in political leadership and campaigning skills and access to campaign financing for women candidates.

22 P38 Recalling its general recommendation No. 23 (1997) on women in political and public life, as well as target 5.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Adopt temporary special measures, such as statutory quotas and a gender parity system, in line with article 4 (1) of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 (2004) on temporary special measures, to ensure the equal representation of women, in particular women belonging to ethnic minorities and women with disabilities, in the Grand National Assembly, provincial and municipal legislative bodies, the Government, the civil service and the foreign service, in

further focuses on improving women's representation in provincial and municipal entities. This is in line with project Outcome 1 through the research, the report on Violence against Women in Politics and training promoting women's leadership in local elections.

UN Conventions on Political Rights:

The UN's International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights[23] (Article 25[24]) and the Convention on the Political Rights of Women[25] (Articles 1,2 and 3) mandate equality for men and women in political rights, representation in political offices, eligibility for election to public offices, and participation in nongovernmental organizations.

The project aligns with these standards through Outcome 1 and Output 1.1 by training local politicians in many localities and by promoting women's participation in the coming elections Also, enhancing EOC's capacity has drawn attention to the need for improve gender balance in public offices. For example, the committee chair sent a questionnaire to various ministries requesting sex-segregated data on their activities, raising awareness and promoting mitigation measures to create a more egalitarian public office. This initiative was significant as one male minister encouraged his staff to commit to appointing more women to leadership positions.

Istanbul Convention:

Although Türkiye withdrew from the Istanbul Convention (Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence)[26] shortly after the project's launch, the project was designed and implemented in line with the convention, specifically Article 13, which emphasizes raising awareness of issues related to violence. The project's focus on digital violence has been identified by stakeholders as a crucial contribution, addressing an emerging form of violence requiring special attention.

EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III:

While Türkiye is not an EU member, as a candidate country, it must gradually align with EU acquis. Consequently, compliance with EU standards is a priority for this project, also considering that the donor country for this project is an EU member.

The project aligns with the *EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III: An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action*[27]*,* especially paragraph 2.1, which stipulates EU-UN cooperation to promote gender equality in the private sector. The WEP's signatories system, Outcome No.2, Output 2.2, and the gender responsive procurement initiative (indicator no 2.2d) are outstanding examples of this collaboration.

The Purple Map's interactive use in municipalities allows citizens to identify areas that need special attention to prevent violence against women, aligning with EU standards.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

The project aligns with three SDGs:

particular at decision-making levels; (c) Raise awareness among political leaders and the general public that the full, equal, free and democratic participation of women in political and public life on an equal basis with men is an essential condition for sustainable development and for the full implementation of the Convention.

23 https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/ccpr.pdf

24 https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights

25 https://treaties.un.org/doc/Treaties/1954/07/19540707%2000-40%20AM/Ch_XVI_1p.pdf

26 https://rm.coe.int/168008482e

27 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020JC0017&from=EN

- SDG 5: aims to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, particularly through SDG 5.A which calls for reforms to ensure women's equal rights to economic resources, ownership, control over land, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, per national laws;
- SDG 10: target 10.3 promotes equal opportunity and reduced inequalities, including the elimination of discriminatory laws, policies and practices through appropriate legislation and action;
- SDG 16: target 16.7 seeks to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.

Achieving women's full participation and equal opportunities in leadership across political, economic and social spheres support these SDGs. With women still underrepresented in almost all local legislatures, holding few offices at the leadership level, and vulnerable to violence, creating intimidation and unfavourable environments to run for elected office, the project addresses these disparities in both political and business domains. Moreover, SDG 5 - women's economic empowerment goal aligns with the project's business-focused dimension.

UNSDCF for Türkiye (2021-2025):

The project outcomes contribute to UNSDCF priorities in Türkiye, particularly priority 1, which targets equality for all; priority 2, which emphasizes inclusive, decent work, and priority 4, which promotes equal participation and governance.

UN Women's and Sida's Strategic Priorities:

The project aligns with the UN Women's strategy and work plan as well as Sida's priorities. The donor and stakeholders have emphasized Sida's commitment to gender equality not only in Türkiye but also across the Balkans.

Specifically, the project supports the *Strategy for Sweeden's Reform Cooperation with the Western Balkan's and Türkiye for 2021-2027*[28] by addressing the goals of '*Increasing women's influence and participation in political processes and combating sexual and gender-based violence alongside changing social norms'.*

SQ1b. To what extent is the project consistent with national development strategies in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment?

Finding 2: The project has relevance to several key national policy documents active during its implementation period, including, the 11th and 12th National Development Plan of Türkiye, the Strategy Document and Action Plan for Empowerment of Women (2018-2023 and 2024-2028), and the 4th National Action Plan to Combat Violence Against Women (2021-2025). These documents prioritize enhancing women's leadership in both politics and economy, making the project fully aligned with Türkiye's national priorities.

12th National Development Plan:

As Türkiye's most comprehensive strategy document, the 12th NDP places particular emphasis on women's empowerment, paralleling with the Strategy Document and Action Plan for Empowerment of Women (2024-2028).

Among 38 targets of NDP, 5 directly relate to the project's activities and goals.

28 https://www.government.se/globalassets/regeringen/dokument/strategy-reform-cooperation-western-balkans-and-turkey-2021-27.pdf

- Target 721.1 and Target 728.1: these emphasize the collaboration with the private sector (Outcome 2) and outline a quadripartite partnership approach, involving national and local government, civil society organizations, and the private sector to empower women. This collaboration aligns with the project's core objective of women's empowerment, as it engages different stakeholders to highlight various dimensions of women's leadership.
- Target 727.1: underscores the needed for special measures to increase women's political participation and representation across decision-making bodies, aligning closely with the project's Outcome 1.
- Target 728.5: following the 2023 earthquake, the project designed one specific output to support for women entrepreneurs affected by the disaster. This response aligns to target 728.5, which encourages the private sector and NGOs to help women recover from disaster impacts.
- Target 726.2: UN Women contributed to the 12th NDP by introducing Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB), now part of Target 726.2. This target mandates GRB implementation across public offices.

Strategy Document and Action Plan for Empowerment of Women (2024-2028)[29]:

This document, which analyzes the social, economic and cultural challenges facing women in politics, sets increasing women's participation in politics, decision making mechanisms and leadership as a top priority at national and local levels. The project aligns with these national priorities.

The strategy document emphasizes improving economic opportunities for women entrepreneurs, directly aligning with the project's Output No 2.2, indicators 2.2d.

The strategy document highlights the importance of partnerships across various societal sectors to support women's empowerment. The collaboration between UN Women, business associations, firms, and NGOs, especially in response to the earthquake, exemplify this approach.

SQ1a. Was the choice of intervention relevant to the situation of the target group?

SQ1c. To what extent has the project been catalytic in addressing some of the root causes of inequalities related to women's leadership in politics and private sector?

Finding 3: The project is highly relevant to the target groups' needs and was designed to help overcome the inequalities in business life and in politics. All funded activities, including targeted trainings, promotion of increased gender sensitivity in business and media, and capacity building for CSOs, appear to be highly relevant.

Research and strategy documents on gender in Türkiye consistently identify politics and business as critical areas for women's empowerment. According to the End of Year Donor Report (2021), efforts by stakeholders, including political parties and Parliament, have seen limited success with women's participation remaining low. At 17.32 %, Türkiye has the lowest proportion of women in the Parliament in Europe and Central Asia. Structural barriers, capacity gaps, and insufficient special measures continue to restrict women's participation in decision making. The project's main objectives are based on three outcomes: improving the legislation, enhancing the capacity of local authorities on gender equality and empowerment policies, and developing a cadre of women leaders in politics and business. These outcomes direclty address the critical need for collaborative intervention by UN Women and all stakeholders, as highlighted in gender-related strategy documents of Türkiye. The beneficiaries of the project and key informants also agreed that project's interventions, such as capacity building and gender-sensitive media training, were highly relevant to meet their needs and address encountered challenges.

In this framework, as media is crucial in disseminating information and promoting social change, it is worth mentioning the gender-sensitive media trainings promoted by the project. These activities enabled media

29 https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Twelfth-Development-Plan_2024-2028.pdf

members to revise and systematize their knowledge, by improving their sensitivity and use of language. As a Milliyet member stated:

> "*Of course, even before the collaboration with UN Women, we were already, as a media company, sensitive to gender equality. Issues that we previously handled instinctively with our own initiatives have become more concrete due to these workshops. It's like a set of rules that I need to note down. I mean, I can say it became more generalized.… maybe more systematic.*" (FGD with Milliyet)

A similar experience can be observed with a WEP signatory company, which had the opportunity to avail of the assistance of a consultant provided by UN Women. They said this was a remarkable opportunity for them to discuss their problems and find feasible solutions:

> '*We worked together with UN Women on many activities within the scope of gender equality, from awareness-raising efforts that started at that time to various equality-focused initiatives. Sometimes, this was to support an awareness session; sometimes, it involved being included in a training process; sometimes, it was about us being invited to an environment to listen to good practice. Sometimes, it was about making policy procedures and commitments visible and actionable within the company. Frankly, we consider ourselves a bit luckier as a company in Türkiye at this point*.' (KII with private sector)

Furthermore, the following aspects of the project's political intervention require special attention:

Engagement with EOC: UN Women has built a strong, collaborative relationship with the EOC, primarily through GRB trainings. Both committee members and parliamentarians value this partnership, recognizing it as relevant to their needs. A key outcome of this collaboration is the strengthened bond among members of parliament, which foster potential cross-party synergy and collaboration. An EOC member emphasized this initiative's importance, stating:

> "*In our commission, there are 27 MPs, and about 20 of them are new. The Sapanca program was very important for the MPs and the commission to bond. People got to know each other better. Also, we discussed what gender equality means, what this commission does, and what kind of laws can be passed in which areas. It was a very important briefing meeting for our commission and the MPs. Besides this, we discussed a lot about what can be done to strengthen women's leadership.*' (KII with public partner)

The second activity deserving special attention is the **report and meetings on digital violence**. This initiative aligns with the EOC's focus on innovative interventions in the current parliamentary period. The digital violence report and meetings resonate with women MPs who face digital violence on their social media accounts.

Additionally, the project's **training for candidates in upcoming elections** has proven especially relevant for beneficiaries' needs. The sessions covered essential topics such as the political system, funding, financing, quotas, and informal rules of politics. For many participants who had limited priori political experience, these insights and skills they learned were invaluable. As expressed by one expert :

> '*Most of them were trying to juggle family life with a desire to be in politics. So, they did not have long-standing political lives. This training was like a crash course in politics.*' (KII with expert)

Further, the beneficiaries of the training described their experiences as follows:

> '*It was quite good and productive, and this training convinced me I could succeed. So, I decided to be a candidate. …KADER's path was the biggest step for me. It was about establishing mutual trust relationships with people.*' (FGD with KADER trainees)

'*Apart from the training, being able to be on friendly terms with ladies from all political parties, getting to know each other better, and expressing ourselves better was much more special (valuable) for me.*' (FGD with KADER trainees)

'*They helped me complete my shortcomings very well. Shyness, inability to speak, inability to express oneself. But in that environment, you can ask questions. You can express yourself better.*' (FGD with KADER trainees)

In addition to meeting the beneficiaries' needs, the training provided a valuable opportunity for **networking and sharing experiences.** This aspect is crucial for women politicians who, as a minority, may perceive the challenges they face as personal. By sharing their experiences and sentiments, participants gained confidence and a stronger sense of solidarity.

SQ1e. To what extent does the UN Women possess the comparative advantage in the project's area of work in comparison with other UN entities and key partners in Türkiye?

Finding 4: UN Women, as UN body specialized in GEWE, is considered a flexible and responsive trustworthy partner that delivers outcomes in a timely manner.

Almost all stakeholders and partners who were interviewed highlighted that UN Women, with its specialized focus on gender equality and women's empowerment, provides up-to-date, reliable, and independent expertise across their activities and portfolios. UN Women's reputation for objectivity and neutrality from political ideology, has encouraged stakeholders' partnerships without hesitation. This neutrality, along with its law-abiding approach, egalitarian partnership style, and willingness to contribute funds and expertise as highlighted by stakeholders, allows UN Women to collaborate with a diverse range of stakeholders and extend their services across broader sections of society.

SQ1 f. To what extent has the project been flexible to adapt to the changes in the political and economic context of the country?

Finding 5: UN Women has been highly flexible and adaptive to the changes of the conditions in Türkiye.
Almost all stakeholders repeatedly mentioned that UN Women was accessible and adaptable to both partner needs and the evolving political and economic context in Türkiye. This is also confirmed by the evaluation team's analysis of the evolution of the project. It was underlined that UN Women staff were consistently praised for their responsiveness and understanding of the evolving circumstances. When possible, UN Women agreed to be flexible to the demands of the stakeholders, such as renaming activities (e.g., changing the name of Purple Map in Gaziantep), providing extra GRB training in Istanbul or offering a Zoom access to partner. The organization's flexibility in the allocation of budgets, where possible, facilitated the activities of the state partners.

The project's most significant flexibility was demonstrated in response to the February 2023 earthquakes, which shifted national priorities drastically. Although the project initially included no direct earthquake-related activities, UN Women responded effectively to the needs of the victims through two initiatives: a **Gender Responsive Settlement Model report** providing guidelines for gender-sensitivity in establishing settlements and an initiative facilitating the formation of a **network between KAGİDER, local women entrepreneurs, and HepsiBurada[30].** This activity helped local women entrepreneurs access markets and generate income in a tough situation. Both initiatives underscored UN Women's capacity to respond flexibly and in a timely manner in a time of crisis.

5.2 Coherence

Q2. Does the project create synergies with the interventions of UNCT, UN Women, the government and other national partners?

30 A marketplace platform owned by a women entrepreneur.

In terms of coherence, the main focus of this evaluation is to assess the synergies created with the interventions of UNCT, UN Women, the government and other national partners. Specifically, the coherence criterion focuses on: (i) the extent to which the project fits within the UN Women's Strategic Plan and interrelated threefold mandate; (ii) the synergies and interlinkages between the project and other interventions of UN Women; (iii) the complementarity, harmonization and coordination of the project with other actors' interventions; (iv) the synergies and coordination with the relevant efforts of the government and key partners while avoiding duplications; (v) the synergies with the work of the UNCT; and (vi) the contribution of the project to the implementation of UN Women's Strategic Note and UNSDCF. As indicated in the project documents, the project directly stems from UN Women's overall objective to address persistent gender gaps and in line with the national and international commitments of Türkiye, with the experience and know-how of the organization accumulated through its previous interventions and in line with UN Women's Strategic Plan and Country Strategic Note for Türkiye.[31]

SQ2a To what extent does the project fit within UN Women's Strategic Plan and interrelated threefold mandate?

Finding 6: The project is highly coherent with UN Women's Strategic Plan and triple mandate.

Concerning the project's coherence with UN Women's Strategic Plan[32] and its interrelated triple mandate - namely, encompassing normative support, UN system coordination, and operational activities - to mobilize urgent and sustained action to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, supporting the achievement of Agenda 2030, the project contributes to the objective of promoting integrated actions to address the root causes of inequality and promoting systems change by supporting women's voice, leadership and agency.[33] Among UN Women's four thematic focus areas, Governance and Participation in public life is a key priority. The Strategic Plan emphasizes the organization's commitment to work with key partners to ensure women's full and equal participation in decision-making, and access to gender-responsive laws, policies, budgets, services and accountable institutions. Key actions to be followed for this purpose include supporting the achievement of gender balance in decision-making at all levels, increasing awareness, capacities and political will to integrate gender equality into financing and policy decisions.[34] Additionally, the Strategic Plan highlights UN Women's commitment to support women's active economic participation and leadership.[35]

The project also supports UN Women's goal of strengthening normative frameworks, gender-responsive laws, policies and institutions.[36] It directly contributes to the Strategic Plan's aim to strengthen a cadre of women political leaders, candidates, elected and appointed officials,[37] dedicating one of its three major outcomes (Outcome 2) on this aim through defined actions.

Interviews with key stakeholders also confirm that UN Women, through the project, has a significant impact in bringing critical issues to the national agenda, address root causes of inequality and underline the organization's efforts to drive systems change. The project's focus on violence against women in politics has been greatly appreciated, adding important new dimensions to the awareness of key political actors.

> "*While there are many studies on VAW and on politics separately, UN Women has shown great effort to introduce the issue of VAW in politics in Türkiye's agenda. We started with the aim to conduct a qualitative study on the issue, and decided to not only focus on the Parliament, but also on local administrations, CSOs, academics and public institutions… Our*

31 SIDA ProDoc Inception Report, p. 4
32 UN Women Strategic Plan 2022-2025. UNW/2021/6. Available at: https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n21/186/22/pdf/n2118622.pdf?token=8sieAMjn9nQPz4KcRn&fe=true
33 Ibid., p. 2-3.
34 Ibid., p. 10
35 Ibid., p. 11
36 Ibid., p. 14
37 SIDA ProDoc Inception Report, p. 10

report has clearly shown that VAW in politics was a prevalent issue in Türkiye and examined the different types of violence, including economic violence." (KII with expert).

SQ2b Are there any synergies and inter-linkages between the project and other interventions of UN Women?

Finding 7: The project successfully builds on the experience and know-how of UN Women Türkiye accumulated for more than a decade through a variety of programmes and interventions in the areas of women's political participation, private sector engagement and media partnerships, while also feeding into current actions.

Since 2011, the UN Women Country Office in Türkiye has implemented projects on women's political participation (WPP) and leadership, including the previous phase of the current project (2014-2020), also funded by Sida. This phase focused on the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA) as a key institution that is "*uniquely placed to drive changes and lead by example*"[38], and focused on supporting the EOC and its members. In this framework, legislation reviews from gender perspective were carried out, EOC members were convened around common issues, and the first ever GRB activities were initiated in the Parliament Secretariat, all in partnership with Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). The previous phase of the project supported capacity building, networking and multi-stakeholder dialogue of women in various positions of leadership (i.e., women elected to municipal councils, in municipal government, and in civil society). Partnerships with municipal authorities also started in the previous phase, around gender responsive governance and services models. Moreover, a capacity building program was launched for media students and focused on gender sensitive reporting. Challenges encountered in the previous phase of the project informed the design of the current project through significant lessons. As stated in the project's Inception Report, these challenges include:

- the increasing conservatism, patriarchal mindsets, reluctance to "gender issues";
- highly volatile political and economic environment in the country;
- unpredictable and long-lasting election processes;
- significant structural and governance change due to the shift from Parliamentary to Presidential system;
- high turnover rate of the staff of TGNA and governmental organizations;
- polarization among women's organizations and shrinking political environment for CSOs, as well as the limited communication between the rights-based women's organizations and the Government; and
- reluctance of experienced women politicians to liaise and network with women parliamentarians from other political parties and the locally elected women due to centralized and confrontational pre/post-election party politics.[39]

In response to these challenges, UN Women increased its focus on **local partnerships**, and on creating spaces of dialogue and convening among women in / aspiring for or in leadership positions in public and political life, around common issues. By late 2018, new municipalities were reached out, and efforts gained a particular pace around the local elections of 2019, with the aim to increase cooperation with local government and assemblies, women's councils, local women's organizations and universities, and to build their capacities on gender equality and women's empowerment, and leadership, including in the context of Covid-19 and crises. As part of this **focus on the local level**, the issue of violence against women in politics (VAWiP) emerged as a particular concern, requiring further programmatic efforts addressed by the current phase of the project. In this respect, the lack of evidence based on its root causes, manifestations and consequences in Türkiye, along with the lack of data and indicators for measuring it, led UN Women to place the issue a central importance in the current phase.

