

## UN Women Management Response

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### Overall comments:

The evaluation of UN Women's programme "Integrating Gender Responsive Budgeting into the Aid effectiveness Agenda" generated the following outputs:

- A consolidated report of three country profiles namely: Nepal, Peru and Rwanda;
- A synthesis report of the overall evaluation of the programme.

These reports provide specific recommendations that seek to enhance relevance, effectiveness and sustainability on gender responsive budgeting and aid effectiveness programming. The recommendations will involve action at the policy level (Senior Management), the technical guidance level (the GNP Programme Team in HQ), the implementation and oversight levels (respective country and regional offices) and the operational level (programme management and operations teams). The evaluation report has identified many strengths and good practices in UN Women's programming on GRB and aid effectiveness but it also identified a major weakness in the programme design. In particular, it found that while the programme outlined its objectives in a logical framework approach, it had not developed an explicit Theory of Change (ToC) that captured key assumptions and causal relationships linking inputs and activities to expected results in the short, medium and long terms. In order to address this gap, the evaluation team developed a ToC that was used as the basis of assessing programme performance. The reconstructed ToC attempted to fill in some of the gaps in the programmes logical framework and illustrates what the programme actually tried to achieve. Importantly, it should be noted that the final year of programme implementation overlapped with the development of the new EC supported programme "Increasing Accountability in Financing for Gender Equality". As a result, many of the recommendations from the evaluation were addressed in the design of the new programme which builds on and consolidates the strengths of the previous programme and avoids some of the weaknesses in programme design and implementation.

This management response addresses the main recommendations in the consolidated evaluation report while making reference to the strategies and approach adopted in the new programme.

### Evaluation Recommendation 1:

**UN Women and the EC should establish a task group to further clarify each partner's goals and expectations for the partnership, and for any programme they engage in jointly.**

The evaluation highlighted a lack of shared understanding between the EC and UN Women regarding the programme's role vis-à-vis EU country delegations. This included gaps in formulating and operationalizing strategies for action required by programme and EUD staff at country level and for actions/guidance required from EC HQ. In addressing this recommendation, UN Women and the EC should ensure that they:

- Define what needs to happen in order for their partnership to go beyond a traditional 'donor-recipient' relationship, i.e. what their respective

understanding of 'partnership' entails;

- Come to an explicit and agreed upon understanding of what each partner expects from the overall partnership and/or specific programme, not only in terms of development results, but also in strengthening the position or capacity of UN Women and the EC respectively;
- Clearly identify what types of HQ support, guidance, and/or incentives are required for UN Women and EUD staff at country level to work together effectively and engage in specific programming activities. This would require an assessment of potential barriers and challenges, and possible strategies to overcome them; or, if that does not seem feasible, adjusting expectations to meet existing realities.

**Management Response:**

UN Women agrees with this recommendation. In order to address this gap, the new programme “Increasing Accountability in Financing for Gender Equality” ensures that as a committed partner and donor of the programme, the EU plays a key role (both at Brussels and delegation levels), in facilitating and championing the achievement of the expected programme results. The EU Plan of Action on GE provides a strong basis for active engagement of EU Delegations beyond the traditional donor-implementer relationship presenting UN Women and ITC/ILO with strategic opportunities for fostering strengthened and more effective collaboration. The new programme generates results to support the EU’s efforts in implementing the EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Development (2010-2015). The programme makes available to the EU, on demand technical support, dialogue, and evidence especially with regard to actions identified in the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP). The programme also supports EU internal capacity to translate its GE/WE policy commitments into action by drawing on ITC/ILO’s expertise on gender mainstreaming in development cooperation to support capacity development efforts in relation to gender-sensitive EU-programming.

With support of ITC/ILO, the new programme aims to mainstream gender in Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) and selected EU funded programmes in 8 programme countries including Ethiopia, Haiti, Jordan, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Ukraine, Zambia and the occupied Palestinian territory. Availability of technical know-how and resources provided by the programme has created a good opportunity for the EU to take bolder steps in engaging in strategic discussions on gender mainstreaming with national and international partners. The country visits of the ITC/ILO staff have in most cases increased the visibility of the work that EU Delegations’ Gender Focal Points carry out at the country level to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
1.1 Assess capacity development needs of selected EU-Partner Country cooperation programmes through direct consultation with European External Action Services, UN Women country staff and on-line surveys	September 2011 - December 2011	ILO/ITC	Completed	
1.2 In-country action learning workshops engaging targeted stakeholders of EU-funded development cooperation programmes	January 2014	ITC/ILO	On-going	
1.3 Develop an on-line comprehensive package on the Know How of gender equality in EU development cooperation	December 2013	ITC/ILO	On-going	

**Evaluation Recommendation 2:**

**The EC should provide clear guidance to EUDs about how they are to be involved in a joint programme.**

If a joint programme is expected to contribute to EUD capacity to integrate gender equality into their own planning, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring processes, the programme will need to reach a range of staff members, including those responsible for sector specific interventions. One likely factor that prevented the programme from influencing EUD capacity and/or programming was that its primary contacts were the Gender Focal Points in each country, who, in most cases, had limited access to and influence on senior staff in the delegation who had the decision making power to make a difference. The experience in Peru showed that when a more senior person was the Gender Focal Point, collaboration was more effective and reached higher up in the EUD.

**Management Response:**

UN Women agrees with this assessment. Gender focal points within donor delegations often lack seniority, resources and decision-making power to influence the policies of their organizations. During programme implementation, several attempts were made to engage senior economists in EU delegations on gender equality issues. These were often met with deep resistance stemming from ingrained attitudes and biases to lack of interest and understanding of gender equality. While it is important to work with Delegation staff responsible for particular sectors, it is equally important to build the capacity of gender focal points to offer support, guidance and advice on gender mainstreaming in order to ensure that institutional knowledge and capacity in this area is developed and sustained. Meaningful promotion of gender equality requires both designated staff with appropriate skill, expertise and seniority, as well as commitment and support from senior management. In order to build this political support, a joint letter was sent to Heads of EU Delegations, United Nations Resident Coordinators, UN Women Regional and Country Directors to announce the launch of the new F4GE programme along with a call for strong co-operation and implementation of the GEAP. The Letter further highlights how the programme will support EU delegation efforts to mainstream gender on programming cycle through ITC/ILO's expertise. The steering committee will monitor this closely in 2013.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
2.1 Joint EC/UN Women letter to EU Delegations (and UN Women country offices) introducing programme and requesting cooperation	November 2011	EC-UN Women	Completed	
2.2 EUD/ UN Women country collaboration is a standing item on the agenda of steering committee meetings	January 2013	ITC/ILO	Ongoing	

**Evaluation Recommendation 3:**

**UN Women (GMS team)<sup>1</sup> and the EC should use the noted strengths and weaknesses of the GRB in AE programme design to inform and improve (if and as needed) the development of the F4GE and future joint interventions.**

<sup>1</sup> The GMS team in the evaluation report refers to the former GRB, now Governance and National Planning (GNP), team. For the purposes of this management response, we have not changed the name of the team.

The evaluation noted areas for improvement in the programme design which should be taken into consideration in refining the approved F4GE programme and in conceptualizing any new interventions. In particular, UN Women and the EC should:

- Upon programme onset, develop a theory of change (ToC) that includes the key assumptions underlying the programme logic. Review and adjust this ToC if/as needed on a regular basis, e.g. as part of annual reporting.
- Define clear and realistic programme objectives at different levels (e.g., global, national) and for units of change (e.g., the actions/behaviour of targeted stakeholders).
- Define indicators that are both meaningful and measurable, and use them to systematically track and report on progress towards results. As noted in the conclusions above and section 1.2.8 on limitations, the lack of indicator-related data was a challenge for this evaluation.
- Formulate strategies and allocate resources for each programme objective, including, for example, for the engagement with donor agencies (if applicable).
- Define transparent and meaningful country selection criteria for programmes involving several countries. What constitutes 'meaningful' will depend on what the partners hope to achieve and/or learn from an intervention.

#### Management Response:

The new F4GE programme has an explicit and well developed theory of change. The programme is based on a comprehensive approach and logical framework that links gender equality commitments with planning and budgeting systems and instruments used by donors and national governments at country level in order to ensure adequate funding and actions that address gender inequalities. Using the overall theory of change and logical framework defined at global level, country Implementation Plans are developed in consultation with national partners to identify country specific entry points, strategies and outputs. The programme theory of change is flexible, adaptable and will be reviewed and adjusted if needed. Indicators defined for the F4GE programme to measure progress on programme results are meaningful and measurable. Output level indicators have been adapted to each country context to take into account country specific realities. Reporting is based on each indicator defined at both output and outcome levels. Indicators especially at the output level are flexible and can be easily adjusted whenever needed. Baseline data on each outcome level indicator is being collected to allow assessment of programme progress over the years. A common methodology has been devised for collection of comparable data across programme countries, which can be used to track progress over the years.

The programme annual work plan specifically identifies strategies and outputs with clear resource allocations for each programme objective to ensure that programme budget is linked with results.

Following UN Women internal approval of the F4GE programme by the Programme Appraisal Committee (PAC) in January 2011, the selection of the 15 countries was made after an assessment of country context, demand and potential in accordance with the following criteria:

#### Enabling environment:

- Present political context;
- Political commitment to gender equality and women's rights, and collaboration or past work between the Ministry of Finance or Planning and the National Women's Machinery (NWM) and other sector ministries on gender and GRB;
- Governmental capacity with regards to GRB and gender mainstreaming within the aid effectiveness agenda;
- UN framework and work on gender equality in the country. EC priority countries and commitment from EU Delegations and existence of

relevant EU programme(s) in country.

- Donors' engagement and coordination efforts to integrate gender equality in the aid effectiveness agenda, and to deliver for gender equality commitments at national level.