38 Ibid., p. 10
39 Ibid., p. 10-11.

UN Women has also deepened its **private sector partnership**, further capitalized on in the current phase of the project. Since 2010, the agency has implemented three global frameworks for the private sector in Türkiye, including:

- Women Empowerment Principles (WEPs) since 2011;
- HeForShe since 2015; and
- Unstereotype Alliance (UA) since 2019.[40]

As of February 2021, Türkiye had the second highest place in the world in terms of the number of WEPs signatories, with 345 signatory companies working on GEWE on the basis of specific commitments, along with provincial (Bursa) and regional (Aegean region) WEPs platforms. UN Women engaged in Covid-19 response activities with these companies and formed strong partnerships with prominent corporate entities such as Koç Holding and Unilever since 2020.

The organization has also been proactively **focusing on the media**, "*both as actors that reflect and shape public opinion, and as corporate entities*." [41] It established partnerships with GQ Türkiye and Milliyet Newspaper, with both joining the Media Compact in 2020, organizing communication and public outreach campaigns on traditional and social media.

The Inception Report of the project further outlines several related projects that foster **complementarities and synergies**, including:

- The three-year Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting in Türkiye project funded by EU IPA (2020);
- Strengthening the Agency of CSOs to Advance Women's and Youth Rights and Gender Equality in Türkiye, a three-year EU-funded initiative launched in April 2021;
- Unstereotype Alliance, a platform convened by UN Women to address and eradicate gender-based stereotypes in all media and advertising content; and
- HeForShe Initiative implemented with Fenerbahçe Sports Club (2018-2021), aimed at raising public awareness on gender equality and elimination of VAW.[42]

Several respondents provided significant examples in this respect:

> "*We aimed to conduct a complementary action in the pilot provinces of the GRB project. We were already providing gender-responsive budgeting and planning trainings to municipal staff there. We thought to provide them with an additional tool so that they can check the city's needs from the map and do gender-sensitive planning with a digital tool.*" (KII with UN Women staff)

> "*I was already working for the Local Equality Action Plan as a UN Women expert in that province. Since we are also monitoring the province in terms of politics, we also had a chance to link Purple Map to the local politics study*." (KII with expert)

All the elements outlined above point to the strong coherence of the project with other UN Women initiatives and programmes and the synergies and complementarities with its previous and ongoing activities, for which the organization has comparative advantage in terms of extensive know-how and experience.

SQ2c **To what extent the project is in complementarity, harmonisation and coordination with the interventions of other actors' interventions in the same context?**

40 Ibid., p. 12
41 Ibid., p. 13
42 Ibid., p. 23-24

***SQ2d* To what extent the implementation of project ensures synergies and coordination with Government's and key partners relevant efforts while avoiding duplications?**

Finding 8: The project is in complementarity and coordination with Government's, key partners and other actors' interventions, and in many cases it complements and provides further direction and guidance to existing initiatives. However, the backlash in gender equality increasingly observed in the public discourse and actions poses challenges for UN Women interventions.

In terms of the project's complementarity, harmonization and coordination with the interventions of the Government and other actors, UN Women adds significant value to the project's activities promoting women's political leadership, being the only UN agency directly working with the TGNA and EOC. This project constitutes an important impetus to legislative reviews from a gender lens, research studies and information and experience sharing with major political actors, and creates a significant window of opportunity to raise the importance of the issue on the governmental agenda. Expanding engagement across the TGNA, beyond EOC and female Parliamentarians directly working on the issue, is needed to broaden awareness and information among a wider parliamentary audience, including men.

The Government places an emphasis on promoting women's leadership and participation in decision-making mechanisms throughout its major strategies and policy documents. The current Strategy Document and Action Plan on Women's Empowerment (2024-2028) has a specific section on this, acknowledging the need for improving awareness and training activities, incentives for women, as well as gender mainstreaming of major plans and programmes.[43] The Plan outlines several strategies determined for this purpose, including

- institutional capacity building;
- societal awareness raising; and
- research activities and arrangements to promote women's leadership and participation in decision-making processes.

The activities under these strategies include awareness raising activities for public officials, local administrations, professional organizations and trade unions, students, academics, teachers and vulnerable women; experience-sharing meetings for women's CSOs on women's participation in local and national politics; TV, radio and social media programmes with role model women who participate in politics; incentives for political parties to adopt transitory special measures to support women's equal participation in election times; collection and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data by public institutions; and research studies to be supported to promote women's leadership. While the project's outcomes and activities align well with these governmental strategies, challenges due to a deteriorating context for the promotion of gender equality led by the public discourse remain, resulting in questioning the concept of gender itself and Türkiye's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention in 2021. In this environment, although several Government documents highlight the need for particular efforts to promote women's leadership and participation in decision-making, most of the targets cannot be reached and initiatives adopted by UN Women within the framework of the project are not fully coordinated with governmental actions.

In relation to other actors, the project's gender perspective shows coherence with ongoing activities by CSOs and municipalities, such as digital mapping studies and local equality initiatives, as stakeholders underlined:

> "*Istanbul Planning Agency has its own socioeconomic map, we get data from this. But of course, it is very valuable to have a gender perspective. We only know about our own directorate, but (Purple Map) also has data from different directorates. There are 116 directorates under (our municipality), so we get constant updated data from those."* (KII with municipality)

The project is in harmony with the activities of various actors, often complementing and enhancing existing initiatives by providing additional direction and guidance. However, the evaluation assesses that in some

43 T.C. Aile ve Sosyal Hizmetler Bakanlığı (2024) Kadının Güçlenmesi Strateji Belgesi ve Eylem Planı, 2024-2028.

cases, these synergies have remained under-explored, and the project could provide more opportunities to capitalize on the existing activities of different organizations, for example, incorporating staff from existing initiatives into the training programmes, or demonstrating connections between ongoing and new initiatives.

***SQ2e* To what extent are the interventions achieving synergies with the work of the UN Country Team?**

Finding 9: UN Women, with its leading role in the UNCT Türkiye on GEWE, has under-explored opportunities for collaboration and coordination with other UN agencies through the project.

Within the UN system in Türkiye, UN Women comes to the fore as the organization with a clear responsibility in leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability for gender equality and women's empowerment across sectors, as acknowledged by various project documents. As the chair of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) Gender Results Group, and as a member of Democratic Governance and Human Rights Results Group of the same framework, UN Women takes the leading role in this respect. The project documents also underline these roles that the organization plays, and mark a strong commitment to implement the project in synergy and complementarity with the rest of the UN system. Highlighting that UN Women is the only UN agency directly working with the TGNA, the project's Inception Report states that several joint UN activities were supported for the sub commissions under the EOC, including the sub commission on Supporting Rural Women's Entrepreneurship and the Monitoring and Implementation of the Istanbul Convention, to continue under the present project. It further mentions the links of the project with the UNFPA Women Friendly Cities Project, with its Local Equality Units and Local Equality Action Plans, along with UNDP Local Administration Reform Project, supporting local authorities' implementation of the new local administration model based on democratic governance principles, and UNICEF work on child-sensitive budgeting.[44]

However, a closer review of the project documents and activities indicates that these opportunities have remained under-explored by the project, and synergies with the UNCT has been rather limited. Specifically, the project has the potential to advance UN Women Strategic Plan 2022-2025 commitment to joint programming for GEWE and inter-agency, gender-disaggregated data production. Several respondents emphasized the need for increased collaboration and coordination with other UN agencies, particularly concerning WEPs, where similar initiatives may overlap and cause confusions among stakeholders and beneficiaries.

> "*We have an observation that the relations between UN Women and other UN agencies are not coordinated enough. It would be useful for UN agencies to establish a strategic board, which would then serve as a platform to work on gender equality in support of each other, not stepping on each other in the competition for funds.*" (KII with expert)

***SQ2f* To what extent does the project contribute to the implementation of UN Women's Strategic Note and UNSDCF?**

Finding 10: The project provides direct contributions to the implementation of UN Women's Strategic Note and UNSDCF by fostering an environment conducive to women's leadership and participation in politics and business, and by establishing partnerships for this purpose.

As indicated in the project documents, the project builds on the lessons from UN Women Türkiye Strategic Note 2019-2022 and aims to sustain and systematize the previous achievements in creating an enabling environment for increasing women's leadership and participation in politics and the business life. Designed to support the current UN Women Strategic Note, the project explicitly contributes to the UN Women Türkiye Country Office Strategic Note Impact 1 under the Development Results Framework on "Governance,

44 SIDA ProDoc Inception Report, p. 24

Leadership and Participation" as well as Organizational effectiveness and efficiency Output 2 "Increased engagement of partners in support of UN-Women's mandate."[45]

Aligned with the UNSDCF, the project contributes to Cooperation Framework Outcome 1.2: "*By 2025, women and girls have improved and equal access to resources, opportunities and rights, and enjoy a life without violence and discrimination*". This includes strategic interventions for the full and active participation of women in political, economic and social decision-making. The UNSDCF also emphasizes establishing partnerships with TGNA, local administrations, municipalities, private sector, CSOs, the media and academia for this purpose[46]. The project documents underline that the project contributes to the all four impact areas of the UN Women Global Strategic Plan (2022-2025) and several of its Outcomes.[47]

5.3 Effectiveness

Q3. Has the Project successfully achieved its expected results and objectives?

In terms of effectiveness, the main focus of the evaluation has been on assessing whether the project has successfully achieved its expected results and objectives. The answer to this question entails an examination of various aspects, including (i) the extent to which the expected results of the project have been achieved on both outcome and output levels; (ii) reasons for non-achievement or under-achievement of results; (iii) unforeseen results, shortcomings and obstacles, along with the way they have been overcome; (iv) the effectiveness of selected strategies and approaches in achieving project results; (v) the extent to which the project succeeded in involving and building the capacities of right-holders and partners; (vi) the existence of effective monitoring mechanisms to measure progress towards results; and (vii) innovative good practices. While the last point will be addressed below in a separate section, this section will focus on the remaining aspects.

SQ3a. To what extent have the expected results of the project been achieved on both outcome and output levels?

Finding 11: The progress towards the expected results of the project has been remarkable, but uneven across the outcomes and outputs.

Finding 11a: Significant progress has been made in establishing legislative frameworks and arrangements to promote gender balance in elections and decision-making bodies (Outcome 1) through strengthening the capacities of political stakeholders (Output 1.1). All activities under this outcome have been successfully realized.

In terms of **Outcome 1** - *Legislative frameworks and arrangements promote gender balance in elections and decision-making bodies in line with the international normative framework*, with its **Output 1.1** - *Strengthened capacities of political stakeholders,* the project has successfully completed all the activities and significant contributions have been provided to these objectives.

In this respect, the analysis of existing **legal and policy frameworks** to identify areas for reform (Activity 1.1.1) and the development and **advocacy of a draft legal amendments package** for gender balance in politics and decision-making (Activity 1.1.2), have largely been conducted in partnership with Women's Coalition, which was supported by UN Women to prepare a draft legal amendment package, including the analysis of legislation from a gender perspective[48]. The EOC has been a significant partner in the activities under this outcome and, from early on in the implementation of the project, several capacity-building activities have been conducted. In 2021, technical peer review of seven laws have been completed in order to identify issues that hinder women's political participation and to develop proposals for legal amendments to the

45 SIDA ProDoc Inception Report, p. 14
46 UNSDCF, p. 23-24
47 End of Year Donor Report, 2022.
48 End of Year Donor Report, 2021, p. 7

Constitution, Political Parties Law and Election Laws, and the results were shared with the EOC. The review of laws were then placed on the website (www.yasataramasi.com) to constitute an open source for the public as a database for gender-sensitive law-making in Türkiye.[49]

In 2022, UN Women placed a significant emphasis on advocacy activities for **Temporary Special Measures (TSMs)** in view of the 2023 elections, and continued to support the preparation of the legislative amendments proposal so as to include TSMs. In this respect, Women's Coalition started an advocacy campaign, targeting political parties, media, and other relevant stakeholders. UN Women also advocated for changes in the Public Procurement Law to increase the participation of women entrepreneurs in public biddings, by initiating dialogue between KAGİDER and EOC. This resulted in the preparation by the EOC of a report recommending the incorporation of provisions in the Public Procurement Law to implement affirmative actions for women to participate in public procurement processes[50].

In 2023, UN Women initiated a campaign targeting the General and Presidential elections of May 2023, and concentrated on advocating for the equal participation of women in the Parliament through a social media campaign. The elections have increased the proportion of women in the Parliament from 17.3% to 19.9%, marking the highest-ever rate achieved in Türkiye[51].

Other two activities under this outcome include the **research study on VAWiP** (Activity 1.1.3) and the **gender analysis of general elections** (Activity 1.1.4).

Concerning the former, UN Women led the first comprehensive qualitative study on VAWiP in 2022 with the technical support of the Terra Development Cooperative. The study aimed to explore "*the experiences of violence and perspectives of women engaged in politics at different levels, barriers and issues that limit women's ability to exercise their political rights, and to identify strategies for promoting and enhancing women's active and meaningful involvement in the political spheres*."[52] The study has been important for UN Women's advocacy efforts, and a reference group meeting was held with the participation of CSO representatives, public officials and academics to consider the possible use of the research for further policy making and advocacy. Furthermore, it was shared with the newly elected members of the EOC in 2023.[53]

In terms of the latter activity, a **post-election assessment of the 2023 General Elections** was conducted in 2023, with the aim to establish a foundation of evidence aimed at enhancing the capabilities of political stakeholders and promoting gender balance in decision-making. The analysis considered both pre-election and post-election processes from a gender perspective. The pre-election analysis focused on the candidacy processes, political party nominations, and campaign operations through a gender equality lens, while the post-election analysis examined the election results from a gender perspective, utilizing sex-disaggregated data. The results of the study were again shared with the EOC members in a knowledge-sharing meeting, which served as a platform for dissemination, as well as with women's CSOs working on women's political participation.[54]

In summary, all the activities under Outcome 1 were successfully completed and disseminated, contributing directly to political stakeholders' capacity-building and marking progress for the achievement of Output 1.

Finding 11b: Progress towards establishing a cadre of interested, diverse and capable women leaders in politics and business (Outcome 2) has been mixed, particularly in increasing commitment among all relevant actors to promote women's participation in political and economic life (Output 2.2), mainly due to limited efforts in promoting male engagement in GEWE.

49 Ibid., p. 8-9.
50 End of Year Donor Report, 2022, p. 11
51 End of Year Donor Report, 2023, p. 1
52 End of Year Donor Report, 2022, p. 13-14
53 End of Year Donor Report, 2023, p. 10
54 End of Year Donor Report, 2023, p. 2

Under **Outcome 2** – *A cadre of interested, diverse and capable women political and business leaders is formed and supported to exercise leadership,* two key outputs are identified, namely, **Output 2.1** -*Women in or aspiring for political leadership positions*, *have increased technical capacity, knowledge and networking to engage in political life and to advance gender equality*; and **Output 2.2** - *Increased understanding and commitment of political and business leaders, and the media, to promote gender equality and women's participation in political and economic life*. Generally, the objective of this outcome is to increase women's representation in the Parliament, local government, and managerial positions. While Output 2.1 contributes to the project's objective to support women political aspirants at local level, including young and marginalized women throughout the electoral cycle in view of the 2023 general and 2024 local elections, Output 2.2 focuses on increasing current and future media professionals' understanding on gender-sensitive content and journalistic practices on the one hand, and to support companies to sign and implement WEPs on the other.[55]

Under **Output 2.1**, four activities have been specified. Activity 2.1.1 involves **training and capacity-building programmes** to advance women's political leadership and skills development. A partner agreement was signed with KADER in 2021 to develop and implement the training programme, with the following tasks:

- to review and adapt the UN Women Political Leadership and Candidate Training Manual to the context of Türkiye;
- to develop and deliver the candidate training programme to a minimum of 250 women aspiring to become involved in politics and run for local elections, to be selected through a call for interest covering specific regions; and
- to provide and facilitate networking and peer-to-peer learning opportunities for women in politics and political aspirants to effectively engage in political life and advance gender equality.[56]

In 2022, a pool of national trainers was formed, who were then provided by KADER with a Training of Trainers (ToT) on the basis of the global UN Women Manual adapted to Türkiye, including topics such as transformative leadership, campaign management, public communication and running as a woman candidate, along with specific information on Türkiye concerning the situation of women in social, economic and political life and legislative framework on general and local elections.[57] In 2023, the training programme was delivered to 275 women aspirants from various regions of Türkiye, at a strategic time before the March 2024 local elections. It is reported in project documents that 10% of the trainees were expected to become candidates for mayoral positions, deputy mayoral roles and municipal counseling positions.[58] Moreover, as an integral component of the training programme, an online training platform (https://siyasetokulu.myenocta.com), containing 137 online material on topics such as gender equality, GRB, women's rights, poverty, digital violence and local governance, was established and became accessible to all the training participants. The platform is important to provide continuity for the learning process of the training participants, and reinforce the knowledge gained in special thematic areas.[59] In 2023, a digital violence training module was integrated into this candidate training platform in line with the increasing importance of the issue, and an online interactive session was organized reaching out to 143 participants.[60]

Other activities under this Output aim to promote **networking, dialogue and learning** among local women in politics and aspirants. Activity 2.1.2 concerns networking and peer-to-peer learning opportunities for women in politics and political aspirants, Activity 2.1.3 stipulates the provision of safe spaces for women leaders in local communities to cultivate leadership skills and solidarity networks, and Activity 2.1.4 promotes regional exchanges (conferences, events, study visits) for this purpose. In this respect, UN Women has been

55 End of Year Donor Report, 2021, p. 11-13
56 End of Year Donor Report, 2021, p. 11
57 End of Year Donor Report, 2022, p. 15
58 End of Year Donor Report, 2023, p. 6
59 Ibid., p. 6
60 Ibid., p. 7

actively promoting networking opportunities for women in politics and aspirants since 2022, through experience-sharing meetings where the participants discuss common concerns, cultivate leadership skills, build solidarity networks and increase knowledge on gender-sensitive municipal activities,[61] as well as meetings organized for the dissemination of the findings of research studies, such as the one on digital violence, which brought together the EOC, mayors and municipal councilors.[62] As for the establishment of safe spaces for women, a key initiative came following the February 2023 earthquakes, in the form of a comprehensive gender-responsive settlement model to respond to the urgent needs and to facilitate the resumption of essential services in a gender-responsive manner. The model complements efforts ongoing in the area of gender-responsive governance and community leadership at the local level, as it goes beyond addressing immediate needs and provides guidelines for the reconstruction of permanent residential areas. With the objective to integrate this model into emergency plans, this was presented to the EOC members as part of advocacy efforts at the legislative level, and shared with women's CSOs in the earthquake affected region.[63]

Output 2.2 entails four further activities, two of which are closely inter-related. Activity 2.2.1 concerns capacity-building trainings on gender-responsive media / reporting, while Activity 2.2.2 focuses on strengthening media partners' capacities.