**Gender priorities and capacity:**

- An identified GE Policy Framework, such as a National Action Plan (NAP) on GE or VAW to prioritize in the programme, especially for the costing work.
- Evidence that gender equality is prioritized in the country National Development Strategy (NDS) or Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).
- Level of capacity and engagement of National Women Machineries (NWMs) to influence national planning and budgeting processes.
- Existence of women's organizations or networks that are already engaging on issues of macroeconomics, financing for development (and gender), aid effectiveness, and GRB.

**UN Women past work and capacity:**

- UN Women's institutional capacity to deliver at country level, past work on GRB and gender equality and aid effectiveness, and partnerships built with multiple stakeholders that strategically positions UN Women in the work on F4GE.
- Findings from the final evaluation of the EC/UN partnership (for the 12 pilot countries) with respect to whether there is evidence of results and the existence of enabling environment to continue working on F4GE.

In the case of fragile countries, in addition to the previous points, the criteria included:

- Use of the IASC Gender Marker and coordination with humanitarian mechanisms;
- Existence of donor and UN coordination mechanisms and joint funding mechanisms such as MTFDs for recovery and reconstruction.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
3.1 Developed programme theory of change that will be reviewed and adjusted and realistic and clear programme objectives at country level.	July 2012	F4GE programme management unit	Completed	
3.2 Formulated measurable and flexible indicators at country level to take into account the context	July 2012	F4GE programme management unit	Completed	
3.3 Realistic annual work plans that link programme budgets with programme objectives	May 2012	F4GE programme management unit	Completed	
3.4 Country selection criteria defined	August 2011	F4GE programme management unit	Completed	

**Evaluation Recommendation 4:**

**UN Women (GMS team & overall organization) should develop a more robust Theory of Change that clarifies its current thinking on the**

### **linkages between normative (global policy advocacy) and operational work.**

The evaluation found various examples of how UN Women and its partners are trying to link global policy commitments with practice (e.g., by assisting partners to translate commitments into action, and develop related national level indicators and monitoring systems). In Rwanda, for example, the programme's work in connection with the optional Paris Declaration Survey Optional Gender Module included and brought together other development partners, including donors and other UN Agencies. Nevertheless, there is limited evidence of global policy commitments influencing the way and extent to which donor agencies integrate gender equality considerations into the planning, budgeting, and monitoring of their own programmes, or of their contributions to aid coordination systems at country level.

Overall, there is still a gap when it comes to capturing and making explicit UN Women's (and others') current thinking as regards the conceptual linkages between global normative and operational work, and the concrete steps and/or processes that are required (or assumed to be required) to link the two. Clarifying and summarizing its current thinking in this regard should also consider UN Women's ongoing process of clarifying and further defining the organization's overall mandate, in particular the linkages of its normative and operational work not only in GRB, but in all thematic areas.

#### **Management Response:**

UN Women disagrees that there was a lack of robust thinking on the global policy advocacy work under the programme. On the contrary, the GNP team was very successful in ensuring that country level work informed the global policy discussion on aid effectiveness. In particular, the programme supported UN Women's strategy for effective engagement in the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness (HLF4) held in Busan in November 2011, working in close collaboration with women's organizations, OECD/Gendernet, within the UN system, and through support of national efforts to contribute to the HLF-4 preparations. In particular, the programme supported the Association of Women's Rights in Development (AWID), the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET), and the Women in Development Europe (WIDE) to implement a plan of action for mobilizing women's rights organizations and networks around the HLF-4. This plan was a strategic approach to inform the HLF-4 preparations and provide contributions to the further strengthening of the capacity of women's rights organizations to participate and influence development policies. Additionally, the organizations organized and participated in the Global Women's Forum (26-27 November 2011), as part of the Busan Global Civil Society Forum, where women's rights and other civil society organizations strategized and developed inputs for the Civil Society Forum and the official HLF-4. At the HLF-4, women's organizations played key speaking roles, both as part of the formal programme and through participation in floor interventions including at the technical gender side event and the high-level session on gender equality. The women's organization representatives also participated actively as part of HLF-4 caucuses and strategic meetings. See below for more information on participation at the HLF-4.

In collaboration with OECD/Gendernet, the programme contributed to monitoring the Paris Declaration (PD) commitments through its support of countries to complete the Gender Equality Module of the PD Monitoring Survey, which was an optional complementary module to the overall PD survey. The gender equality module included three indicators aligned with the broad PD indicators that address ownership, managing for results, and mutual accountability. The three selected indicators selected are considered the best measure of support for gender equality and women's empowerment and progress on these indicators is essential to make aid more effective. Four of the programme countries<sup>2</sup> completed the gender equality module through the leadership of national partners. Results of the OECD report "Findings from the Gender Equality Module of the 2011

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<sup>2</sup> The programme in Tanzania endeavoured to participate in the Gender Equality Module, but was unable to do so within the required time period.