In 2021, **gender-sensitive media trainings** were provided to 40 students from the communication, media and journalism departments of Eskişehir Anadolu and Trakya Universities. The trainings provided modules on gender equality concepts, gender-responsive language, gender bias and stereotyping in media content, portrayal of women politicians in the media, and gender perspective in news media content.[64] Collaboration with Milliyet Newspaper and GQ Magazine had led these two organizations to become the first UN Women Media Compact partners in 2020, and has continued through the project with activities to increase their capacity on creating gender-responsive content. In 2021, UN Women supported Milliyet to create high-quality gender-sensitive content during the 16 Days of Activism to End Gender Based Violence, which also had positive impact on other media outlets.[65] In 2022, interactive trainings were organized for Milliyet and GQ staff, along with the development of a digital and interactive gender-responsive media toolkit, which includes a checklist for media professionals to assess news stories from a gender lens (https://medya-rehberi.netlify.app). Furthermore, gender-responsive media trainings continued to be organized for media and communications students, in Istanbul Bahçeşehir and Maltepe Universities, which was followed by a panel discussion with the participation of Demet Evgar (UN Women Türkiye Goodwill Ambassador), Aslı Filiz (Film Producer), and Ceylan Özgün Özçelik (Director) as part of the 41st Istanbul Film Festival, on the portrayal of women in the films, the analysis of film industry from women's perspective and, how films can contribute to promoting gender equality.[66] The trainings for media students could not be continued in 2023 due to the devastating earthquakes and the following online education in universities, which required re-programming of this activity.

Still, in terms of **developing media partners' capacities**, a monitoring meeting was organized with Milliyet staff to assess the collective efforts on gender-responsive and transformative approaches in media initiatives, as a follow-up of the previous year's trainings.[67]

The third Activity (2.2.3) of this Output focuses on **advocacy and support to companies to sign and implement WEPs.** In 2021, technical support was provided on the implementation strategies for WEPs, and interested companies were invited to meetings and information sharing, which led to the increase of WEPs signatories from 341 in 2020 to 400 in 2021. Upon the demand of Koton, a large-scale textile company and WEP signatory, UN Women provided technical support to the company to prepare a gender equality

61 End of Year Donor Report, 2022, p. 15
62 End of Year Donor Report, 2023, p. 7
63 Ibid., p. 7-8
64 End of Year Donor Report, 2021, p. 12
65 Ibid., p. 12-13
66 End of Year Donor Report 2022, p. 16-17
67 End of Year Donor Report, 2023, p. 4-5

manifesto. Collaboration with TUSIAD and TURKONFED, which had led to the impact assessment "Covid-19 impacts on women in the workplace" in 2020, continued for a "Gender Responsive Crisis Management Guideline" framed by 7 WEPs,[68] which was finalized in November 2022 with an accompanying Monitoring Tool and presented to over 100 private sector representatives.[69] In 2022, 56 additional companies became WEP signatories, bringing the total number to 456, as a result of UN Women efforts. In March 2022, UN Women and Milliyet co-hosted the Equal Stories Summit to raise awareness in promoting gender equality in the corporate sector in Türkiye, and a "Women at Work" event was organized with Koton to improve the skills of its female employees. Moreover, a Gender Responsive Procurement Summit was co-organized with KAGİDER and UNGC in October, bringing together over 150 representatives from the private sector, women entrepreneurs, CSOs and public sector. A key output of the Summit was to open a discussion on public procurement legislation, and an amendment to the public procurement law was suggested to the EOC as a result.[70] In 2023, over 120 meetings were held with companies and business associations, to support them to sign and implement the WEPs, as a result of which the number of signatories reached 540, keeping Türkiye as the country with the second highest number of WEPs signatories in the world. Furthermore, a Private Sector Collaboration Agreement was signed with OPET to support them in implementing WEPs, and WEPs Summits were organized bringing together numerous companies and raising their awareness. In July 2023, UN Women launched the Sözden Eyleme WEPs / WEPs in Action programme, aiming to advise companies on their WEPs journeys through the establishment of a WEPs Center of Excellence (CoE) in Türkiye. For this purpose, 10 companies were selected through a call as pilot companies, which were assisted by UN Women consultants to develop WEPs implementation roadmaps. Following the February earthquakes, UN Women and many companies shifted their attention towards the needs of the earthquake region. In November, UN Women, KAGİDER and Hepsi Burada partnered to organize an event in Hatay to provide practical skills, resources and tools for women entrepreneurs and cooperatives to help their economic recovery. This partnership has led to the creation of March 8 gift boxes consisting of the products of eligible women entrepreneurs and cooperatives to be sold to companies in Istanbul, the profit of which were to go to women entrepreneurs.[71]

Activity 2.2.4, as the last activity of Output 2.2, focuses on scaling **male engagement** in gender equality. The examination of primary and secondary data, however, shows that this is the activity where progress has been remarkably slower compared to others, and where more attention needs to be focused in the coming period as male engagement is an integral component of efforts to promote gender equality and women's leadership. In 2021, UN Women launched the #BenDegilsemKim campaign with actor Kerem Bürsin, the first HeForShe Advocate in Türkiye, as the local version of the global #Ido social media campaign of the HeForShe Movement, with the aim to empower men to act for gender equality, celebrate those who do, and set positive and egalitarian role models among men. The campaign reached more than 1.5 million people between November 2021 and January 2022.[72] In 2022, the major initiative under this activity was a conference organized with Tüpraş and Batman University within the scope of 16 Days of Activism, introducing the HeForShe Movement to university students and representatives and focusing on topics such as digital violence. Technical support was also provided for Tüpraş to launch a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee with an event that reached out to 400 employees.[73] The Feburary 2023 earthquakes, however, have led to the interruption of this activity, as collaboration with universities and face-to-face interactions were no longer feasible. Therefore, the activity was re-programmed to contribute to other activities in consensus with the donor.[74]

Overall, progress under Outcome 2 has been rather uneven. While the project has made substantial contributions to local women's leadership, gender sensitive media practices, and private sector WEPs

68 End of Year Donor Report, 2021, p. 13
69 End of Year Donor Report, 2022, p. 17-18
70 Ibid., p. 17
71 End of Year Donor Report, 2023, p. 8-10
72 End of Year Donor Report, 2021, p. 13-14
73 End of Year Donor Report, 2022, p. 18
74 End of Year Donor Report, 2023, p. 5

commitment, male engagement remains remarkably limited, also due to changing priorities in the context of the earthquake.

Finding 11c: Significant progress has been made toward enabling local authorities to implement gender-responsive plans and budgets (Outcome 3). However, the full potential of the Purple Maps has not yet been realized within the project's lifetime.

Under **Outcome 3 -** *Local level authorities, with multi-stakeholder engagement, implement new and existing international commitments on GEWE through gender responsive plans and budgets*, **Output 3.1** aims to enhance local governments' awareness and capacity to develop and apply gender responsive plans and budgets. This Outcome generally focuses on establishing local gender equality units and enabling local public institutions to allocate specific resources to implement gender-related targets with UN Women support. Two activities are specified for this purpose, including Activity 3.1.1 focusing on **capacity development for gender-sensitive planning and service delivery**; and Activity 3.1.2 on **gender-sensitive social risk maps** in selected municipalities.

The development of a **social risk map**, Mor Haritam (Purple Map), launched in partnership with Ankara Metropolitan Municipality (AMM) in 2020 serves as an online tool to identify and address the needs of women and improve the provision of gender-sensitive municipal services. The main function of the map was to identify specific locations and physical spaces in the city to address women's needs and get women's feedback on municipal services. In this framework, various improvements were done in the city, such as improvement of street lighting in 66 places, establishment of two new childcare facilities, and operationalization of a Women's Counseling Center. In 2021, partnership was made with the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV) for the development of at least five more social risk maps. The partnership involved the creation of neighborhood maps with (i) age, education, poverty, employment, disability and age distribution; (ii) population of refugee women and girls; (iii) VAW mechanisms; (iv) distribution of women mukhtars and local councilors; and (v) spots where women feel the most safe. In addition, information on available public services concerning women, including Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers (ŞÖNİM), addresses of women locals, women counselling centers and vocational courses available to women, and disaster gather spots would be matched with the maps. TESEV would be responsible for producing the interactive map and the beta version of the mapping website, piloting the map with at least one district municipality at each province, and adapting the map to the IT requirements of the municipalities, along with providing training to municipal staff on data management and governance scorecard tool. The map for Eskişehir was completed by the end of 2021, and a workshop was organized in İzmir MM on gender-responsive policy development and municipal services.[75]

In 2022, in addition to the establishment of the Women and Family Department within Bodrum Municipality with the support of UN Women in the form of GRB trainings, the work on Purple Map continued. Through the map, the AMM collaborated with UNICEF for the establishment of 15 kindergartens in strategic locations, and installed panic buttons in 24 parks. The Purple Map was launched in Eskişehir, and two workshops were held for Istanbul MM on GRB.[76] In 2023, collaboration started with Adana MM for the development of a Local Equality Action Plan, to serve as the basis for gender-responsive strategic planning, budgeting and service provision. Moreover, a digital violence training was organized for Eskişehir MM staff. As one of the most important developments of 2023, the Purple Map for Istanbul MM was developed and launched with a ceremony in November 2023 with the participation of IMM staff, district municipalities, provincial directorates of public institutions, international community and CSOs. Finally, the data and necessary resources were prepared for the maps of Edirne and Gaziantep, which were finalized in 2024.[77]

While the progress of the activities under this Outcome have been remarkable, several respondents have underlined that more effort is needed for the maps to function correctly, to be utilized at an optimum capacity

75 End of Year Donor Report, 2021, p. 16-17
76 End of Year Donor Report, 2022, p. 19-20
77 End of Year Donor Report, 2023, p. 3-4

by all municipality staff, as well as to overcome technological and infrastructural problems to put the interactive maps effectively in life, as further explored in the next section.

Q3b What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results?

Finding 12: Factors emanating from the larger political and economic context, along with factors related with the approach and attitude of UN Women CO and those that are intrinsic to the project, have played important roles for the achievement and non-achievement of results.

Finding 12a: The main reasons for the **achievement** of project results include UN Women's engagement, openness and supportive attitude, its expertise and know-how, along with its convening capacity; the flexibility deployed through the project; and the integrated approach of the project to GEWE issues.

Along with these, the strategic allocation of resources to achieve the project's objectives, efficient management structure, as well as correct partnerships have also been important in the achievement of results, which will be addressed in more detail in the section on Efficiency. These factors are explored below with quotes from the field research.

UN Women's engagement, openness and supportive attitude: Respondents highlighted UN Women's accessibility and collaborative approach, noting its know-how and expertise providing significant contributions to the smooth implementation of the project. This open, consultative relationship empowered stakeholders to actively participate, reinforcing their commitment and trust in the project. This strong partnership was instrumental in navigating challenges and maintaining engagement through program changes.

> "*We discussed several issues with UN Women, because there are areas where they have significant experience. They were always open in this respect. They presented their ideas on the basis of my feedback on the gaps in the topic. They asked me what I think about these issues, what do I want to do. Therefore, both before and during the study we regularly came together and discussed progress, we informed each other and shared data with each other."* (KII with expert)

> "*We can always reach out to UN Women, for all the issues. It's easy to reach them… It has an immediate problem-solving approach."* (KII with Adana MM)

UN Women's convening role, acting as a hub in gender-related issues: UN Women effectively mobilized stakeholders, creating platforms for dialogue and experience-sharing among diverse actors. As a central actor in GEWE, UN Women has been a hub for gathering diverse stakeholders, from public officials and NGOs to academics and private sector representatives. This role has been instrumental in creating platforms for knowledge-sharing, facilitating broad-based dialogue and action in a way that individual entities could not have achieved alone. By mobilizing a variety of actors, UN Women established a collaborative environment that expanded the project's reach and enabled more holistic solutions to complex social and political issues.

> "*UN Women was a focal point which provided me with the opportunity to contact women in the field. UN Women, through its objective and impartial identity, can reach a large section of society which we cannot reach as academics. It can bring all parties together. I found the opportunity to personally contact those women – women who come from all around the world, from all around Türkiye, from different levels, different political parties.*" (KII with expert)

> "*UN Women, with the resources and possibilities it provides and with creating platforms to bring people together, reaching out to people working in this field and bringing them together, makes a great contribution through this project... For instance, UN Women presented this study to the EOC and got feedback from them. A meeting was organized in July with IPU, EOC and UN Türkiye, where we found the opportunity to present the findings of this study. This created a platform where we can discuss how to develop solutions to Türkiye's problems. UN*

Women thus creates platforms where it brings different stakeholders together to discuss solutions." (KII with expert)

"*UN Women team creates a platform where studies or reports can internally develop and transformed by bringing together common stakeholders and beneficiaries together*." (KII with expert)

Flexibility of strategies and approaches: The project's adaptability, particularly following the February 2023 earthquakes, enabled a rapid response to emerging needs, illustrating UN Women's capacity to pivot strategically. By quickly changing focus to urgent needs, such as supporting the creation of women's life centers, UN Women ensured the project remained relevant and impactful in a time of crisis.

"*We conducted the study on parity, equal representation. Then we used this during the local elections, in the demands for legal amendments. Then was it finished? No, the earthquake happened. We started doing projects in the earthquake region, for instance we led the establishment of women life centers. These findings need to be transformed into different objectives, feed into different relations."* (KII with expert)

Integrated approach: By addressing different aspects of gender equality, from political participation to women's entrepreneurship and gender-sensitivity media practices, the project has facilitated the achievement of results by creating a holistic view on different problems of GEWE, particularly in terms of data collection and in-depth understanding and discussion of issues.

"*The scope of the project is too large, it tries to produce outputs on gender inequality in Türkiye, gender-sensitive data, in a variety of areas. I really find this project important as a platform to gather all these in an integrated manner. This is also the case for politics, because there are bits and pieces of studies by academics in the area of gender and politics. There are studies conducted by women's CSOs. Data are also collected and shared at the level of governmental or public organizations. But studies that can put all these in an integrated manner are quite limited. I think in my field this project has great contribution. It can provide data for further studies*." (KII with expert)

Finding 12b: The main reasons for the non-achievement of results include the rapidly changing political, economic and social context of the country; time pressures; staff rotations in partner institutions; reluctance of certain individuals / groups / institutions to collaborate; insufficient coordination among activities / partners; and limited male engagement.

The **rapidly changing political, economic and social context** of Türkiye has led to abrupt shifts in the public agenda along with the priorities or the stakeholders. The February 2023 earthquakes, while displaying the flexibility of strategies, at the same time represented the most significant challenge in this respect, which led to significant re-programming within the project, and affected almost all the implementing partners along with beneficiaries. Such external events have delayed project milestones, impacted stakeholders' motivation to contribute to activities such as dissemination, and requested a re-prioritization of resources, revealing the challenges of implementing sustained GEWE projects in unstable environments.

"*When we completed the study, we could not present it to the stakeholders because of the earthquake. It was an exceptional condition. When we presented it later on, there were not many participants in the meeting. There was a deadline I needed to meet but it was postponed due to the earthquake, so it was a very short-notice meeting*." (KII with expert)

"*When the earthquake happened, the interest of funds shifted towards that. I don't know, maybe if the earthquake had not happened, we could have met with numerous municipalities. It also affected the motivation and energy. All the team went on and off to the earthquake*

region and all the other topics became secondary – which is so understandable. This still continues. But we can say that the part with municipalities remained incomplete, we could have done a better dissemination." (KII with expert)

The deteriorating economic situation in the country is a further key factor that has led to the interruption of project activities and shifting of priorities, particularly as it entailed cutbacks of funds:

"*In fact, there are savings measures across all fields. This leads to discussions on cutbacks in different fields. Women will be the most negatively affected from these cutbacks. There is always a new agenda. First there was the pandemic, then the earthquake. This leads us to work in every field apart from our own field. We packed aid boxes. We helped the earthquake zone. These interfere with our own job. We make plans but we cannot implement them for the fourth year in a raw."* (KII with Ankara MM)

The political and social agenda has also been acknowledged by several respondents as leading to interruptions in project activities, which has led to changing priorities, in many cases sidelining the project's objectives.

"*Since last night I have had to talk to all Syrian opinion leaders. I had to discuss all these with Turkish CSOs. Because unfortunately, people were outside on the streets in certain parts of the city last night. Therefore, there is always something. The agenda changes. Yes, the social risk map is one of the agenda items, but unfortunately this is a period we cannot achieve the required or expected concentration*." (KII with municipality)

Time limitations / pressures: Strict deadlines and complex bureaucratic processes created pressure to deliver results rapidly, sometimes compromising the depth and sustainability of engagements. This issue was especially noted in private sector collaborations, where critical project phases coincided with peak business periods**.** This time pressure meant for stakeholders with insufficient time significant difficulties in internalizing new knowledge and integrating it into their workflows sustainably, affecting the quality of work.

"*We had to do a lot of things in a very limited timeframe. The application process, the evaluation of your application takes considerable time. After it is finalized and after you sign the contract, you need to work in a determined time. This time aspect is very important, as we are academics, we also have other things to do. This was a factor which created too much pressure. I was sometimes worried about the quality of the work.*" (KII with expert)

"*Deadlines. You cannot make the system, the society, the organizations work against deadlines. You cannot progress like that. You need to disseminate things, you need to progress slowly. Stakeholders need to internalize*." (KII with expert)

"*We couldn't get enough of the consultancy aspect. It would have been much better if this was a longer-term initiative… It was useful for us to apply the WEPs tool. But when it was completed, they could have taken it further, they could have put us in partnership with different companies… If we could have felt the support of (our consultant) it would have really been beneficial. Above all, for the sustainability within the company.*" (KII with private sector)

"*When the project coincided with end of the year, it was a very busy period for us. The last quarter is a period with a lot of difficulties for the private sector. Closure of the budget, targets, etc. In terms of its timing, we wish this was conducted in the middle of the year, because the beginning and end is critical. 2-3 months was also too short for us. That is, we tried to do something compact… We just wanted to have at least four months to work in more detail for this project.*" (KII with private sector)

The issue of time limitations becomes particularly important for the Purple Map across the majority of municipalities, since they appear as not fully functional across the majority of municipalities due to different reasons, although the project's lifetime has already come to an end. This is closely related to **technological difficulties and infrastructural problems**, such as technical interruptions, digital gaps, lack of skills and need for support by UN Women through assistance and trainings.The Purple Map's challenges highlight the importance of robust technical support and tailored digital literacy training, which are essential for the effective implementation of technology-based solutions.

> "*The Purple Map has so far not been delivered to our municipality. It is open as an application on Google. But it will be delivered to us. We first need to get a training on how to use the application, how to issue notifications, who will use it, where the demands will be directed, etc… How to get back to incoming demands, how many days do we have to get back to demands? A training will be delivered on this*." (KII with municipality)

> "*Unfortunately, the Purple Map cannot be accessed for the last 8 months. It started all well, we did many things initially, but now it is interrupted. It is completely a systemic, a digital failure, and it thus needs to be solved by IT staff. IT stud needs to solve this so that we can enter and get data. Unfortunately, this has not been solved although we had numerous discussions with UN Women and TESEV.*" (KII with municipality)

> "*We had a difficulty concerning the technical aspect. This is not related to UN Women, this is related to TESEV… We demanded separate sections (in the map) where we can enter other data too. We want our other jobs to be visible in the map, too… UN Women informed us that it is not too difficult, that once the map comes to our server it would be done in our own IT department… UN Women does not provide technical support, but it needs to bring us with the technical partner regularly*." (KII with municipality)

> *"The biggest problem in the e-learning system concerns women's lack of digital skills while they get training on a digital platform. They forgot their passwords, they could not succeed in entering the system, they blocked the accounts, etc… For instance we say that our training starts at 7 pm, we send them the calendar, we say please join the meeting by 6 pm, and let us now if you cannot connect to it. Some of them even could not connect until 8 pm, we had to make so much effort. This was a digital obstacle we encountered in almost all the 14 trainings. I don't know how to call it, lack of digital skills or information gaps?"* (KII with CSO partner)

Staff rotations appear as a further significant factor intervening with successful achievement of results, as this implies discontinuities and loss of time and effort on the part of stakeholders. High staff turnover in partner organizations, particularly within municipalities, led to knowledge gaps and discontinuities in program activities. This was especially challenging for activities requiring long-term engagement, such as data management for the Purple Map.