Paris Declaration Monitoring Survey” illustrated the need for better monitoring frameworks for gender, stronger mutual accountability systems, and more and better use of sex-disaggregated data.<sup>3</sup>

The work on the gender equality module provides a clear example of the linkages between efforts at national level and contributions made to the global policy dialogue on gender and development effectiveness. In **Peru**, the programme provided technical assistance to the APCI for completion of the gender equality module and then presented it to the MESAGEN to identify advocates to support APCI in data gathering. Peru’s completion of the module contributed to the overall findings and also facilitated a close collaborative relationship with APCI. In **Rwanda**, the External Finance (Aid Coordination) Unit/MINECOFIN encouraged the government to agree to complete the gender equality module. Following the government’s agreement, the programme provided technical assistance and facilitated sessions with governmental and development partner representatives to finalize the findings. The External Finance Unit presented the gender equality module findings at the Development Partners Coordination Group (DPCG), March 2011, for validation and agreement prior to submission to OECD/Gendernet. As part of this presentation, key challenges and proposed ways to address these challenges were shared, including:

- Integration of a gender equality perspective into PFM has focused on producing gender budget statement by all ministries, provinces and districts and mainstreaming gender in sector programmes, but other aspects of PFM such as procurement, budget execution, reporting and accountability have been given little attention.
- Insufficient sex-disaggregated data hampers evidence based programming in some sectors like trade and industry. However, the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR) in partnership with the Gender Monitoring Office, with support from UN Women, has established the gender statistics framework that will help NISR produce and make gender statistics available.
- In most cases, where sex-disaggregated data exist, in-depth gender analysis is still a major challenge in informing programming and decision-making. There is a need to conduct systematic data analysis to ensure that gender equality concerns are addressed in policy formulation.

In addition to the completion of the gender equality module, evidence collected from the five programme countries (and additional countries) on efforts to integrate a gender perspective into national planning and budgeting and aid management instruments were provided to support the preparation of the “Progress since Paris” report. This report was prepared by the OECD and presented the overall findings of the 2011 Survey on Monitoring the Implementation of the Paris Declaration.

**Participation at the Busan HLF-4:** In collaboration with OECD/Gendernet, the programme contributed to the conceptualization and implementation of the technical side event “Progress on gender equality and women’s empowerment since the Paris Declaration” that was held on 29 November 2011. The session built upon analytical work on aid effectiveness, including the findings from the gender equality module of the PD Monitoring Survey, and examples of effective practices in supporting women’s empowerment. The event aimed to identify actions for post-HLF-4, including: 1) improving national and donor systems for tracking financing for gender equality, and monitoring the impact of this financing (ownership), 2) strengthening support for the collection and use of sex-disaggregated data and gender equality indicators (results), and 3) inclusion of a few gender equality and aid effectiveness indicators in any aid effectiveness monitoring framework developed after HLF-4, building on the indicators of the gender equality module.

The technical event featured a roundtable discussion entitled “ownership and resources for gender equality – including financing in the economic

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<sup>3</sup> The report is available at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/6/31/49014760.pdf>

sectors” with presentations by the Vice Minister of Finance from Ecuador, the Executive Vice-President of the Inter-American Development Bank, and the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Finance from Nepal, Mr. Krishna Hari Baskota – key programme countries for UN Women. The roundtable discussion examined the need to address the gap between commitments to gender equality in national development plans and adequate allocation of resources to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment objectives. During the discussion, examples were presented of national efforts to implement gender-responsive public finance management as a means to ensure effective and equitable development outcomes. One of the main recommendations from this session was: **“Donors and countries need to support capacity development in government agencies to strengthen gender-responsive planning and budgeting. This will enable more effective responses to women’s empowerment in economic areas and beyond.”**<sup>4</sup>

A key outcome of the HLF4 was strong language on gender equality and gender responsive budgeting. A global indicator on gender equality was included in the post Busan monitoring framework. The indicator measures the number of countries with **a system in place to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women’s empowerment**. The purpose of this indicator is to offer a measure of progress in the implementation of the Busan commitment. The focus on *efforts* and *behaviour* is distinct from other existing efforts to monitor gender equality and women’s empowerment at the *outcome* level (e.g. through the MDG framework and other frameworks). UN Women will lead field testing of this indicator in 9 countries in February-March 2013. Data from UN Women annual reports for 2013 will provide the baseline for the indicator.

The F4GE programme includes a specific outcome linking operational work undertaken at the country level with global policy advocacy initiatives. A key global activity is providing support to gender equality advocates and feminist economists for their engagement in global policy fora to support stronger coherence on gender equality in the economic and development effectiveness. The programme also ensures linkage with intergovernmental processes within the UN including by reporting on programme results and policy recommendations at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and ECOSOC Dialogue on Financing for Development, Development Cooperation Forum among others.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
4.1 Development of a methodology for the gender indicator	January 2013	GNP team	Ongoing	
4.2 Field test indicator at country level	February- March 2013	GNP team	Ongoing	

**Evaluation Recommendation 5:**

**At the country level, UN Women should further expand its network of strategic partners with a (potential) role in integrating GE into public finance management.**

The programme made an effort in all countries to work with a range of stakeholders, but the number and influence of key partners varied from country to country. In Rwanda, one of the strengths of the programme (and the overall national context) is that the GRB agenda is not only owned and driven by the Ministry of Finance, but that there is also significant buy-in from other (more or less influential) actors with specific roles in planning, budgeting, implementing, and monitoring government programmes and expenditures. This includes active involvement from Parliamentarians, and various parts of the National Gender Machinery.