> "*There is this political thing. The chairpersons change all the time. You talk to a director, the next time you go, the director is no longer there. Elections were held, the person changed*." (KII with municipality)

> "*There is a lot of circulation. Today, you found me here as a correspondent. You may no longer find me when you write your report. This is the challenge of municipalities. I started my current position 4 years ago. I worked with 5 different directors… It will change again in July. Because this is a political institution*." (KII with municipality)

> "*You ask me whether gender-sensitivity will be there during the preparation of the 2025 budget. Now there is a change of blood here every 5 years. Since the stability of same persons does*

not exist here, you cannot provide the same concentration. You cannot determine everything with the same chairperson." (KII with public partner)

"*The map is ready now. But we are at a point where the municipality needs to take action regarding the updating of data. While our mayor has not changed, 90-95% of existing cadres have changed since 31 March. This causes a slowness, a delay on our part. This has nothing to do with UN Women. We need to update data, get data from DGs, work on them, etc.*" (KII with municipality)

Reluctance of certain individuals / groups / institutions constitutes a further factor implying significant difficulties in terms of achieving the project's foreseen results. In this respect, reluctance of certain public institutions in providing data, as well as inability to involve representatives of certain political parties in the planned activities, particularly trainings, have been emphasized.

"*In fact, data is available. There are two institutions which can provide me with data. One is the Supreme Election Board (YSK), the other is TURKSTAT. You can also add political parties or the Parliament. But I didn't have the possibility to get data from these four sources… Thus we had to waste all our energy to obtain these very basic data. The most fundamental challenge was to obtain data from public institutions. It took so long*." (KII with expert)

"*Some political parties are more open, some are more closed. But it depends on how each party sees you, how it locates you. We could not get any data from any of them, except for one. Generally, I can say that those political parties that are more conservative are more closed in this respect, while we observed that left-wing and social democratic parties are more collaborative*." (KII with expert)

"*Those from CHP, DEM participate, they express their views. Part of AKP also participates. But there is a conservative nationalist wing and we cannot involve them, there is such a negative thing… This can also happen with government units. I really spent so much effort to talk to a representative of a public institution… The relations with public institutions and municipalities might need to be strengthened.*" (KII with expert)

Insufficient coordination among activities and partners is a significant point that has been expressed by several stakeholders, who emphasized that their opportunities to exchange experience and ideas with their counterparts in other project components have been limited, along with their knowledge of what has been going on under other Outcomes, despite the integrated nature of the project.

"*I think all people working in the project need to be in contact with each other, or they need to send the outputs of their activities to each other. The horizontality is important… All stakeholders do important things, I am sure very valuable things come out. But this should not end here, like a check list, we did this, this is done*." (KII with expert)

"We don't know about the other components of the project, we are not aware of women politicians' trainings. We have been only focusing on the Purple Map. But we are not aware of Purple Map studies in other cities." (KII with municipality)

Limited male engagement is a further factor slowing down the achievement of the project's objectives. The low level of male involvement has restricted the project's transformative impact on gender norms, limiting the potential for broader societal change. Without actively engaging male stakeholders, efforts to promote GEWE remain largely isolated within women-focused groups, missing opportunities for cross-gender understanding and buy-in.

"*We shared the findings with the EOC, but it is crucial to share them with other political stakeholders. The project is an integrated one, it does not only interest women. It is*

> *comprehensive, it is actually of interest to the whole politics. Therefore, it is important to share the findings with male politicians and make them encounter with these data… Male politicians are not aware of these. We need to think about mechanisms to share these with male politicians, with men."* (KII with expert)

SQ3c Has the project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom? What are the good practices and the obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How were they overcome?

Finding 13: The main obstacles experienced throughout the implementation of the project, in addition to the ones outlined under Finding 12, include the volatile and uncertain political context; lack of capacities and technical difficulties at the local level; and difficulties in collaborating with public institutions.

While the evaluation has not identified any major unforeseen results, certain unforeseen processes and elements can be discerned, and there are certain obstacles and shortcomings encountered in the implementation process, most of which have been detailed in the above section. In a similar vein, here, it would be important to underline the **political uncertainty** which has posed obstacles to the project activities. For instance, as underlined in the project documents, the long-lasting uncertainty around the scheduled date of the general elections has implied a challenge for the planning and organization process of the candidate trainings. The selection of the trainees was therefore postponed until after the general elections, in order to allow for a more targeted selection process and to ensure that motivated women aspirants participate in trainings.[78]

Bureaucratic hurdles and reluctance from certain public institutions: Bureaucratic requirements and limited cooperation from certain public institutions further complicated data access and slowed down the project's progress. UN Women had to find alternative methods to acquire necessary data, a time-intensive process that revealed challenges in institutional transparency and data-sharing practices.

> "*There was significant challenge concerning the tendering process. There was a challenging bureaucracy particularly for small companies. But I observed that they (UN Women) can overcome this bureaucracy thanks to the good dialogue between the HQ and Türkiye Office. We had to send so many documents about the company, but we overcame this with mutual trust and understanding, as well as flexibility*." (KII with expert)

Furthermore, as mentioned above, the delays in the launch and functioning of purple maps were caused by several challenges faced at the local level. The project documents underline that the implementation of the project at the local level has encountered specific challenges due to **lack of systematic sex-disaggregated data collection,** which has negatively affected the timely and efficient development of the purple maps, and led to delays in their launch. The lack of reliable and comprehensive data "*has hindered the accurate mapping of gender-responsive information and indicators, which is the needed baseline for the functioning of the maps*."[79] Still, it should be emphasized that the process of the development of the purpose maps has in itself led to improvements in data collection, and the process has been instrumental for initiating sustainable gender-responsive data collection practices at the local level, to support evidence-based policy and decision-making.

The consultations with project stakeholders have revealed other challenges and unforeseen elements. This includes, for instance, the **unevenness in the perceived capacity of certain partners**. The project encountered varying levels of readiness and skill among municipalities, which affected the consistency of Purple Maps implementation. Some municipalities required additional orientation to effectively integrate the tools, as illustrated by efforts to provide introductory sessions to explain Purple Maps to local departments. As our respondent puts it:

78 End of Year Donor Report, 2022, p. 22
79 Ibid.

> "*We realized that not all municipalities are the same. We started to organize introductory meetings within municipalities. That is, what is Purple Map? We first explain this to relevant staff from all departments, because it is not a tool which will only be used by the women or local equality unit. Different units, branches can also use it for their own purposes. We organized our latest meeting in Adana to introduce the system, to show them how this can be used, how they can benefit.*" (KII with UN Women staff)

Limited coordination among project activities and stakeholders' **reluctance to cooperate** (particularly among public partners) restricted knowledge-sharing across components, preventing stakeholders from leveraging cross-cutting insights. This siloed approach minimized opportunities for mutual support and learning, as stakeholders remained isolated within their respective domains.

> "*It was so difficult to get data from public institutions. I made a lot of efforts… But UN Women tried to support me through their partnership with EOC. They contacted several institutions to get data. But we couldn't reach any results. You can imagine how difficult this was. We had to access the data of around 133.000 candidates manually, we screened them all by name and gender! This was so difficult, as this also included villages, districts, covering people with no presence in the social media whatsoever."* (KII with expert)

SQ3d How effective have the selected strategies and approaches been in achieving project results?

Finding 14: The project has successfully employed effective strategies, notably in mobilization of partnerships, deployment of know-how and exercise, opportunities for networking, dialogue and socialization, innovative strategies used in response to unforeseen developments, and the various training programmes implemented. However, limited coordination among stakeholders, limited engagement of men, and limited dissemination of outcomes in some cases have hindered or slowed down the progress towards achievement of results.

In terms of the effectiveness of the selected strategies and approaches in achieving the project results, a number of aspects come to the fore. The first concerns the **effectiveness of partnerships** established within the purposes of the project. As indicated in the project documents and confirmed by respondents, the partnership with the EOC of the TGNA has been key in this respect. UN Women has certainly availed of its position as the only UN agency that directly partners with the TGNA and EOC to increase awareness and information on crucial aspects of gender equality, also introducing new elements and raising the leverage of new issues such as violence against women in politics, digital violence, etc. at the highest level of policy and decision-making. This has also led to the establishment of a continuous platform for exchange of knowledge and experience between the Parliament and academics, experts and other relevant actors.

A second key aspect concerns the support provided by UN Women to implementing partners and stakeholders in the form of **know-how and expertise** on a diverse range of issues, sometimes in the form of consultancy, as well as the opportunities for **networking, dialogue and socialization**, which have been widely emphasized by the stakeholders. These interactions have strengthened relationships, facilitated knowledge-sharing, and contributed to the sense of cohesion and collaboration among participants. For example, project-organized trainings and social gatherings created opportunities for women leaders from diverse backgrounds to build alliances.

> "*I found KADER and participants very valuable, they are open-minded, participatory. The environment it provided, the openness to questions was very important. We also went for an excursion to Ishak Paşa Palace, there was a sociality like that. I find this valuable, because there is a pragmatic approach in many meetings I participate in Istanbul, and maybe less in Ankara. People try to do their own business without establishing relationships, without listening. Here, people were completely dedicated. This provided a much better dialogue*" (KII with KADER trainer)

"*We really found more than what we hoped for. Our consultant is a very well-equipped person, resulting both from her past human resources experience and her current consultancies. So she understood us very well. What can we do in a quick and efficient manner? What can be rapid actions, quick wins that we can really benefit from? She shared these with us. This was very facilitating."* (KII with private sector partner)

"*We went to Muğla, Samsun municipality trainings, delivering trainings for council members and municipality staff. These were very productive. I think the trainings were crucial for increasing the dialogue among the participants themselves. Because there were representatives from different political parties. There was first a tense atmosphere, and then dialogue was starting, because the problems faced by women in politics are common."* (KII with expert)

Innovative strategies have also been used to go beyond the scope of activities, and reinforce the gains obtained from the activities through networking. Moreover, the ability to **rapidly adapt** activities in response to crises illustrates the project's agility and resilience, which have been crucial in maintaining momentum under unpredictable circumstances and ensuring ongoing relevance for stakeholders. This has particularly been effective in the aftermath of the earthquake, where the ability to pivot priorities, such as establishing women's life centers and partnering with organizations like KAGİDER, has enabled continuity in efforts toward women's empowerment in challenging circumstances.

"*Last year, with the unfortunate earthquake, we mobilized with KAGİDER and UN Women and we went for a cooperation. We already had support projects in the earthquake region… In fact all our targets changed after the earthquake. For this reason, we went into a collaboration with KAGİDER and UN Women in order to increase our power. That's why it was very easy for us to come together… The first step of this was the organization of a meeting in Hatay on 21 November… This was a meeting that brought together private sector, public sector, banks, mayor, etc. This was important both to enable networking – the sellers interacted with each other, they bought things from each other; and all our sectoral collaborators explained what kind of advantages they provide for the earthquake region. We delivered an e-commerce training, which focused on how they can sell their products with the advantages of the earthquake zone by registering in our database. Our colleagues were there to register them, too. Following this, we made a collaboration with KAGİDER and UN Women to support institutional procurement. We bought products from women entrepreneurs and women cooperatives in the earthquake zone and we formed a support box to be purchased by companies on 8 March. We used the network of KAGİDER, but UN Women was also very helpful by finding us institutional customers*." (KII with private sector)

A further aspect that needs to be underlined concerns the **positive contribution of trainings** provided to the organizations and beneficiaries, which have also been crucial to develop the capacities of the partners and target groups. The training programs for women candidates have been foundational in building a diverse cadre of women leaders, contributing to the project's long-term sustainability by empowering participants with the tools needed to advocate for and embody gender equality. The transformative role of the training sessions should also be underlined, not only in skill-building but also in fostering solidarity among women leaders who, despite political differences, face common challenges. The gender-sensitivity trainings for media staff, on the other hand, constituted a crucial step for capacity-building and internalizing gender issues.

"*KADER has had tremendous contributions to us. Our trainers were really so valuable, the team was so strong. I followed both face-to-face and online trainings, they were really productive. Indeed, there was a synergy with other political parties during the face-to-face meetings. Those who normally see each other as opponents had a very good communication there… We had exchange of information and knowledge with each other… I understand that we as women need much more of these trainings. We need to get more comprehensive*

trainings so that we can get a place in patriarchal parties, we gain power, we get our voices heard." (FGD with KADER trainees)

"*I am very happy about the trainings provided by KADER. They have provided me with a road map, they helped to fulfill me. We learned many things we did not know. Above all, you get over your shyness, your inability to express yourself. You can ask questions in that environment, you can better express yourself.*" (FGD with KADER trainees)

"*I started my candidacy for city council one step ahead of my friends because I participated in KADER training. I shared the value of this training at every possible platform. I received information from such and such people. Even if I gained one sentence from each of them, I am in a better position than you. I said this to men at every possible occasion and this brought me to the fore."* (FGD with KADER trainees).

"We have tried to translate this into an internal policy, we are still working on it. We make efforts for this to become our own language, our own constitution, irrespective of the managers. We change the language of news that come from the agency. We try not to use the photos of women subject to violence. Because the violence has already happened, it would not change anything that the readers read about the details of the violence. So the trainings have had such a contribution to us. We were enlightened." (FGD with media partner)

"We received an interactive training, we had a lot of fun. I really forced my male colleagues to participate in the meeting. They were unwilling to join and very few of them came. But it was very informative and fun. Then we had a second training last summer to go through what we have done in this period. We want continuous trainings, we talk with UN Women about this. Because as many trainings you receive, as many things you learn. I think this would be beneficial." (KII with media partner)

On the other hand, in terms of strategies and approaches that hindered and / or slowed down the process of achievement of results, which need further attention in the upcoming period, the limited coordination amongst stakeholders, the limited engagement of men in project activities and objectives, and the limited dissemination of outcomes come to the fore.

Limited collaboration and information-sharing among stakeholders have been noted as significant obstacles. The segmented approach hinders the project's integrative potential, which is essential for a project addressing multi-dimensional gender issues.

Limited engagement with male stakeholders has constrained the project's potential to drive cross-gender advocacy for GEWE. Without active male participation, the project has missed out opportunities for broader social impact. This also relates to **limited dissemination** of project activities, particularly to a broader audience including men, which has reduced the visibility and impact of the findings. This is particularly important for issues such as digital violence and women's political participation.

"*They have to do the presentations they do to EOC members to 118 women MPs*." (KII with public partner)

"*It is important to share the findings with male politicians and make them encounter with these data… Male politicians are not aware of these. We need to think about mechanisms to share these with male politicians, with men*." (KII with expert)

SQ 3.e How well did the intervention succeed in involving and building the capacities of rights-holders, duty-bearers, as well as project partners?

Finding 15: The project has remarkably succeeded in involving and building the capacities of the project partners and beneficiaries, including the EOC, municipalities, the private sector and civil society. Through

targeted initiatives, training, and resource provision, UN Women has helped establish sustainable practices and enhance the roles of these stakeholders in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) in Türkiye.

It should be underlined that the project had an important contribution towards the capacity-building of project partners and rights-holders. In this respect, one of the major points concerns the **capacity building of the EOC** in terms of **gender-sensitive legislation initiatives** and, **advocacy for temporary special measures (TSM)**,[80] which continued over from the previous phase, as well as the introduction of **new concerns on gender equality such as digital violence.** These efforts signify the project's role in equipping legislative bodies with tools for fostering a gender-sensitive policy environment.

Another success of the project has been **building the capacity of municipalities** in terms of **data collection and monitoring.** Through the Purple Map initiative, the project has contributed to increasing the awareness of gender disparities and leading further training and gender mainstreaming. The Purple Map (along with GRB trainings), has led some of the municipalities to be more careful about sex-segregated data collection and use the data in other planning activities of the city. The Purple Map's focus on data-driven gender equality encourages a systematic approach to local governance. This indicates the project's influence in establishing systematic, sustainable data practices within a number of municipalities. These practices not only help measure the success of gender-sensitive policies but also build a reliable data repository to support future policies. One of the municipal officials interviewed summarizes this effect with the following sentences:

> "*For instance, the thing we did best was to ask our IT department to prepare a monitoring module although no one had asked us to monitor. We were always writing to different units to write the numbers of men, women to us, and the data was gathered in our department. We were collecting papers, papers, papers. Then we said, there must be a mistake here, there should be something easier. So we opened a monitoring module in the internal control system, which enables all units to enter their data instead of writing to us. It takes 1-2 minutes for them, and it is easier for us to report on these data*." (KII with municipality)

A further contribution to capacity building concerns the private sector, through the WEPs signatory companies that participated in the pilot project. The project has provided **extensive support to WEPs signatory companies**, helping them conduct gender gap analyses on the way to developing comprehensive action plans to address gender disparities. Training has led some companies to create policies prioritizing female representation in leadership, develop gender-inclusive recruitment practices, and collaborate with other organizations to enhance gender equality. By introducing companies to tools and frameworks for gender gap analysis, the project has enabled the private sector to take concrete, measurable steps towards gender equality. These initiatives not only address immediate gaps but also institutionalize gender-inclusive practices within corporate structures, fostering a culture of sustained gender sensitivity.

> "*We first completed the UN Women Gender Gap Analysis tool. This includes communications, human resources, design, that is, equal pay for equal work, diversity inclusion, etc. It was a tool that address this inclusion from many different perspectives. Then we saw where we were… The consultant that was assigned to us was always with us, it was a very pleasant process. We both saw the best practices she brought with her, and the situation in the other 10 companies. We evaluated our situation, thought about what should we do to have better results, what can we develop. So we sat together and we produced both an action plan and a communications plan. This plan included women's recruitment, career management, what can be done to include more women in management, what can be done in the name of gender equality.*" (KII with private sector)

> "*While we were continuing from our own path, UN Women opened up a perspective for us. They said, look, there are such institutions, there is ILO, there is this institution. You can ask*

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for support from this institution, you can do a collaboration with this association. There is an evaluation study of this platform, there is a team of trainers of that platform. You can examine this academic study to see your pros and cons… That is, UN Women has fed us a lot in terms of individuals, institutions, documents, resources." (KII with private sector)

"*Because we had no high-level women managers. It has only recently started. We now have a policy concerning this. I mean, if there is a way of representation somewhere, I appoint at least one woman, there is at least one woman representative… Indeed, we are currently working on a separate program design for our top-level executives. We want them to go through such a programme. But it's not like training. It has practical applications, simulations, role playing, etc*." (KII with private sector)

The project has also contributed to the **capacity building of CSOs**, particularly KADER and KAGİDER, through funding, network expansion, project management, and skills-building in areas like results-based management. These efforts have enabled CSOs to take on more significant roles in advocating for GEWE, allowing them to partner with international organizations and respond more effectively to community needs.

"*We particularly try to do capacity-building work with CSOs. It's not only about providing funds. It also includes project management, results-based management, enlarging networks, promoting mutual learning, enhancing dialogue amognst CSOs working on different issues, and also supporting them to work together and harmonizing them with UN programmes. KADER is an example of this. In order to increase their capacity, which was low at the time, and their learning process we twinned them with the UN Women project*." (KII with donor)

"UN Women visited all women cooperatives and producers one by one… There are around 70 women cooperatives in Hatay. They brought them together with entrepreneurs, buyers, psychologists, banks in the summit where they presented in detail their supports for women entrepreneurs… There are active training programmes in the region to promote gender-sensitive economic development. UN Women provides the training needs." (KII with CSO)

SQ 3.f Has the project had effective monitoring mechanisms in place to measure progress towards results?

Finding 16: The monitoring and follow-up of activities occasionally remain insufficient, mostly due to the busy schedule of the project and time pressures, as well as limited involvement of the relevant stakeholders in the process.

The monitoring and evaluation mechanism of the project is set out by the Inception Report,[81] stating that the project's monitoring and reporting will be carried out in accordance with the respective UN Women's regulations, rules and procedures. It stipulates that a staff member of Country Office (CO) will be specifically dedicated to the monitoring and reporting of the project, and will work in close collaboration with monitoring and reporting staff under other programmes. This task is to be performed by the Programme Analyst (Political Participation and Leadership). The Report indicates that the progress of the project will be regularly monitored through partner meetings, field visits and the collection and analysis of data on outcome and output levels by tracking the progress of each indicator. It is stated that the results of the monitoring will be included in UN Women's quarterly monitoring and annual reports via the online UN Women Results Management System. The project team is tasked with organising annual reviews to track outcome and outputs progress and the overall implementation of the project under each project component. Furthermore, the annual project reviews aim to solicit the project partners' feedback and advice on activities, performance and personnel of the programme. Annual narrative and financial reports of the project, prepared by UN Women on the basis of a results-based management approach, are set to be presented to the donor. Two reporting mechanisms are used to track the progress of the project, namely, (i) Annual Progress Reports to be submitted no later than

81 Sida Prodoc Inception Report, p. 27-28.

6 months after the year-end; and (ii) Final Report to be submitted no later than 6 months after the end of the implementation period. Both reports are to include the narrative and financial statements.

However, despite the formalized procedure, stakeholder interwievs reveal that **monitoring practices do not meet expectations** in tracking the impact of activities. According to the evaluation team's assessment, the existing M&E approach appears to focus more on reporting quantitative data, such as attendance, rather than qualitative impact assessments. The reliance on attendance-based metrics rather than deeper qualitative analysis limits the understanding of how effectively the project's activities translate into real-world impact. This suggests a need for a more holistic approach that includes assessing how project activities, such as trainings, influence participants' confidence, skills, and practical application in political or business leadership roles.

> "*They don't get back to me in that respect. The issue is not counting heads any more. Of course, they had counted the heads, (but they cannot analyze) what does this mean? I don't know how they monitor the impact… We only have a chance to provide occasional, oral feedback*." (KII with expert)

While the project has mechanisms for annual reviews and feedback from partners, stakeholders indicate that follow-up activities remain ad hoc, with **limited opportunities for structured feedback** after initial engagements. Many respondents noted they could only receive feedback informally, which restricts the project's capacity to collect actionable insights. This lack of structured follow-up has particularly affected the continuity of training programs, where beneficiaries report improved self-confidence but feel there is insufficient long-term engagement to reinforce and build upon initial gains.

> "*I personally met with some whose candidacy was approved, either elected or not, but who became candidate. All have said that the training improved their self-confidence, there is no question about this. All said we learned a lot, but this needs to continue somehow."* (KADER internal evaluation)

> "*I personally got their feedback through WhatsApp, saying hocam, we used this photo, and not that, etc*." (KII with expert)

Moreover, the project's **lack of ongoing follow-up mechanisms** is particularly notable in training programs for political aspirants and private sector partners. Although participants reported improvements in self-confidence and practical skills, they highlighted the absence of sustained contact and periodic updates on best practices or new applications. Stakeholders, such as the private sector, expressed a need for continuous communication about trends and innovations that could reinforce their gender equality commitments.

"*It is important to continue the communication about trends, new applications etc. They communicated with us, but they can also a follow-up mechanism to see where they are, what we are doing*." (KII with private sector)In conclusion, while the project's M&E framework is well-defined in theory, its practical implementation requires adjustments to effectively measure and support the long-term impact of activities.

SQ 3.g What types of innovative good practices have been introduced in the project for the achievement of GEWE results?

Please see section 6 below.

5.4 Efficiency

Q4 Has the project implementation and management been efficient?

This section focuses on the efficiency of the project implementation and management, through four inter-related dimensions, namely, (i) strategic allocation of resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) to achieve the project outcomes; (ii) the extent to which the management structure of the project supports

efficiency for implementation and achievement of results; (iii) timely delivery of outputs; and (iv) the extent to which the coordination between the project counterparts and UN Women has led to better project results.

SQ 4.a Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outcomes?

Finding 17: UN Women's active support for partners, networking capacity, ability to mobilize expertise and know-how, and flexible approach in using funds, have been notable strengths of the project. However, sub-optimal use of resources has been observed as high number and fragmented nature of activities have jeopardized the project's consistency and coherence**.**

In terms of resources strategic allocation (financial, human, technical support), several key points emerged.

In terms of **human resources,** UN Women has been actively supporting its partners across the different components of the project. As indicated above, the open, accessible and problem-solving attitude of the project team has been emphasized by almost all the respondents. This has certainly facilitated the completion of activities and achievement of objectives.

> "*They were so supportive. We said we cannot do this on our own, because we need to prepare visuals, we need to produce texts. Ok, we can do the text, but the visuals need to be colorful, moving etc. in order to attract people's attention so that they read about what is being done. Well they gave a rapid support to us from their resources*." (KII with CSO)

UN Women's **networking capacity** and ability to **convene a diverse range of actors** have been widely recognized as strategic assets, facilitating activities' implementation and experiences sharing. Additionally, many respondents highlighted UN Women's ability in mobilizing expertise and know-how, by engaging qualified and supportive consultants.

> *"There was an expert directed to us by UN Women. I think they were collaborating with these experts, who were mobilized by them, who received their training. It was definitely useful because there are lots of experts around, but to be able to receive training from experts trained appropriately is important, so UN Women's direction was very useful*." (KII with private sector)

An essential aspect of efficient resources use was UN Women's **flexibility** in response to February 2023 earthquakes. The organization adapted quickly to the crisis situation, redirecting resources to the emergency. Notably, collaborations with Hepsi Burada and KAGİDER started to support women entrepreneurs and cooperatives, providing e-commerce opportunities for them, effectively transforming an unforeseen challenge into a supportive initiative. Moreover, the development of a gender-sensitive settlement model for the area demonstrated foresight by addressing immediate and longer-term needs in the affected areas. (Please see below.)

However, the evaluation highlighted certain gaps and sub-optimal resource use. An important issue to be stressed is the broad scope of the project and the high number of activities, sometimes appearing as too dispersed and unconnected. Indeed, some of the actions pursued in the project appeared as standalone activities, not necessarily in synergy with others nor with the overall objectives of the project. For instance, post earthquake activities in the region thought important to demonstrate the flexibility of the project and to provide crucial social and economic contributions to women entrepreneurs in the region, were not fully aligned under the overall objective of '*promoting women's leadership'*. Similarly, the all-encompassing nature of the project outcomes, including capacity-building of institutions, promoting women's political and business leadership, and the development of gender-sensitive service delivery models at the local level, imply difficulties in terms of bringing together all these actions under the single umbrella of women's leadership. Althought the wide range of activities pursued from gender-sensitive media practices to the development of the Purple Map, which is crucial to promote GEWE in the national context, they did not show full consistency and coherence with each other. More importantly, this leads to **under-exploration of possibilities for**

creating synergies and exchange of know-how and experience among the stakeholders involved. Many stakeholders have limited awareness of the project's overall objectives and activities.

> *"I don't have information about the Women Lead project, can there be a mistake? Or maybe this is a broader umbrella project, implementing different sub-projects, and ours might be one of those?"* (KII with expert)

This fragmentation suggests a need for greater integration and mutual engagement among partners to consider in future phases of the project. Indeed, many stakeholders expressed their wish to communicate with each other, to enhance mutual learning, to share experiences and to feed into the different components of the project.

Finally, several respondents highlighted the unique challenges in Türkiye's context, which require **adaptive, non-standardized approaches and resources.** For example, one expert shared insights from a training in Doğu Beyazıt noting digital or written trainings were ineffective due to low women literacy levels and distinct regional political dynamics. This expert emphasized the need for tailored training approaches, as standardized modules do not fully address local realities efficiently.

> "*That's why you need to know the regional dynamics… I think it is not possible to standardize a training module… That's why KADER did not apply it fully, because it's too much American standard. For instance, it talks about campaign training. Campaign training is not possible. Where will the woman do the campaign? Does she have fund-raising possibilities?"* (KII with expert)

SQ 4.b To what extent does the management structure of the intervention support efficiency for implementation and achievement of results?

Finding 18: The project's management structure has been efficient in achieving the results, considering the comprehensive nature of the project, the diversity of the activities and stakeholders, and its flexibility to respond to emerging needs. However, given the project's scope and the likelihood of continuing new activities into the next phase, a broader management framework is missing.

As outlined in the project's Inception Report, UN Women, with its mandate and experience on gender equality projects, oversees overall coordination and implementation, channeling donor resources to responsible parties.[82] Day-to-day project operations are managed by UN Women under the guidance of the UN Women Country Director and direct supervision of the Head of Programme. UN Women has the primary responsibility to ensure that the project produces the required outputs, respects the required standards of quality within the specified constraints of time and cost. The management of the project aims to ensure open and effective communication and interaction among team members, and close collaboration with project partners and stakeholders.[83]

As stated in the project's Inception Report, the project has two different components targeting women in politics and businesses, each requiring specialized skills and experience. The management structure accounts for this, and is formulated as the following:

> The project team will be led by a Programme Specialist, one Programme Analyst, a Communication Associate (SB3), a Programme Assistant – who will be responsible for the political participation and leadership component and will be reporting to the Programme Specialist. Additionally, there will be a Programme Analyst responsible for the activities and strategies related to private sector engagement in gender equality, a Communication Analyst responsible for the overall communication strategy and activities, and a partially funded

82 SIDA Prodoc Inception Report, p. 22
83 Ibid., p. 25

> Operations Analyst, reporting to the Country Director… Team will be supported by national and international consultants.[84]

The project builds on collaboration with NGOs, think-tanks, companies to support the implementation process, which are governed by Partner Agreements. The project team at UN Women has the task to organize and deliver project activities such as training programmes, workshops, experience-sharing and networking meetings together with contracted national and/or international consultants. The key programme partners foreseen at the beginning of the project include the EOC of TGNA, Union of Municipalities and regional unions of municipalities, local authorities and councils in targeted municipalities, the Swedish Association of local authorities and regions, relevant CSOs such as KADER, Yereliz, TESEV, Yanınızdayız, IPU, European Women's Lobby, Women's Coalition, universities and media institutions, TÜRKONFED, TÜSİAD, Milliyet and GQ, private sector companies, advertisement industry and UN Global Compact.[85] Those that have actually been partnered during the implementation have been mentioned above under the Effectiveness section. While most of the originally envisaged partners have been involved in the project, new ones, in line with emerging needs, such as KAGİDER and Hepsi Burada, have also been partnered with to ensure an efficient implementation.

All these elements make the management structure of the project efficient and well-organized to facilitate the achievement of objectives and results. As indicated in the project documents, UN Women has strong technical and operational capacity that allows to provide solid support to the project implementation on the ground[86] and efficiently respond to the needs of the diverse stakeholders. The project team made a remarkable effort to efficiently respond to the needs of the diverse stakeholders.

On the other hand, considering the nature of the project, the diversity of the activities and stakeholders, and its flexibility to respond to emerging needs, which entail new activities likely to be continued in the next phase, the project might benefit from a **more extensive management framework**, i.e., each of the three different components of the project to have separate Programme Analysts, supported by an increased number of Programme Assistants and/or Specialists.

SQ 4.c Have the outputs been delivered in a timely manner?

Finding 19: The contextual changes in the country implied significant time pressures, pointing to the need for a more flexible approach to timing.

It is observed that the project outputs have been delivered more or less in a timely manner, with the exception of the necessities imposed by the wider context, including the emergency situation occurring with the earthquake and uncertainties regarding the exact timing of elections. On the other hand, and as explained in detail in the Effectiveness section, the time dimension is a crucial one for the successful achievement of the project objectives, as well as the sustainability of its outcomes. Therefore, a more flexible approach to timing would be a facilitating factor for the project partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries alike.

SQ 4.d Is the coordination between the project counterparts and UN Women leading to better project results?

Finding 20: While coordination between UN Women and project counterparts is efficient, coordination among the counterparts and stakeholders themselves has been one of the of the project's weakest aspects, as most stakeholders showed limited knowledge and awareness of activities beyond their direct involvment.

The partnerships established through this project showcase UN Women's strength as a hub, bringing together all relevant parties to foster dialogue and experience-sharing among public, private and civil society entities. As the only UN agency collaborating with the TGNA and EOC, UN Women adds significant value to

84 Ibid.
85 Ibid., p. 23
86 Ibid., p. 22

the project, enabling interactions and dissemination among parties that might not otherwise be aware of each other's activities.

> "*Within the scope of this project we come together with different stakeholders through meetings and events organized by UN Women. This provides an opportunity to share information and experience, and to think about ways to disseminate the studies we conducted, which are important to improve the project outputs… UN Women does not keep (the studies) for itself, but in fact it offers us, as academics, the opportunity to share those at different platforms with different stakeholders. Thus we have the possibility to disseminate these through different conferences, with different academics. In addition, this study was presented to the EOC and got feedback from them. At the beginning of July we had a meeting with IPU, EOC and UN Women, and we were able to present the findings of the study. This was a meeting also participated by women parliamentarians from other countries. Therefore, it goes beyond Türkiye and it gives us the chance to think about how we can benefit from other countries' experiences, how we can develop solutions together. The project thus creates platforms bringing together different stakeholders and giving possibility for discussion to solve problems with a joint effort*." (KII with expert)

For example, collaboration with civil society, notably KADER, and private sector partnerships through WEPs signatories and HepsiBurada, played crucial roles in achieving project goals. This close relationship allowed for weekly meetings and continuous adjustments based on collaborative feedback:

> "*During all this process, we have worked in a very close relationship with UN Women's counterparts. We had meetings every week. Each week, both the project team internally met and they met with UN Women. In this way, the content was developed together and was in harmony with their demands. It was a very close collaboration. Apart from weekly meetings, a lot of other communication and joint work took place during the project. Both sides were so flexible…The scope developed was far beyond what was expected.*" (KII with expert)

While the coordination between the project counterparts and UN Women has been quite efficient, however, the one amongst the counterparts and stakeholders is observed as one of the weakest aspects of the project. Almost all of the respondents to this study displayed a significant lack of knowledge and awareness of activities other than the ones they are involved in. This is despite the fact that the diverse range of activities conducted by the project all provide crucial contributions to the objective of promoting GEWE in the context of Türkiye, which is much needed, and could therefore provide key insights and inputs for each other. For instance, the local efforts to promote gender-sensitive service delivery models might definitely have synergies with the trainings provided for local women political aspirants, and the studies conducted on VAWiP and digital violence can be of utmost use to the WEPs signatory companies. Indeed, it would be important to enhance coordination and mutual learning among partners/stakeholders and to promote platforms where they can come together and share their experiences and know-how.

> "*The most important problem is that we never met with the team that will coordinate the work on the establishment of women centers in container cities… UN Women should have definitely brought us together… Without working together in a coordinated way, I must say that the guide I prepared does not match what they do in the field. I even don't know whether the guide reached them or not, whether they read it or not, I haven't presented it to them."* (KII with expert)

5.5 Sustainability

Q 5 Has the project achieved sustainable outcomes and widespread impact?

This section examines the sustainability and impact of the project through the following aspects: (i) the overall impact; (ii) the likelihood that the benefits from the project will be maintained for a reasonably long time after

the project phases out; (iii) the extent to which the project has promoted replication / scaling-up of successful practices, and (iv) the exit strategy of the project. The issues of individual and institutional capacity-building, partnerships and the voice and influence of key national actors have been widely discussed above, and thus will not be repeated here.

SQ 5.a What has been the overall impact of the project?

Finding 21: The project has considerably increased the awareness and ownership of stakeholders and beneficiaries at all levels, with the strongest results observed among local women political aspirants and through research-driven awareness-raising. Nevertheless, platforms for the exchange of experiences and know-how across the different outcomes of the project are crucial to maximize the impact.

The project has definitely had a remarkable impact through its partnerships, activities and approaches throughout the process of implementation. The field research conducted for this evaluation revealed that the project has considerably increased the awareness and ownership of stakeholders and beneficiaries at all levels, while the extent and intensity varies. Perhaps the most significant impact has been on local women political aspirants as project beneficiaries, who received concrete benefits from the training programme in terms of capacity-development. A further potential impact concerns the Purple Map, which constitutes an effective model although technical issues have delayed its broader dissemination.

> "*With Purple Map, we aimed to reveal the structure of the city. That is, what do we need in which region, how to manage needs and services, etc. At the same time, we aimed women to rapidly access what they need, to notify the municipality about what they see as risks. We aimed to see where there are gaps in services, what do we need."* (KII with municipality)

In addition, the research studies conducted have provided significant entry points for new gender equality issues to enter into public agenda, through the effective partnership with the EOC. While they opened up new pathways for interaction among different stakeholders, it would be useful to disseminate the findings of these studies, along with considering new dimensions through which they can be developed in the next phase to increase the project's long-term impact. For instance, further work on the quality of women's political participation is crucial to increase impact in the upcoming period.

> "*One of the issues that the project needs to touch upon is to think about how can we improve the quality of women's representation. We need to work on mechanisms to empower women in a quality manner. Now we have quantitative data on women in politics. Women are few in terms of numbers, and we can understand the reasons for that through numerical data. They cannot be placed high in the candidate lists. They are left behind by political parties."* (KII with expert)

The integrated approach of the project, although not always fully implemented, was another significant element to increase the impact, as expressed by several respondents. This is because it led to important platforms for different types and levels of stakeholders to come together and exchange ideas and experiences. As indicated above, it would be crucial to promote these platforms in the next phase to be encompassing of all relevant stakeholders and to cut across all the different Outcomes to feed into the different components of the project.

SQ 5.b What is the likelihood that the benefits from the project will be maintained for a reasonably long period after the project phases out?

Finding 22: While partnerships and the mobilization of expertise have led to tangible benefits for all relevant parties, significant technical problems and shifting local priorities of stakeholders raise challenges in terms of sustainability.

The issue of the sustainability of the project outcomes and benefits raises a complicated picture, due to the variety and different intensity levels of activities and partners. While the partnerships established, along with

the engagement of expertise and know-how in the form of consultants, has led to tangible benefits for all relevant parties, the outcomes have not been even throughout. For instance, the research studies conducted on VAWiP, digital violence and election analyses from a gender perspective are worth noting to ensure the sustainability of the project beyond its lifetime, while, as indicated above, their dissemination could be speeded up and expanded in the upcoming period.

The **Purple Map** constitutes another significant element with the potential to contribute to the sustainability of the project. The partnerships with municipalities pursued by the project have led to tangible results, and paved the way for the development of wholistic local gender-sensitive service delivery models. However, it should be underlined that significant technical problems and changing priorities of the local stakeholders have led to under-exploration of this potential, and implies challenges in terms of the sustainability of this activity.