<sup>4</sup> Recommendations from the side event “Progress on gender equality and women's empowerment since the Paris Declaration”



In relation to this recommendation, UN Women should consider:

- Work with existing GE champions to engage other national players in active and meaningful roles. For example, one suggestion from the Nepal site visit was to engage the National Planning Commission (NPC) in GRB related work (e.g., by inviting the NPC to co-chair the GRBC along with the MoF, or rotate the role of the GRBC secretariat between the two entities on a regular basis).
- Explore additional options to institutionalize training for GRB/gender responsive public finance management at the country level, especially in countries where no such opportunities exist. Experiences in Rwanda and Tanzania during the GRB in AE programme can provide examples of possible approaches and formats.
- Work with national partners to identify existing or needed (positive and negative) incentives for actors at various levels to integrate GE into planning and budgeting processes, and provide advice and/or technical assistance to address these needs.
- Facilitate inter-sectoral linkages (as appropriate and feasible) to ensure that budgets are aligned with gender needs in various sectors (e.g., education and infrastructure).

**Management Response:**

Through the F4GE programme, the network of partners at the country level has been expanded to include both traditional as well as non-traditional partners. The programme ToC has been developed to allow multiple level efforts to achieve the programme goal that entails working systematically with a wide range of partners. Within the four defined objectives of the programme, the engagement of partners varies from one outcome to the other. For example, to achieve objectives defined under outcome 1 and 2, the programme involves partnerships mainly with national women’s machinery and ministries of planning/finance/sectoral ministries. On the other hand for outcome 3 and 4, the main partners are donors and gender equality advocates including academia, CSOs and women’s networks respectively. The new programme includes institutionalized training for gender responsive planning and budgeting through academic and public finance management institutes. For example, Bolivia has introduced a degree module on Fiscal Policy and Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Centre for Research and Strategic Development of the Universidad Mayor de san Andrés. Kyrgyzstan focuses on institutionalizing GRB in the curricula of the Academy of Management, which is based in the office of the President.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking Status	Comments
5.1 Programme country implementation plans include multiple partnerships	December 2012	F4GE Programme countries	Completed	
5.2 Institutionalized training for GRB	December 2014	F4GE Programme countries	On-going	

**Evaluation Recommendation 6:**

**UN Women (GMS team) should define a set of criteria to help determine the most strategic areas/issues for UN Women to engage in at the country level.**

While UN Women’s country presence and resources (human and financial) may increase in the midterm, it will for the foreseeable future have to work within considerable constraints as regards qualified staff and financial resources available for supporting GRB related work at the country

level. This implies the continued need for UN Women to make strategic choices about where and how to engage. Ideally, this will not always require 'either-or' choices, but will require prioritization.

Although all programming countries made progress towards institutionalizing GE considerations in public financial management processes, a lot remains to be done. In most countries this includes the need to expand reforms/approaches to a larger number of line ministries and/or to the local (regional, district) level. Another common area requiring further attention is the need to develop and/or strengthen effective monitoring and accountability systems at various levels.

Decisions on what constitutes the most strategic area of engagement for UN Women will need to take into account the specific national contexts, but it would be helpful if the GMS team provided core criteria to help ensure some consistency across programme countries and help ensure that country level experiences can systematically contribute to global (and organizational) learning.

Several dimensions that UN Women may want to take into account when determining whether and why a particular area is *strategic* include the following:

- The potential to help change national systems. As an example, the evaluation suggested that in Rwanda it may be more strategic for UN Women to assist the government in strengthening monitoring and accountability systems at various levels than to help it roll out gender budget statements in a larger number of line ministries.
- The extent to which UN Women's technical capacity and resources will allow it to make a difference. This needs to be assessed in light of existing strengths and capacities of other actors, in particular UN Agencies. For example, large agencies such as UNDP may have a comparative advantage when it comes to working at local levels.
- Learning opportunities. UN Women may deliberately choose to engage in areas where it does not yet have a lot of experience in order to broaden its own opportunities for learning and growth. The GMS team would need to provide guidance on how to balance this with other considerations, perhaps by defining a specific list of (relatively) new areas that UN Women wishes to engage in over the midterm.

We are aware that these and other considerations already guide UN Women's programming choices. They are, however, not yet captured in an explicit set of guiding criteria.

#### **Management Response:**

In order to ensure UN Women's strategic engagement at the country level, the new F4GE programme, from the inception phase, made an effort to formulate country implementation plans in such a manner that they are relevant, effective and they offer UN Women an avenue to engage in a more strategic way. To finalize the programme objectives at the country level, extensive consultations were held with multiple stakeholders to determine strategic areas of focus including sectoral foci for the programme where UN Women had an opportunity to contribute. Strategic areas were also determined on the basis of national priorities. In addition, planning and budgeting cycles for the national and sectoral plans were also determining factors in choosing strategic areas of focus.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
6.1 Multi-stakeholder consultations at country level to finalize strategic areas of focus	December 2011	F4GE programme countries	Completed	

#### Evaluation Recommendation 7:

**UN Women (GMS team) should clearly define the desired results of its engagement with donor agencies at global and national levels.**

While consulted stakeholders widely agreed that the programme's engagement with donors (and aid coordination groups) was relevant and strategic, available data provided few examples of tangible results deriving from this engagement. Rather than approaching this issue by critiquing the approaches and strategies used to influence donors, we suggest to start by clarifying the intended short and longer term results that UN Women aimed to achieve in this regard. The evaluation found that the reconstructed Theory of Change did not suffice to fully clarify the programme's key assumptions in this regard.

#### Management Response:

UN Women agrees with this recommendation. While the programme participated in donor and/or development partner coordination groups in each of the five programme countries and UN Women played an important leadership role either in chairing or co-chairing the respective gender coordination group or committee, there were significant challenges in influencing donor agendas. However, UN Women was successful in influencing national agenda through the donor coordination mechanisms with the provision of GRB training, on-demand technical support for the development and/or implementation of gender responsive methodologies, tools, and guidelines, and support for monitoring national plans and budgets. Select examples include:

- In **Tanzania**, the programme successfully contributed to the restructuring of the Development Partners Group on Gender Equality (DPG Gender) to position it more strategically in regard to gender and development effectiveness, with priority placed on advocacy and information sharing through entry points in the dialogue structure vis-à-vis the government. The final evaluation found that the programme's participation in the DPG Gender contributed to the group's successful advocacy for the integration of gender indicators into the Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) and the draft monitoring and evaluation framework of the MKUKUTA 2.
- In the area of training, the programme in **Cameroon** delivered a training workshop in 2011 for the Gender Thematic Group (GTEG) of the Multi Donor Committee and governmental and non-governmental partners on GRB. The workshop supported learning about the appropriate use of GRB tools to enable the participants to plan their common activities aimed at the promotion of the inclusion of a gender perspective in the Cameroonian budget cycle. This collaborative work aligned with the Head of State Call Circular that delivers instructions to ministries and other governmental institutions to mainstream gender in their policies, strategies, programmes.
- The 2011 work plan of the Donor Roundtable on Gender (MESAGEN) in **Peru** included the formation of a sub-working group on aid effectiveness and gender-responsive budgeting chaired by UN Women. Within the framework of the new sub-working group, the programme organized the event in collaboration with MESAGEN to facilitate the exchange of experiences between the Agencia Peruana de Cooperación Internacional/ Peruvian International Cooperation Agency (APCI) and the Government on new aid modalities and GRB. The APCI expressed commitment to follow-up on the implementation of the HLF-4 recommendations and will organize an event with all sectors to share information and reach agreements about how to best take this work forward.

The final evaluation stated that consulted stakeholders viewed the programme's engagement in these donor coordination groups as strategic. However, it also indicated that UN Women at times faced challenges to engagement in some situations. The challenges included lack of eligibility

to participate in certain groups due to limitations on participation to national partners and/or contributing donors. The programme worked to address these barriers by working through its donor partners and supporting national partners to promote consideration of gender equality by the groups and/or within overall policy frameworks.

### **Strengthening work with the EC at global and national levels**

At the global level, UN Women developed and shared a set of recommendations for integrating gender equality and women's empowerment in the EC Communication on Aid Effectiveness. The main focus of the recommendations was the centrality of gender equality, democratic ownership, and mutual accountability as pre-requisites for the achievement of development results. Main recommended areas for action included the importance of expanding the scope of financing for gender equality across sectors and strategic areas, strengthening systems for financing for gender equality, and the need to invest in capacity for mainstreaming gender in public finance management systems, national plans and budgets, and aid mechanisms.

The programme steering committee met in Kigali on 28 July 2011, directly following the Global High-Level Meeting. Representatives from the EC Brussels Office and UN Women HQ attended the meeting via video link and additional EC Brussels and UN Women HQ and country office staff attended in-person. Also, a representative from the EU Delegation in Rwanda was in attendance, but he did not engage in the session. This meeting provided an opportunity for dialogue between the EC, UN Women and national counterparts. During the meeting, countries presented main national programme achievements and there were interactive discussions about how to strengthen the collaboration between EU delegations and UN Women country offices. It also pointed to the difficulty of engaging more senior, sectoral staff members on issues of gender equality.