> *"Since the Purple Map is a system offered to us, and since we incorporated our own data into it, it is surely a programme to be sustainable beyond the current project.*" (KII with municipality)

> "*I think the distinguishing part of the project is this. Because this municipality has been through GRB work many times… But this project has a wholistic view, having made its plans in relation to all units and departments, so considering sustainability. This was valuable. The project had a planning on council members, relevant units, director-generals, branch directors – the whole of the municipality."* (KII with municipality)

A further important point to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes concerns the **gender-sensitivity trainings** provided to the media partner, which have definitely increased the awareness and collective perception among the participants, and have been leading to concrete outcomes for the news outlet concerned. On the other hand, to increase the sustainability of the benefits provided in this respect, it would be crucial to think about new outlets, types (i.e. TV) and platforms (i.e., online) to disseminate gender-sensitivity in the media, and to lead to transformative impact in terms of addressing stereotypes.

The partnership with the private sector through the WEPs signatory companies has also led to sustainable outcomes within the scope of the companies, which have increased their awareness and focus on gender-equality issues. In this respect, both the ownership of the companies of the WEPs, and their further needs in this respect, are worthy of noting.

> "*I think this was a great initiative. It should be continued… How will it proceed from now on? Perhaps consultancy services can be continued, with reasonable prices, because that was so helpful. Really, in a way to be more easily accessible by companies, consultancy can be provided and the consultants can act as one of ourselves (like the one we had for the project), we feel them as a member of our team, I think it would be very useful.*" (KII with private sector)

On the other hand, several stakeholders noted **limited timaframes** as a barrier to internalizing and maximizing benefits, indicating that prolonged engagement may yield stronger, more sustainable outcomes. This is particularly the case for trainings, which could have benefitted from a longer-term approach and continuity.

> "*The point that I criticize the most about this project is not about UN Women Türkiye team, this was a great work whereby we touched a lot of women. However, they ended up the project on the evening of 31 March. I have been saying this from the beginning, this is a wrong thing to do. You end the project on the evening when the elections are conducted, while it was a very long-term effort. You need to get feedback from women who could not be elected in terms of their experiences, traumas, in order to see what types of impacts this has had on them. You need to conduct meetings, surveys. Unfortunately, the system has not allowed this and we went into a very rapid reporting process."* (KII with CSO partner)

"*The trainings need to be continued, to be conducted within the whole of the municipality, to be delivered to all relevant departments. It's not over once we deliver it once…*" (KII with municipality)

SQ 5.c To what extent has the project been able to promote replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices?[87]

The project's best practices are outlined in the following sections, and it remains to be seen the extent to which their replications or up-scalings will be considered for the upcoming period. On the other hand, it is important to highlight one of the findings of the evaluation concerning the **need for simplifying the objectives / activities and aiming for in-depth impact** rather than pursuing stand-alone, sometimes isolated and/or one-off activities. This will allow for a more in-depth consideration of possible upscaling of successful practices.

SQ 5.d To what extent has the exit strategy been well-planned and successfully implemented?

Having come to the end of its second phase, the project is likely to continue through further phases, as all the outcomes and outputs have a long-term nature and efficient partnerships have been established in this respect. In this sense, it is not possible to talk about an exit strategy at this stage, as most likely the activities will continue in the upcoming period.

5.6 Human Rights and Gender Equality

Q 6 Has the project incorporated human rights and gender equality concerns all throughout?

SQ 6.a To what extent have gender and human rights principles and strategies, and disability inclusion, been integrated into the project design and implementation?

Finding 23: The project successfully incorporates gender equality and human rights principles across all stages and activities, and displays the potential to bring about transformative changes in this respect, while male engagement and disability inclusion remain limited.

This section focuses on the incorporation of human rights and gender equality concerns in the project, through its planning, design, implementation and other relevant stages. Having been designed, both during its first phase and its current phase, with a direct consideration of promoting GEWE in the context of Türkiye, and being based on UN Women's experience and know-how on the issue, the project successfully incorporates gender equality and human rights principles across all its stages and activities. The project embarks on with the stipulation that women's participation in the "*processes and decisions that determine their lives – at home, in public and political institutions, and in the world of work – is critical to the exercise of human rights and an essential aspect of women's empowerment and gender equality*."[88] It puts forward many significant elements to bring about transformative changes to address the root causes of gender inequalities, and to overcome in the medium to long-term the social norms, attitudes, and behaviour that would enable women to exercise leadership and participation in politics and businesses.

While the project does not have a specific focus on vulnerable groups and disability issues, most of the activities, in particular the local women aspirants/politicians trainings and purple maps, bear important implications for the inclusiveness towards these groups and for responding to their differentiated needs. The Purple Map has a special position in this respect, as it prioritizes gender-sensitive and women-friendly services and physical spaces in the cities, including the establishment of childcare and women's centers, as well as the promotion of their mobility. The integrated focus of the project, bringing forward elements ranging from GRB to gender-sensitive media practices, has a significant potential to bring about transformative

87 The Evaluation Matrix has been slightly modified after the submission of the Inception Report. With this regard, sub-questions 5.c and 5.d have been added.
88 Sida Prodoc Inception Report, p. 9

change. However, the project's approach to **male engagement** in promoting GEWE is a weakeness and further efforts are needed to ensure **disability inclusion and support for vulnerable groups**, for instance, by setting specific targets for certain activities (i.e., beneficiary trainings) for the participation of these groups.

6. Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Good Practice

6.1 Conclusions

This section brings together the final conclusions on the evaluation of the project 'Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Leadership in Political and Business Life', based on the data and information from secondary resources as well as the KIIs and FGDs with the stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Conclusion 1 – based on findings 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 on Relevance

The Project is highly relevant to international norms and practices, national priorities and policies of Turkish government and the needs, demands and priorities of the beneficiaries and stakeholders. The examination of the project documents as well as the international norms and the national strategy documents indicate that there is a strong relevance of the project to the needs and priorities of the country as well as the stakeholders and beneficiaries. The project is multidimensional in terms of its objectives, outcomes and outputs. The stakeholders range from municipalities to the EOC, from candidates in local elections to media officers, from local entrepreneurs to business organizations. The project has aimed to address these multiple needs and priorities with a highly flexible but also experienced and knowledge based approach. This project was not only implemented in a changing political and economic environment but also had to face two major challenges of a pandemic and a major earthquake. These have led to considerable changes in the priorities and needs of women. The project has acted highly flexibly and promptly to respond to these challenges. Even though UN Women is not a field agency; it has been able to find a niche where they can be relevantly corespond to the emerging needs of the women and create an opportunity for equality and empowerment.

Conclusion 2 – based on findings 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 on Coherence

The evaluation findings confirmed that the project has created significant synergies with the interventions of UNCT, UN Women, the government and other national partners. The project is highly coherent with UN Women's Strategic Plan and triple mandate, and provides direct contributions to the implementation of UN Women's Strategic Note and UNSDCF. It successfully builds on the experience and know-how of UN Women Türkiye accumulated for more than a decade through a variety of programmes and interventions in the areas of WPP, private sector engagement and media partnerships, while also feeding into current actions. Moreover, the project is in complementarity and coordination with Government's, key partners and other actors' interventions, and many times it complements and provides further direction and guidance to existing initiatives. However, the backlash in gender equality increasingly observed in the public discourse and actions might create challenges for UN Women interventions. On the other hand, UN Women, with its leading role in the UNCT Türkiye on GEWE, could explore more opportunities for collaboration and coordination with other UN agencies through the project.

Conclusion 3 – based on findings 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 on Effectiveness

The evaluation has found that the progress towards the expected results of the project has been remarkable, but uneven across the outcomes and outputs. While significant achievements have been recorded under Outcome 1, more efforts are needed in Outcome 2 in terms of male engagement in GEWE, and in Outcome 3 in respect to making use of the full potential of the purple maps.

The main reasons for the achievement of project results involve UN Women's engagement, openness and supportive attitude, its expertise and know-how, along with its convening capacity; the flexibility deployed through the project; and the integrated approach of the project to GEWE issues. On the other hand, the main reasons for the non-achievement of results include the rapidly changing political, economic and social context of the country; time pressures; staff rotations in partner institutions; reluctance of certain individuals / groups / institutions to collaborate; insufficient coordination among activities / partners; and limited male engagement. In addition to the reasons for under-achievement, the main obstacles experienced throughout

the implementation of the project include the volatile and uncertain political context; lack of capacities and technical difficulties at the local level; and difficulties in collaborating with public institutions.

The most remarkable strategies and approaches adopted throughout the project include the effectiveness of partnerships, deployment of know-how and exercise, opportunities for networking, dialogue and socialization, innovative strategies used in response to unforeseen developments, and the various training programmes implemented.

On the other hand, limited coordination amongst stakeholders, limited engagement of men, and limited dissemination of outcomes in some cases have hindered or slowed down the progress towards achievement of results.

Overall, the project has remarkably succeeded in involving and building the capacities of the project partners and beneficiaries, including the EOC, municipalities, the private sector and civil society. Still, more efforts are needed in terms of promoting the effective monitoring and follow-up of the activities.

Conclusion 4 – based on findings 17, 18, 19, 20 on Efficiency

The evaluation points to the fact that the project team has been considerably efficient in the implementation of the project, given the unstable, economic and political conditions of Türkiye. First, in terms of human resources, it was observed that UN Women has been active in supporting its partners across the different components of the project. The open, accessible and problem-solving attitude of the project team has been emphasized by almost all the respondents. This has certainly facilitated the completion of activities and achievement of objectives. In addition, UN Women's networking capacity and ability to mobilize expertise and know-how, along with its flexible approach in the use of funds have been the particular strengths of the project.

On the other hand, sub-optimal use of resources has been observed in terms of the high number and fragmented nature of activities, jeopardizing the consistency and coherence of the project. Indeed, some of the actions pursued in the project appeared as standalone activities, not necessarily creating synergies with other actions or with the overall objectives of the project. This has lead to under-exploration of possibilities for creating synergies and exchange of know-how and experience among the stakeholders involved. Considering the fragmented nature of the project, the diversity of the activities and stakeholders the management structure was remarkably efficient for the achievement of results due to its flexibility to respond to emerging needs. However the project might benefit from a broader management framework, which would yield a more efficient use of resources and effectivity. In addition, a more flexible approach to timing would be a facilitating factor for the project partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries, considering the rapid contextual changes in the country. Finally, it should be noted that while the coordination between the project counterparts and UN Women is quite efficient, the one amongst the counterparts and stakeholders is observed as one of the weakest aspects of the project, as almost all stakeholders display a significant lack of knowledge and awareness of activities other than the ones they are involved in.

Conclusion 5 – based on findings 21, 22 on Sustainability

The partnerships established through the project, along with the engagement of expertise and know-how in the form of consultants, have led to tangible benefits for all relevant parties. However, the fact that the Project has many outputs and many activities implies that there have been a number of standalone activities such as the Gender Responsive Settlement Model Report, even though they may be expected to provide guidelines for future needs. The sustainability of each output and/ or activity varies, depending on the nature of the intervention as well as changing needs and commitments of the stakeholders. However the field research conducted for this evaluation revealed that the project has considerably increased the awareness and ownership of stakeholders and beneficiaries at all levels. This by itself is an important achievement that has a long term sustainability capacity. Perhaps the most significant impact has been on local women political aspirants who greatly benefitted from the training programme. Similarly, media sensitivity trainings provided

to the media partners have definitely increased the awareness and collective perception among the participants. Another positive and sustainable example is the partnership with the private sector through the WEPs signatory companies which are observed to have increased their awareness and focus on gender-equality issues. Furthermore, the increased awareness through the research studies conducted as part of the project are worth noting in terms of promoting its sustainability. Nevertheless, platforms for the exchange of experiences and know-how across the different Outcomes of the project are crucial to maximize the impact.

Even tough the other outputs may also have strong impact during the implementation of the project, they may experience difficulties in sustainability in future. The best example of such an outcome is the Purple Map initiative. While certain municipalities are fully using it and have long term commitment, there are others that are experiencing technical difficulties and/ or display a weaker commitment due to high staff rotation and changing priorities, particularly in the aftermath of the local elections. In addition, there are other actions such as VAWiP, digital violence and election analyses from a gender perspective that may have a wider appeal if there is more dissemination activity to support them. Overall, the Project has provided significant entry points for new gender equality issues and new pathways to enter into public agenda, through the effective partnership with the EOC. In the next phase of the Project, for scaling up and increasing the long-term impact, it would be useful to disseminate the findings of these activities, along with considering new dimensions through which they can be developed.

Conclusion 6 – based on finding 23 on Human Rights and Gender Equality

Having been designed with a direct consideration of promoting GEWE in the context of Türkiye, and being based on UN Women's experience and know-how on the issue, the project successfully incorporates gender equality and human rights principles across all its stages and activities. The project team as well as all the stakeholders have significant knowledge on gender mainstreaming and can implement the project with a gender sensitive perspective and inclusive approach. The project, therefore, displays high potential to bring about transformative changes in this respect, while male engagement remains limited. On the other hand, inclusion of disability and other vulnerabilities also need to be further developed in the upcoming stages.

To sum up, the project was very highly relevant to the international norms, UN strategy documents as well as the needs of the beneficiaries. Despite the increasing backlash in gender equality characterizing the public institutions, UN Women, as the key GEWE partner in UNCT, has been able to build complementary relations with the Turkish government and provide guidance to many actions and interventions. The general political situation in the country and the uneven attitude of the public to gender equality has led to some minor non-acheivements in the project. However, the project had remarkable success in building the capacities of various stakeholders and beneficiaries, including the EOC, municipalites, civil society and the private sector. One key concern, one the other hand, is the fragmented nature of the project, which bears the risk to lead to inconsistencies and problems in using resources. Still, the flexible, open and accessible attitude of UN Women Türkiye CO has helped overcome such hindrerances and enabled an efficient and coherent implementation. As for all such projects coming to an end, the question of sustainability of the outcomes and outputs bears particular significance. Even though the long-term commitment of the partners is uneven, the project has provided significant entry points for new ideas and innovative actions, such as WEPs center of excellence and digital violence, for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.The most important contribution of the project is certainly the reitaration the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment as an utmostly significant dimension of human rights.

6.2 Lessons Learned

Lessons learned through the implementation of this project are:

Lesson 1: Potential sustainability has to be assessed prior to inception, duly considering the multiplicity of factors that can potentially affect sustainability.

Based on findings 8, 13, 22

Special attention should be devoted to the analysis of the potential long term sustainability of the upcoming phase(s) of the project. This would entail that a specific assessment of the factors that may affect sustainability is undertaken at the outset of any project or, better, at the project planning stage, therefore before actual implementation starts. Such an assessment should take into consideration the specific political climate that, in countries like Türkiye, is highly important for the sustainability of outputs and outcomes in the realm of gender equality and women's empowerment. In addition, personnel turnover in stakeholders' management and administration positions, as well as the (lack of) technical (mostly digital) capacity of the stakeholders are other important elements for which relevant mitigation measures should be defined during project preparation.

Lesson 2: Male engagement needs to be given more attention as it fosters the scaling-up of outcomes, leading to broader transformative changes.

Based on findings 9, 12b, 13, 23

Involving men can help scaling-up outcomes.One of the major contributions of UN Women in empowering women has been its strong appeal to involve men, for instance in such initiatives as the HeforShe action. This has been further enhanced by WEPs in the private sector. Another significant action promoting male engagement is Gender Responsive Budgeting, which has been carried out in the National parliament, EOC, and the commission on planning and budgeting.Considering the still strong domination of men in all power offices, including the private sector, the active engagement of men needs to be purposely pursued if the intention is to reach transformative change, improving the project's impact and leading to spillover effects.

Lesson 3: Limiting the number of outputs can be crucial for deepening the impact.

Based on findings 12,17,18

The project was originally designed to support the UN Women Strategic Note, and it was then transformed into a standalone project, which explains its encompassing nature, diversity and occasional disconnection among its major activities. This has led to significant challenges in terms of ensuring the coherence of the activities undertaken, as noted particularly during two major emergency situations, i.e. COVID-19 and the 2023 earthquakes. While the actions adopted in these periods indicate UN Women's flexibility, their standalone nature has somehow hindered the achievement of higher impact and durable outcomes. Reducing the number of activities can thus allow more deepening and more impact-oriented projects, which would further improve the visibility of UN Women in GEWE advocacy.

Lesson 4: Promoting actions involving and appealing to all political spectrums and political parties is important to address common problems.

Based on finding 14

Not all political parties have the same approach to women's problems and empowerment, and some may be even reluctant to participate in activities such as training of women candidates. This does not only limit the number of participants but also may violate the legitimacy of the activity. Mechanisms to integrate different actions so as to have a wider appeal should be considered. For example, participants from Samsun

municipality training highlighted that starting a dialogue among participants from different political parties has been productive as gender inequalities in politics is a common issue.

Lesson 5: Dissemination is always important to ensure the project's sustainability.

Based on the overall dissemination strategy of the project

Although UN Women is visible in the project, stakeholders have not been very effective in disseminating the results of the project's activities, thus affecting the project's sustainability. On the contrary, through dissemination, good practices and lessons learned can be shared, leading to strengthened awareness and thus a more fertile environment for future similar activities. Dissemination should be considered as a multidimensional task. It is oriented toward the public and stakeholders but it should also be used as a dialogue mechanism among different stakeholders/ beneficiaries of the project. Dissemination of the project's outputs to be modeled as best practices can be required from the stakeholders when ending their activity.

6.3 Good Practices

- **Training of women candidates**

Women in Türkiye are underrepresented in all political positions, but specifically in local politics. Therefore, training women in local politics is highly relevant to the women's needs and empowerment, thus representing a best practice of the project, from its design to its implementation. The design started through international collaboration, with an international expert who shared experience, good practices, documents, and a manual for training. This was followed by a collaborative activity with experts of political communication in Türkiye who eventually conducted the trainings of local women politicians. This activity helped the adaptation of the manual to Turkish political culture and political system. The trainings were facilitated by an NGO specialized in women's political participation. The trainers were highly qualified, and the candidates were recruited from various parties and regions in Türkiye. Online and face-to-face trainings in different locations, enabled the participation of women from different backgrounds. This activity is a good practice as it used mixed methodology (digital and face-to-face), it adapted international accumulation of knowledge to the National system and culture, it reached and engaged diversified groups in the trainings, and it is in line with both Türkiye's and UN Women's priorities.

- **Training of media on gender sensitivity**

Training of media on gender-sensitive reporting and writing can be considered a good practice to be replicated in other media outlets and social media as it targeted media staff with some awareness of gender equality who, however, could not systematize and/or apply their knowledge. The training favoured community pressure, collective understanding and checks system in the newspapers. This kind of actions thus may lead to a sustainable culture of equality in the media outlet concerned.

- **Introduction of a new entry point in promoting gender equality and collaboration with the National Parliament**

New technologies and global conditions lead to new gendered problems, on which decision-makers need to be sensitized, in addition to classical problems such as violence against women. Indeed, new issues such as digital violence are relatively less known although common among women, especially women politicians, as they are exposed to visibility in public life. UN Women, by introducing digital violence to the EOC and women members of parliament, has been innovative. As it is a new and less researched area, the published report, and the following seminars have also been very useful. Introducing and presenting a new dimension to a high-level partner that leads to high-level ownership can be considered a good practice.

- **Flexibility in response to crisis**

Two crises impacted the project's implementation. The first is the COVID-19, which started during the previous phase of the project but continued during the implementation of the current phase. The second is the 6 February 2023 earthquake. Even though UN Women Türkiye does not have a field service unit, it has been remarkably flexible in adapting to both emergencies. COVID-19 changed the structure of work-life significantly. Many workplaces, especially in the private sector, could not adapt to the new situation with a gender-sensitive approach. The Gender Responsive Crisis Management Guideline and Monitoring Tool provided by UN Women represent an impressive guide for the private sector, especially for WEP signatories. A more important example of good practice can be seen in the response to the earthquake. There are two interventions to be noted in this respect. The first is the Gender Responsive Settlement Model Report, which indicates the importance of gender-sensitivity in establishing temporary settlement areas. Another intervention, which is also in line with the 12th National Development Plan target 728.5, activated a tripartite collaboration between UN Women, the Business Women's Association (KAGİDER), a digital marketing platform (Hepsi Burada), and women entrepreneurs in the earthquake region. Through this activity, women entrepreneurs learned about marketing techniques, were given expert advice on issues related to production, and could reach markets. This can be considered as a model to be emulated and replicated for women's empowerment.

7. Recommendations

The recommendations below are based on the evaluation findings derived from the desk review, stakeholders interviews, and focus group discussions with end beneficiaries, as well as feedback from the UN Women and Sida teams. They are addressed to all stakeholders, specifically the UN Women team.

Recommendation 1 on women's participation in politics

Priority	**High**	**Timeframe**	**Medium**
Impact	**High**	**Difficulty**	**High**

Based on findings 1, 2, 3 **Target: UN Women, UNCT, Sida**

R1. UN Women should continue and reinforce its support to women's political participation in Türkiye.

Specific suggested actions to support the achievement of R1 include:

- The resources and attention of UN Women should be mainly directed toward **local politics**, in consideration of the limited available resources and the increasing, despite still insufficient, participation of women within the National Parliament.
- Specifically, the **trainings** of the local women aspirants/politicians should continue and should be supported by **online resources**, with existing materials adapted to Türkiye's specific conditions, which may have a wider appeal and sustainability.
- **CSOs should be supported** in increasing the awareness of political parties and the public on the importance of women representatives in local politics.
- Mechanisms for **regular communication and exchange of data/information** should be promoted with all political parties, and all should be encouraged to be involved in project activities.

Recommendation 2 on women's leadership in business.

Priority	**High**	**Timeframe**	**Medium**
Impact	**High**	**Difficulty**	**Medium**

Based on findings 3, 18 **Target: UN Women, WEP signatories, business organisations**

R2. UN Women should continue supporting the private sector in promoting women's leadership in business, leveraging on the project's track record of successful activities, including the HeForShe campaign.

Specific suggested actions to support the achievement of R2 include:

- The private sector should be approached as a **transformative partner**, and their ownership of gender equality and women's empowerment principles should be promoted through support to company strategies and organization. This could include assigning **focal points within WEP signatory companies** and keeping regular contact with them.
- The monitoring of and support for the WEP signatory companies should be strengthened through an **independent consultation mechanism**. Friendly business associations should be encouraged to provide those support mechanisms.

- The firms included within the WEPs Implementation Advisory Services should be encouraged to form a **network to share experience, expertise, and best practices**. A UN Women permanent consultant can be included within this network to provide support for companies in putting the principles in action, establishing an effective monitoring mechanism for participant companies, and thus improving the sustainability of the action.
- The WEPs Center of Excellence should be finalized and established as a **coordination platform** to provide guidance, support, and mentorship to WEPs signatory companies. The Center should be considered an independent center (to be formed in collaboration with different stakeholders, including UN Global Compact, KAGİDER and other similar CSOs, universities, and research centers) with close connections with the private sector and experience in providing marketing, public relations, finance, and monitoring support.
- Efforts should be promoted to **reach out to smaller enterprises, SMEs, and women entrepreneurs** to trickle down and disseminate WEPs through social media campaigns and outreach activities, benefitting from the best practice examples and networks of the large companies participating in the project.

Recommendation 3 on increasing coordination with and amongst project stakeholders.

Priority	**Medium**	**Timeframe**	**Medium**
Impact	**Medium**	**Difficulty**	**Low**

Based on findings 6, 8, 15, 21 **Target: UN Women, UNCT**

R3. In the next phase of the project, a networking mechanism should be established where stakeholders from different components of the project can regularly gather together, preferably face to face, sharing experiences, best practices, problems, and related solutions, and promoting mutual learning processes and synergies to improve participation, visibility, and dissemination.

Specific suggested actions to support the achievement of R3 include:

- Ensure **diversity of participants** to guarantee diversity of actions, interests, opinions, and approaches.
- A **virtual networking mechanism,** open and available for all the stakeholders, should also be established, where **UN women staff** may be involved, containing Q&A, best practice sharing, and problem-solving sessions. This will be time and energy-saving for UN Women staff as there may be some shared issues that will be answered collectively. This will also enable wider use of the outputs by different stakeholders and help eliminate the problem of underuse of the outputs of some activities.

Recommendation 4 on sustainability and ownership.

Priority	**High**	**Timeframe**	**Medium**
Impact	**High**	**Difficulty**	**High**

Based on findings 19, 20, 22 **Target: UN Women, UNCT, Donors**

R4. The sustainability of the project and its ownership by the stakeholders after UN Women's involvement ends is crucial. The sustainability aspect should be considered and ensured starting from the early phases of the project and throughout the implementation.

Specific suggested actions to support the achievement of R4 include:

- At the inception stage, the long-term commitment of the stakeholders and the resources to be used have to be secured.
- The stakeholders should ensure a **long-term commitment** to the project through integrating the outcomes of the project into their regular internal information sharing and/or training systems.

- Starting from the design of the project, the stakeholders and partners should concentrate on establishing a **reporting system** that is based on quality impact, both quantifying the results and recording qualitative impacts.
- The stakeholders should also be encouraged to share their outputs so that others can **replicate and/or emulate** them. They should think of their role as an ongoing dissemination activity.

Recommendation 5 on scale and integration.

Priority	**High**	**Timeframe**	**Short**
Impact	**High**	**Difficulty**	**Low**

Based on Findings 6, 13 **Targets: UN Women, Donors**

R5. Since long-term impacts of small-scale projects can be limited, UN Women should design policy-oriented projects to ensure high-impact, which will make an imprint of the organization on gender equality and human rights in Türkiye.

Specific suggested actions to support the achievement of R5 include:

- UN Women should increase **its efforts to be innovative in the content and implementation of its projects**, integrating more up-to-date technologies and emerging issues, thus introducing new dimensions of gender equality. This perspective will secure the interest and participation of the **younger population** on the gender-related issues of the new global digital era. This may involve more projects with digital components, such as the continuation of digital violence and the outcomes and remedies of environmental problems.
- UN Women should design **more integrated projects** rather than standalone activities to have a higher impact and visibility but also to create further synergies.

Recommendation 6 on UN Women's role.

Priority	**High**	**Timeframe**	**Medium**
Impact	**High**	**Difficulty**	**Medium**

Based on findings 7, 9, 10, 12, 15, 24 **Targets: UN Women, UNCT, public partners, CSOs**

R6. UN Women should leverage on its recognized comparative advantage in designing and implementing projects / programmes / advocacy activities aiming to advance GEWE in Türkiye. The organization should capitalize on its capacity and know-how, facilitate the participation of stakeholders from all sections of society, and further strengthen its influence on the policy-making processes.

Specific suggested actions to support the achievement of R6 include:

- UN Women should take a more **prominent role in the policy-making process**, availing of its leverage and network with governmental (i.e., EOC), non-governmental and private sector actors, and expanding its direct **collaboration with political parties**, particularly their women and youth branches, in order to disseminate its activities to a broader spectrum, as well as to promote the exchange of data and information with them.
- The organization should increase its **advocacy efforts** to turn its activities and projects into permanent policies to secure sustainability and achieve tangible outputs on the promotion of GEWE.
- UN Women should adopt more **flexible and accommodating processes** to secure the full participation and capacity of all stakeholders, particularly CSOs with limited administrative capacity and the private sector that is used to moving fast with fewer bureaucratic procedures.

Recommendation 7 on inclusion of wide range of stakeholders

Priority	**High**	**Timeframe**	**Medium**
Impact	**High**	**Difficulty**	**Medium**

Based on forward-looking strategy documents of UN system and up to date gender literature

Target: UN Women, UNCT, public partners, CSOs

R7. UN Women should increase efforts to include all relevant stakeholders while pursuing the objective of promoting gender equality.

Specific suggested action to support the achievement of R7 include:

- More focus should be placed on increasing the **involvement of men at all levels** since UN Women has been one of the pioneering agencies that involved men in promoting gender equality. As gender equality means equality of all gender groups, it has to be understood and internalized by all sexes. The present phase has been limited in terms of encouraging male involvement, while men's inclusion and involvement are important as they are the main gatekeepers and decision-makers. Particular attention should be given to **male politicians** at both central and local levels through awareness-raising activities, as well as disseminating the research studies and outcomes of the project to male politicians. This will to contribute to the change of mindsets in the longer-term, which is needed to promote gender equality in society.
- Gender equality and sensitivity should be promoted in all sections of the society, **including youth**. Projects that address youth and focus on new and emerging areas of inequality are important. Being innovative is necessary to attract youth, and digital technology can always be of significant help to this end.

Recommendation 8 on new technologies and media

Priority	**Medium**	**Timeframe**	**Medium**
Impact	**High**	**Difficulty**	**Medium**

Based on findings 12, 22 **Target: UN Women**

R8: UN Women should adapt to new trends and innovative technologies to reach a broader audience. Expanding media partnerships to engage a wider range of platforms and integrate digital components across projects can increase awareness on new forms of violence and discrimination (i.e. digital violence) and enhance dissemination across different stakeholders.

Specific suggested actions to support the achievement of R8 include:

- UN Women should strengthen and expand its **partnership with the media**, including new media outlets and platforms (e.g. social media) in order to promote transformative changes.
- As many projects in the recent decade are using **digital technologies**, the digital capacity of the stakeholders should also be assessed and strenghtened if necessary.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 Bibliography

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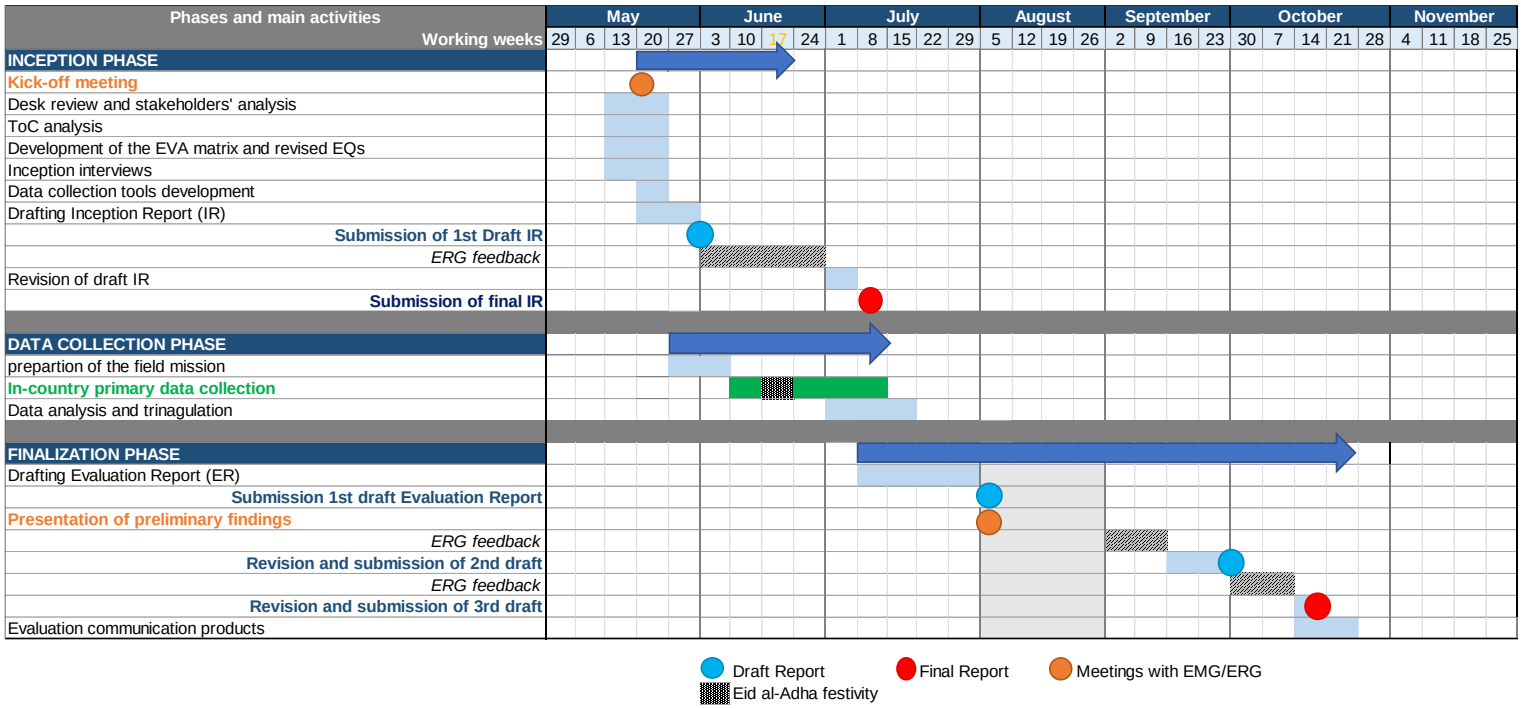
Annex 2 List of participants in individual interviews and FGDs

Institution	City
UN Women	Ankara
UN Women	Ankara
UN Women	Ankara
UN Women	Ankara
UN Women	Ankara
UN Women	Ankara
Embassy of Sweden, Sida	Ankara
EOC	Ankara
EOC	Ankara
EOC	Ankara
Ka.DER	İstanbul
Kadın Koalisyonu	Ankara
Kadın Koalisyonu	Ankara
KAGİDER	Istanbul
Eskişehir MM (Metropolitan Municipality)	Eskisehir
Eskişehir MM	Eskisehir
Eskişehir MM	Eskisehir
Eskişehir MM	Eskisehir
Eskişehir MM	Eskisehir
Adana MM	Eskisehir
Gaziantep MM	Gaziantep
Ankara MM	Ankara
Ankara MM	Ankara
Ankara MM	Ankara
Istanbul MM	Istanbul
Istanbul MM	Istanbul
Istanbul MM	Istanbul
Istanbul MM	Istanbul
Istanbul MM	Istanbul

Bursa MM	Bursa
Bursa MM	Bursa
Expert	Istanbul
Expert	Istanbul
Expert	Eskisehir
Expert	Ankara
Expert	Brüksel
Yeryüzü Kalkınma Kooperatifi	Ankara
TESEV	Istanbul
ILLAC	Londra
Milliyet	Istanbul
Türk Traktör	Ankara
Hepsiburada	Istanbul
Şişecam	Istanbul
Yeşilova Holding	Bursa
TÜSİAD	Istanbul
Academics/ KADER trainer	Istanbul
KADER, internal evaluation expert	Ankara
Academics / KADER trainer	Istanbul

List of Participants (FGDs)	
Participants	**Number of participants**
Istanbul Municipality Staff	8
Participants of KADER Trainning	6
Participants of Milliyet Trainning	6

Annex 3 Detailed Evaluation timeline



Annex 4 Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
Relevance	1. Is the design of the project and its results relevant to national and international strategies, UN Women priorities, and needs and priorities of target groups?	a. Was the choice of interventions relevant to the situation of the target group?	Existence of women rights situation analysis and needs assessment document(s), and/or country context analysis (at the stage of the project design), having women rights lenses (identifying the specifics for different groups of beneficiaries), taking into account good practices. Evidence that thorough needs assessments have informed project design Degree to which the project implementers took into account at all stages of implementation (onset and adjustment milestones) the diversity of beneficiaries' needs - with a special focus on gender dimension, country context, and the impacts of 2023 earthquake. Perceptions of the stakeholders on the relevance of project activities for target groups. Existence of gender-related goals/targets and commitments in national development plans and strategies. Existence of appropriate and evidence-based linkages to	Project documentation Research and studies conducted on the issue Project / Programme team at UN Women Project stakeholders Project beneficiaries	Desk review Inception meetings KIIs FGDs
		b. To what extent is the project consistent with national development strategies in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment?			

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
			national targets in the project documents. Perceptions of project stakeholders on the consistency with national targets / priorities.		
		c. To what extent has the project been catalytic in addressing some of the root causes of inequalities related to women's leadership in politics and private sector?	Project document presents SMART objectives, which key stakeholders regarded as a reference to track changes and achievements. The Project document outlines a ToC clearly explaining the intervention logic and causal pathways among its different components and levels. Perceptions of project stakeholders on the successes and challenges of the project.		
		d. To what extent is the project aligned with international agreements and conventions on gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of women's leadership?	Existence of appropriate and evidence-based linkages to international standards in the project documents. The extent to which the country reports of relevant international bodies have been taken as reference in the project documents. Existence of a clear analysis of UN Women strengths and contributions in project		

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
		e. To what extent does the UN Women possess the comparative advantage in the project's area of work in comparison with other UN entities and key partners in Türkiye? f. To what extent has the project been flexible to adapt to the changes in the political and economic context of the country?	documents in relation to the UN priorities in Türkiye. Perceptions of project stakeholders on the advantages of working with UN Women, its expertise and support. Strategies in place for addressing identified challenges in promoting participation of women in politics and private sector. Perceptions of stakeholders that the project addressed changes in needs/priorities in context, particularly following the earthquake and economic pressures.		
Coherence	2. Does the project create synergies with the interventions of UNCT, UN Women the government and other national partners?	a. To what extent does the project fit within UN Women's Strategic Plan and interrelated threefold mandate? b. Are there any synergies and inter-linkages between the project and other interventions of UN Women?	Existence of clear linkages indicating that the project objectives are aligned with, and supportive of the UN Women's priority commitments on women's rights and international development in project documents. Existence of clear linkages to other UN Women interventions and analyses of complementarities in project documents.	Project documentation UN Women and UNCT agreements and strategic documents National plans and strategies	Desk review Inception meetings KIIs FGDs

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
			Perceptions of UN Women Programme Teams and stakeholders		
		c. To what extent the project is in complementarity, harmonisation and coordination with the interventions of other actors' interventions in the same context?	Existence of clear linkages to interventions of other actors and analyses of complementarities in project documents Evidence that UN Women regularly collects feedback from relevant stakeholders Perceptions of stakeholders on the complementarity and coordination of the project with their activities.		
		d. To what extent the implementation of project ensures synergies and coordination with Government's and key partners relevant efforts while avoiding duplications?	Information sharing and/or coordination mechanisms in place to exchange knowledge/ experience/best practices Degree to which UN Women and other stakeholders have taken steps to create synergies and align with respective policies and programmes on women's rights, during the project life cycle. Degree to which this can be attributed to the existence of the project. Mechanisms in place /actions taken to improve coordination		

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
			and complementarity with external partners/actors. Evidence of joint planning processes (UN Women, UN CT) to align priorities/ objectives related to the project. Joint initiatives by UN Women and other UN agencies related to GEWE.		
		e. To what extent are the interventions achieving synergies with the work of the UN Country Team?			
		f. To what extent does the project contribute to the implementation of UN Women's Strategic Note and UNSDCF?	Existence of clear linkages to UN Women Strategic Note and UNSDCF in project documents Perceptions of UN Women Project Team		
Effectiveness	3. Has the Project successfully achieved its expected results and objectives?	a. To what extent have the expected results of the project been achieved on both outcome and output levels?	Degree to which the project has or is expected to deliver on its outcomes and outputs; to be assessed by: 1.Evidence for strengthened legislative frameworks and arrangements that promote gender balance in elections and decision-making bodies (Outcome 1) 1.1 Analysis of legal and policy framework from a gender lens (Output 1.1) 1.2 Evidence on advocacy by CSOs on draft legal amendments package (Output 1.2) 1.3 Research study on VAW in Politics (Output 1.3)	Project documentation Project / Programme team at UN Women Project stakeholders Project beneficiaries	Desk review Inception meetings KIIs FGDs