Over the course of the programme, countries endeavored to work with the EU delegations (EUDs). These efforts varied in level of success, with some countries showing productive, mutually supportive relationships and others facing more barriers to collaboration. For example, in **Nepal**, the final evaluation found evidence of a mutually informative relationship between the programme and the EUD. This relationship included regular information sharing at least once every two months. While this relationship was viewed as positive from both sides, it was noted that there was no evidence to date of the programme efforts influencing the EU's existing PFMs at country level. In other countries, certain changes occurred during the programme implementation that affected the relationship. Of note, in **Peru** the EUD gender focal point had limited decision-making power at the start of the programme. During the last year of implementation, the gender focal point position was strategically reassigned to a higher position to support increased opportunities to affect change related to gender equality. While it is too early to fully assess the effects of this change, it is hoped that it will be a positive shift in terms of the ability of the EUD gender focal point to influence the EC's work on gender equality at the country level in Peru.

Across all five phase II countries, efforts were made to share information with the respective EUDs. As noted above, the manner and depth to which exchange occurred varied across countries and was frequently confined to exchange with the gender focal point who did not always have access to decision-making venues with the EUD. While in some of the countries (Nepal, Rwanda, and Tanzania) there were noted challenges in the relationships, it should be recognized that the final evaluation recorded improvements in each country in the last year of programme implementation. These challenges and appropriate measures to address them will be considered within the context of the (F4GE) programme, particularly in light of the ITC/ILO component of that programme that focuses on capacity strengthening. In particular the F4GE programme works with multilateral donor institutions (primarily European Commission, EU Member States, OECD, and the World Bank) and bilateral donors at country level. It also seeks to engage with Joint donor coordination mechanisms such as direct budget support groups, sector coordination groups, joint reviews etc. The programme will also continue to strengthen its collaboration with the *OECD-DAC GenderNet* at the technical level and will maintain

the consultative communication and exchange of information and support.  
 The F4GE programme clearly articulates objectives and desired results of its engagement with donors. The programme results framework includes a specific objective, 'strengthened capacity and accountability of donors and stakeholders in aid coordination mechanisms to achieve commitments towards gender equality in stable and fragile countries'. Through its engagement with the donors, the programme aims to ensure that: Gender is integrated in donor policy documents / policy dialogues. Gender indicators are included in performance assessments/joint review'

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
7.1 Defined results for UN Women's engagement with donor agencies	August 2011	F4GE programme management unit	Completed	

**Evaluation Recommendation 8:**

**UN Women (GMS team) should systematically explore opportunities and constraints to its engagement in different types of aid coordination systems, and compile more examples of successful mitigation strategies to address existing limitations.**

This recommendation is based on the assumption that UN Women will and should continue to engage with donor/development partner coordination groups. In the context of GRB related work, this should not be limited to GE related coordination groups, but should, to the extent possible, span thematic and sector specific entities. The evaluation noted UN Women's leadership role in many GE related coordination bodies as well as constraints due to its status as a UN agency. To guide UN Women's future work in this regard it may be helpful to capture related experiences from a wider range of countries than explored in this evaluation. This could help it to identify other opportunities (e.g., related to UN Women's mandate and status, but also to the types of changes/results that its engagement in aid coordination systems has been able to contribute to) as well as mitigation strategies that have helped it overcome challenges in other settings.

**Management Response:**

The F4GE programme currently engages systematically in aid coordination mechanisms, country based assessments and analysis will be carried out during programme implementation in years 2 and 3 to explore opportunities and constraints.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
8.1: Engagement with aid coordination mechanisms included as one of the programme objectives	August 2011	F4GE programme management unit	Completed	
8.2 Assessment of UN Women's engagement with aid coordination mechanisms	December 2014	F4GE programme management unit	On-going	

**Evaluation Recommendation 9**

**UN Women (GMS team as well as corporately) should further define the implications of its coordination mandate for GE inside the UN, and identify implications for its work around GRB related issues at global, regional, and country levels.**

The evaluation found several examples of successful collaboration and interaction between UN Women and other UN agencies on the ground, both

related to leveraging capacities and resources through synergies and joint programming, as well as in connection with contributing to integrating GRB thinking into the next UNDAF (e.g., in Rwanda). At the same time, several consulted stakeholders pointed out the need to further clarify UN Women's relatively new mandate to coordinate the UN's work on gender equality, and the implications thereof. These implications may not only relate to specific tasks or functions expected from UN Women, but also to new/broadened opportunities for ensuring coherence and effectiveness of the UN's overall work on GE, including on GRB related issues.

As noted in Recommendation 4 above, related deliberations should take into account the ongoing process inside UN Women to further clarify implications of its corporate mandate and its coordination function in particular. The GMS team will not necessarily need to wait for this process to be completed, but could identify specific issues and implications for global, regional, and country specific work in its particular area of focus.

**Management Response:**

UN Women leads and coordinates the overall efforts of the UN system to support the full realization of women's rights and opportunities. It provides expertise on incorporating gender equality in the programmes of other UN organizations, and through regular monitoring helps the UN system stay on top of its internal commitments to women. As the chair of the UN Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, UN Women supports the efforts of 25 UN organizations to promote gender equality across the UN system.

On 13 April, 2012 a [landmark System-wide Action Plan](#) (UN-SWAP) on gender equality and women's empowerment was adopted at a meeting of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to be applied throughout the UN system. For the first time, the UN will have a set of common measures with which to measure progress in its gender-related work, including the mainstreaming of the gender perspective across all its operations. The UN-SWAP, as an accountability framework, allows UN Women to guide the system's coordination on gender equality. Throughout 2012, the various UN agencies continued to align their performance indicators on gender equality, along with their policies and work processes.

UN Women supports coordination with UN agencies at the country level for GRB programming and its implementation. A number of programme countries supported under the new programme engage with other UN agencies to support gender responsive planning and budgeting specially at the sectoral level. For example in Honduras in the framework of UN gender theme group, an assessment is ongoing to analyze the extent to which gender is integrated in the policies of UN agencies and to elaborate minimum common gender policy guidelines for UN agencies. Support was also provided to FAO to follow up on policies, strategies and commitments towards gender equality. In Ukraine in collaboration with UNFPA and UNDP, technical assistance was provided to the Government's working groups in designing and finalizing the Concept of State Programme on Equal Rights and Opportunities, which is the first national action plan that sets priorities for gender equality and women's empowerment in the country.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
9.1: System wide action plan adopted	April 2012	UN Women Inter-Agency Team, UN Agencies	On-going	
9.2: Regular meetings of the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality		UN Women, UN Agencies	On-going	

#### **Evaluation Recommendation 10:**

##### **UN Women (GMS team) should develop a strategy to focus its knowledge products and assess their relevance to stakeholders.**

While consulted stakeholders widely agreed that the programme had produced high quality and relevant knowledge products, it was difficult to assess how these products had actually influenced or been used by the intended targeted groups or on which types of products had been more effective than others.

In addressing this recommendation, UN Women should:

- In documenting experiences and good practices in GRB related work, UN Women (GMS team) should ensure that knowledge products focus on results (e.g., poverty reduction, economic growth, development effectiveness) rather than processes.
- Expand its efforts to assist national partners in documenting and disseminating national experiences in integrating GE into planning and budgeting processes. The programme assisted national partners in Rwanda and Nepal in documenting their own work and experiences in GRB application and institutionalization. This approach is promising in terms of further strengthening national capacity for and ownership of GE related change processes. Also, resulting knowledge products send 'strong messages' to both international and national players about national partners' commitment to and leadership for GE. UN Women should build on the positive experience gained during the GRB in AE programme and apply this approach in other contexts.
- Explore ways to systematically capture some data on the different needs and uses of its knowledge products by different stakeholder groups (e.g., through surveys, interviews). While this would not be realistic for all knowledge products, it would be helpful to do this.
- Explore ways to systematically capture some data on the different needs and uses of its knowledge products by different stakeholder groups (e.g., through surveys, interviews). While this would not be realistic for all knowledge products, it would be helpful to do this for a sample of different types of products that are targeted at different stakeholder groups.

#### **Management Response:**

UN Women agrees with this recommendation and has developed a comprehensive knowledge management strategy under the F4GE programme. A communications strategy that seeks to ensure effective and strategic communication of the knowledge products both within and outside the programme has also been developed. At global level, the communication strategy will be geared towards consolidating and disseminating learning and analysis for informing policy advocacy, capacity building and country knowledge sharing. At country level, communication plans will support the effective implementation of the programme and the expansion of the partnerships amongst various stakeholders.

The knowledge strategy is designed to ensure custom made products targeted to different stakeholders. The F4GE programme will ensure systematization and dissemination of knowledge and experiences with regards to:

- Costing methodologies (includes systematization of costing methodologies and experiences on costing for national gender equality priorities - for example, the case of Bolivia);
- Integration of GE in aid management and funding modalities; including assessment of most effective aid modalities for ensuring implementation of GE commitments.

In addition the programme will convene two thematic learning workshops focusing on the following:

- Alignment of gender equality commitments with national systems: From costing to results for GE priorities (Year II of the programme)
- Gender-responsive planning and budgeting at sector level: a mutual challenge for national governments and donors (Year III)

The F4GE Programme also supports a grant making facility that aims to promote innovative knowledge building on financing for gender equality. The grant making facility provides a flexible mechanism that allows civil society organizations the opportunity to test innovative approaches for generating new knowledge, undertake effective advocacy and perform a critical citizen monitoring role in relation to financing for gender equality.

<b>Key Action(s)</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Responsible Unit(s)</b>	<b>Tracking Status</b>	<b>Comments</b>
10.1 Knowledge agenda developed	December 2012	F4GE programme management unit	Completed	
10.2 Communications strategy developed	December 2012	F4GE programme management unit	Completed	
10.3 Civil society grant launched to build knowledge and innovative approaches on financing for gender equality	February 2013	F4GE programme management unit	On-going	