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
			1.4 Review of election process from a gender perspective (Output 1.4) 2.Evidence of support for the establishment of a cadre of diverse women political and business leaders (Outcome 2) 2.1 Evidence of training and capacity-building programmes for local women aspirants (Output 2.1) 2.2 Evidence of networking and peer-to-peer learning activities for this purpose (Output 2.2) 2.3 Evidence of capacity-building trainings for media students and professionals (Output 2.3, 2.4) 2.4 Number of companies signed and/or strengthened in the implementation of WEPs (Output 2.5) 2.5 Number of project activities targeting males, aiming to raise awareness on women's leadership (Output 2.6) 3.Existence/ evidence for the development of gender responsive plans and budgets at municipalities (Outcome 3) 3.1 Evidence for capacity-development activities held for municipalities (Output 3.1) 3.2 Formation / launch of gender sensitive social risk maps at selected municipalities		

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
		b. What are the reasons for the achievement or non-achievement of the project results?	Stated reasons in Project documents (i.e. progress reports) Perceptions of UN Women Programme Teams and stakeholders on the reasons of non-achievement Degree to which and reasons for activities to have been changed. Extent to which changes helped in achieving the project's objectives and intended results – including any differential results across various groups of beneficiaries. Degree to which and reasons why the achievement or non-achievement of the project objectives and intended results can be attributed to other reasons or external factors.		
		c. Has the project achieved any unforeseen results, either positive or negative? For whom? What are the good practices and the	Assessment of unforeseen results through KIIs and project documents Perceptions of UN Women Programme Teams and stakeholders on the unforeseen results, and their evaluations on the reasons		

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
		obstacles or shortcomings encountered? How were they overcome?	Analysis of strategies and approaches as they have been put forward by project documents Perceptions of UN Women Programming Teams and stakeholders on strategies used		
		d. How effective have the selected strategies and approaches been in achieving project results?	Perceptions of stakeholders on the contribution of the project to the development of their capacities		
		e. How well did the intervention succeed in involving and building the capacities of rights-holders, duty-bearers, as well as the project partners? f. Has the project had effective monitoring mechanisms in place to measure progress towards results?	Existence of regular coordination and M&E mechanisms between UN Women, implementing partners and other stakeholders Regular reporting of progress, also by partners / stakeholders Responsible in-house M&E unit / contact person for the project Pre- and post-tests for trainings, seminars and other relevant activities Results as reported periodically by UN Women Evidence of good practices in project documents		

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
			Perceptions of UN Women Programming Teams and project stakeholders on good practices		
		g. What types of innovative good practices have been introduced in the project for the achievement of GEWE results?			
Efficiency	4. Has the project implementation and management been efficient?	a. Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outcomes?	The extent to which financial, human and technical resources were translated into results at the outcome and output level Extent to which human and financial resources were used fully and appropriately as originally planned Extent to which human and financial resources were redirected to new needs emerging from changing context Extent to which project management was successful in addressing and managing emerging risks Extent to which obstacles were overcome and delays were mitigated by project management Extent to which the project was implemented within planned	Project documentation Project / Programme team at UN Women Project stakeholders	Desk review Inception meetings KIIs FGDs
		b. To what extent does the management structure of the intervention support efficiency for implementation and achievement of results?			

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
		c. Have the outputs been delivered in a timely manner? d. Is the coordination between the project counterparts and UN Women leading to better project results?	timeframe, meeting specified milestones and targets. Extent to which the original time frame was appropriate and realistic Extent to which the timeframe was adjusted to changing context during implementation Degree to which the project activities have been carried out in coordination, through regular contact between UN Women and stakeholders, and among different stakeholders.		
Sustainability	5. Has the project achieved sustainable outcomes and widespread impact?	a. What has been the overall impact of the project?	Extent to which the project caused significant change in the lives of the target groups / beneficiaries Extent to which the project has led to transformative effects (i.e. changes in gender norms, practices, systems). Degree to which there are measures linked to policy areas relevant to the project that are under development. Extent to which the target groups have benefitted from the project interventions.	Project documentation Project / Programme team at UN Women Project stakeholders Project beneficiaries	Desk review Inception meetings KIIs FGDs

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
		b. What is the likelihood that the benefits from the project will be maintained for a reasonably long period of time after the project phase out?	Extent to which the intervention succeeded in building individual and institutional capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers Extent to which UN Women has been able to establish relevant partnerships with key stakeholders in the programming, implementation and policy advocacy processes Extent to which the project generated national and local ownership of the results Extent to which steps were taken to develop and/or reinforce the operating capacities of in-country partners during the implementation of the project Extent to which the project has been able to promote replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices		
		c. To what extent has the project been able to promote replication and/or up-scaling of successful practices? d. To what extent has the exit strategy been well-planned and successfully implemented?	Existence of a well-planned exit strategy which would ensure the continuation of positive effects Degree to which potential risks and opportunities in sustaining the results beyond the current project have been identified are being – respectively – mitigated or exploited.		

Evaluation Criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions	Indicators	Data Sources	Data Collection Methods
Human Rights and Gender Equality	6. Did the project incorporated human rights and gender equality concerns all throughout?	a. To what extent has gender and human rights principles and strategies been integrated into the project design and implementation?	Evidence of gender assessment in the planning and implementation. Evidence of meaningful inclusion of women at the different stages of the project life cycle (design; implementation; and monitoring). Evidence of human rights and non-discrimination principles taken into account during all stages and activities Evidence of disability inclusion criteria in the different stages of the project	Project documentation Project / Programme team at UN Women Project stakeholders Project beneficiaries	Desk review Inception meetings KIIs FGDs

Annex 5 Main Evaluation Tools (e.g.: Questionnaires; Forms; etc).

5.1. Interview guidelines for experts

Introduction	
	Could you please introduce yourself and tell us about the work you do in your organization, along with the activities you have been involved within the scope of the Project?
	What was your role in the Project? Are you a permanent staff member in this organization, or were you recruited for this specific intervention?
	How did you get involved with this Project? Did you reach UN Women, or did they approach you? Did you have a role in the planning/design of the Project? At what stage of the Project have you become part of it?
	Could you tell us about your collaboration with UN Women? Did you find their approach reliable and flexible for your specific needs?
	In your opinion, to what extent were gender and human rights principles and strategies integrated into project design and implementation?
Relevance	Could you elaborate on the extent to which the Project and its activities correspond to Türkiye's needs in terms of women's empowerment?
	Do you think the Project addresses the root causes of inequalities related to women's leadership in politics and the private sector?
	Was the project executed in a timely manner to meet the needs of your partners/ beneficiaries and the target groups?
	Do you think the Project has been affected by the larger social, political and economic context during its implementation? (Covid, earthquake, elections, economic hardships, etc.) Was the Project flexible enough to respond to the changing context? Has there been any major changes in its objectives / activities?
	How do you evaluate UN Women's role in the Project? What are the main advantages/disadvantages of the organization in terms of the focus area of the Project compared to other UN agencies and partners in Türkiye?
	Could you elaborate on the extent to which the Project and its activities correspond to Türkiye's needs in terms of women's empowerment?
	Do you think the Project addresses the root causes of inequalities related to women's leadership in politics and the private sector?
Coherence	Have you been informed about other activities within the project? Were you expected to have interaction with other components? If yes: Did you benefit from such an interaction ?
	Do your other activities align with this project?
	Did/ do you carry out any Project / activities complementary to this one? Could you tell us about those? In what way was this complementary? Did UN Women support it?
Effectiveness	To what extent do you think the Project has achieved its expected results? What do you think are the reasons for achievement / non-achievement of the results?
	Could you tell us about any good practice / success story emerging out of the Project?
	Have you experienced any major challenges / obstacles / resistance during the implementation of the Project? Could you tell us about those? What did you do to address / overcome those?
	Have you experienced any unexpected outcomes? Did you get help from UN Women in mitigating them? Did you find their interventions helpful?
Impact	Have you reached any tangible results after the project? (any numbers, any products, etc.)
	Has the Project had any major contribution to your personal career?
	Do you feel that your capacity has been enhanced as a result of taking part in this project? **Do you think that the stakeholders that you were involved within this Project will benefit from this activity?**

	Do you think it may be used as a good example to be emulated by other institutions?
Efficiency	What level / type of strategic, technical and expert support was provided by UN Women during the implementation phase?
	Were there any monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place? What methods were used for monitor and evaluation?
	Did you have a smooth relationship?
	Did your demands reasonably responded?
Sustainability	To what extent do you think the project benefits will be maintained after the project phases out? Do you think the material and capacities developed will be used in other activities?
	To what extent did the project intervention succeed in building both individual and institutional capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers to ensure the sustainability of benefits and more inclusive practices in the targeted organizations?
	Do you think other international / national bodies will see this intervention as a good practice and replicate?
	Do you think your beneficiaries will continue implementing the capacity built here in their other activities?
	After implementing this project, to what extent have the beneficiaries acquired a more gender-sensitive outlook?
	Have you used this outcome in other projects you are involved with ? What are your future plans?
	What would be your recommendations for improvement for the upcoming phase of the Project?

Annex 5.2. Interview guidelines for institutional stakeholders

Introduction	Could you please introduce yourself and tell us about the work you do in your organization, along with the activities you have been involved within the scope of the Project?
	What was your role in the Project? Are you a permanent staff member in this organization, or were you recruited for this specific intervention?
	How did your institution get involved with this Project? Did you reach UN Women, or did they approach you? How did you decide to execute/partner with the project? Did you have a role in the planning/design of the Project? At what stage of the Project have you become part of it?
	Could you tell us about your collaboration with UN Women? Did you find their approach reliable and flexible for your specific needs?
	In your opinion, to what extent were gender and human rights principles and strategies integrated into project design and implementation?
Relevance	Could you elaborate on the extent to which the Project and its activities correspond to Türkiye's needs in terms of women's empowerment?
	Could you elaborate on the extent to which the Project and its activities correspond to your needs as a partner/beneficiary?
	Do you think the Project addresses the root causes of inequalities related to women's leadership in politics and the private sector?
	Was there a needs assessment available before the project was designed and implemented?
	Was the project executed in a timely manner to meet the needs of your partners/ beneficiaries and the target groups?
	Do you think the Project has been affected by the larger social, political and economic context during its implementation? (Covid, earthquake, elections, economic hardships, etc.) Was the Project flexible enough to respond to the changing context? Has there been any major changes in its objectives / activities?
	How do you evaluate UN Women's role in the Project? What are the main advantages/disadvantages of the organization in terms of the focus area of the Project compared to other UN agencies and partners in Türkiye?
Coherence	Does the project align with your institution's (and/or country's) strategic plan and priorities?
	Do your other activities align with this project?
	Did/ do you carry out any Project / activities complementary to this one? Could you tell us about those? In what way was this complementary? Did UN Women support it? Were you informed about the other activities in the project and were you able to develop networks? If yes; did this networking lead to synergies?
Effectiveness	To what extent do you think the Project has achieved its expected results? What do you think are the reasons for achievement / non-achievement of the results?
	Do your other activities align with this project?
	Did/ do you carry out any Project / activities complementary to this one? Could you tell us about those? In what way was this complementary? Did UN Women support it?
	To what extent do you think the Project has achieved its expected results? What do you think are the reasons for achievement / non-achievement of the results?
	Could you tell us about any good practice / success story emerging out of the Project?
	Have you experienced any major challenges / obstacles / resistance during the implementation of the Project? Could you tell us about those? What did you do to address / overcome those?
	Have you experienced any unexpected outcomes? Did you get help from UN Women in mitigating them? Did you find their interventions helpful?
Impact	Have you reached any tangible results after the project? (any numbers, any products, etc.)

	Has the Project had any major contribution to your organization?
	Do you feel that your capacity has been enhanced as a result of taking part in this project?
Efficiency	What level / type of strategic, technical and expert support was provided by UN Women during the implementation phase?
	Were there any monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place? What methods were used to monitor and evaluate the change in the capacities/expertise of the trained personnel and beneficiaries in terms of mainstreaming and adapting gender equality to the policies and day-to-day work?
	In your opinion, what has been the nature of the involvement of the UN women's team in implementing this project? Have you suggested alterations to the project during the inception or implementation phase? Did you get a reasonable response to your suggestions?
Sustainability	To what extent do you think the project benefits will be maintained after the project phases out? Do you think the material and capacities developed will be used in other activities? Do you have plans to disseminate this capacity to other relevant organizations?
	To what extent did the project intervention succeed in building both individual and institutional capacities of rights-holders and duty-bearers to ensure the sustainability of benefits and more inclusive practices in the targeted organizations?
	To what extent did the establishment of partnerships with relevant stakeholders and developing target groups' capacities ensure the sustainability of the efforts and benefits?
	Do you think your beneficiaries will continue to implement the capacity built here in their other activities?
	After implementing this project, to what extent have the beneficiaries (such as the staff that has taken the trainings) acquired a more gender-sensitive outlook?
	How have you disseminated your outcomes? What are your future plans? Will you be able to use the capacity acquired in this project for building new partnerships?
	What would be your recommendations for improvement for the upcoming phase of the Project?

Annex 5.3 Focus Group Discussion Guidelines

Focus group guidelines for local political leadership trainees

Baseline information to be collected by the assistant

1. Age
2. Education
3. Marital status
4. Number of children (if any)
5. Age of children (if any)
6. Profession
7. Employment status

-Housewife

-Retired

-Old age pensioner

-Farmer

-Self-employed

-Employed as a worker

-Employed as a professional

-Small business owner

-Business women

8. If either retired and/or housewife, have you ever been employed?
9. Are you a member of a political party? Which one? Since when?
10. If not, are you planning to be a political party member?
11. Have you ever been a candidate for any political positions?

- Sub-provincial party executive committee

- Provincial party executive committee

- National Executive Committee

- Local party leader
- Municipal council

- Mayor (sub- province and /or city)

-Member of Parliament

- Mukhtar

- Alderman

12. Have you ever participated in any civil society activity / organization? If yes, please specify which of the following:

- NGO

- Cooperative

- Women's platform

- Protest movements / organizations

- Professional associations

13. Have you ever taken a leadership role in civil society activity/ organizations?

14. How did you learn about KADER trainings?

- Through party

- Through a friend

- Through a civil society activity

- Through social media

Focus group discussion points:

1) How did you find the training? Did you find it helpful in politics/ in other social activities? Did it change your perception of political activity?

2) Has it changed your perspective on gender? Do you feel you are more gender sensitive?

3) Have you attempted to become a candidate for a political position after this training? Were you successful? Has this training been useful on your decision? Has it changed your attitude to candidacy? was it helpful in your candidacy process?

4) If you did not become a candidate why was that?

5) What would you suggest to be added to this training? What can be omitted? What kind of a future intervention on encouraging women can be done?

6)Have you developed a network during this training? do you keep your contacts have you been able to use these contacts since then?

Guidelines for local government (Purple map) participants

Baseline information to be collected by the assistant

1. Male / Female
2. What is your age?
3. What is your education?
4. What is your profession?
5. What is your position in the municipality?
6. What kind of responsibilities do you have?
    - I do the strategic planning of the infrastructure
    - I am responsible for social services
    - I am in charge of cultural activities
    - I am in charge of family and gender
    - I am in charge of transport
    - I am in charge of consumer products

- I am in charge of health
- Other

7. To whom do you report?

- Directly to the mayor
- To my director
- To my department manager
- I am independent
- I am a temporary staff in the municipality
- Other

8. Is gender/ women's rights integral to your job definition?

9. What kind of training on gender/women's rights did you participate in?

- Basic gender sensitivity training
- Gender sensitivity training designed for my position
- Gender-responsive budgeting training
- Gender sensitivity training for work-based harassment, mobbing, etc.
- Other

Focus group discussion points:

1) How did you learn about the purple map? When you heard about it, what was your opinion? Were you consulted in joining the map?
2) Did you participate in design? Could you intervene in the process? Do you find it user friendly?
3) Do you find purple map useful for the beneficiaries of the municipality? Do you find it useful for your own work? Have you used it in your work? Do you think other sections / colleagues in the municipality are using the map?
4) What kinds of problems do you see in implementation or usage of the map in the long run? What can be done to improve it?
5) Have you had any trainings for using the map? Have you had training on gender responsive budgeting? Do you find it complementary?

Focus group guidelines for media participants

Baseline information to be collected by the assistant

1)Male / Female

2) What is your age?

3) what is your education? Was gender sensitivity part of your education ?

4) what is your profession ?

5) what is your position in the newspaper ?

6) what kinds of responsibilities do you have ?

- I am a news reporter
-I am photographer
- I am responsible from page design
- I am social media operator
- I am a columnist
- I am an administrative staff
-I am a sports reporter
- other …

7) to whom do you report within the hierarchy?

8) is gender an integral part of your work ?

Focus group discussion points :

1) How was the gender and media training?
2) Did it change your perception on gender in media ?
3) Are you using what you have learned since the training? Do you feel you are more gender sensitive?
4) Is your management requiring you to be more sensitive? Do you feel the pressure to be otherwise from your superiors ?
5) Do you feel a positive impact on the image of the paper as a gender sensitive paper ?
6) Do you think you can continue this sensitivity if you move to another media body ?

Annex 6 Additional details on the Methodology

The evaluation employs a **contribution analysis** to demonstrate whether, how and why the activities implemented under the project have made a difference. The analysis focuses on assessing plausible contributions to achieving immediate and intermediary outcomes, recognising that longer-term outcomes might not be presently discernible during the implementation of the project. It is useful to note that this should be seen as not just a matter of the degree to which the project and each partner can take credit for the results achieved. Rather, this analysis directly sheds light on the role of each partner's engagement both in the support directly provided through specific activities and as an actor in the social change of the country. More specifically, assessing the **added value** of the project entails both assessing the contribution of the specific activities, and of linking these contributions to an overarching picture. In this way, a comprehensive contribution story can be investigated, set out and reported. The report focuses on untangling the actual contribution of each partner, in a context where several actors play significant roles in progress of the project towards its stated objectives.

Since quantitative data collection was deemed unfeasible for this assignment, **qualitative research** became the main route for data collection, consisting of in-depth Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) along with Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Most Significant Change (MSC) techniques to uncover the perceptions and motivations of stakeholders and beneficiaries.

In order to evaluate the project stakeholders' opinions and values, intended as observable changes which have occurred in their lives as a result of the project activities, an appreciative inquiry approach has been adopted, investigating the project's positive outcomes in order to understand and replicate them. The evaluation has thus pursued the **Most Significant Change (MSC)** method, which is a participatory tool that involves the collection of significant change stories at different levels of the project (implementing partners, experts who contributed to various knowledge production activities and ultimate beneficiaries/rights-holders at community level, i.e. women and girls) and collectively deciding with the various project stakeholders on the most significant change stories based on the impact identified by the project strategy. Collecting significant change stories provides a powerful means to obtain information on the project's outcomes from ultimate beneficiaries' experiences and viewpoints which can highlight both its strong points and weaknesses, as well as any unintended consequences.

Annex 7 Evaluation TOR

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