

Annex 1

**Review of the Women's Political Leadership and Economic Empowerment for
the Peace Building Regional Project 63745-48**

by

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Executive Summary

The main objective of the assignment was to review the Peace Building Regional Project to assess the activities completed and results achieved in order to build on the successes of the project and/or to propose new activities that respond to emerging regional needs resulting from the on-going political transformation. The proposed activities for the extension of the project from 2012 to 2013 focus on two areas:

1. Country activities in Egypt Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen that meet the goals of the project and are potentially sustainable during a changing political environment.
2. Regional activities that provide critical tools, resources and experts to build women and youth capacity in citizenship, conflict resolution and dialogue, and, to provide networking opportunities that allow better articulation of needs, desires, and demands using international human rights instruments as tools.

The proposed activities in this report—after a critical review and acceptance by the ASRO project team—will utilize the remaining available project funds and any additional mobilized resources to implement the country and regional activities during the extension of the UN Women’s Peace Building Regional Project from 2012-2013.

This review is based on the available project documentation; discussions with UN Women ASRO’s project and program staff; as well as teleconferences and meetings with the implementing partners from the seven participating countries during a four-day mission to Amman, Jordan, August 21-25, 2011.

Project Background & Context

UN Women ASRO has been implementing a two-year initiative entitled Women’s Political Leadership and Economic Empowerment for Peace Building in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. The intended outcomes of this project are to

1. Develop the leadership skills of women’s groups at all levels of society to effectively participate in decision making and peace building;
2. Advocate for the formulation and implementation of economic policy and legislation that promotes equal opportunity in the private and public sectors; and,
3. Propagate knowledge towards democratic and innovative solutions and emerging issues, as well as finding innovative solutions toward conflict resolution through peace building processes within communities.

To seize the momentum created by revolutionary regional events, the project management team decided to assess the project activities. By reviewing the current approach and evaluating what is working, the remaining activities and resources can be reallocated to respond most effectively to any changing needs of the targeted women and youth. These

activities will include *providing the needed resources for women and youth to communicate better, express their needs effectively, network with each other more easily and unify their voices*. Acquiring these skills will empower their effective participation in expected conflict resolution structures, dialogue committees, and policy negotiations to obtain their rights and achieve their political, economic, and social goals.

With project activities underway in 2011, revolutionary changes ignited in Tunisia swept rapidly throughout the Middle East and North Africa. The ASRO team viewed the regional events as an opportunity to continue capacity-building activities while reorienting them to respond to the dynamism and hope coursing through the Arab populations due to the popular uprisings and dramatic changes.

Results of the Review

The UN Women Peace Building Regional Project has been highly successful in achieving the stated goals of the project. The success of the project is attributable to (1) the ASRO project team's skilled management and program oversight; (2) the country organizations' community-based implementation process; (3) the multi-dimensional peace building activities; and (4) the overarching regional activities. The outcomes of the national programs have direct and immediate relevance to achieve the project's goals of enhancing the engagement and leadership of women in conflict resolution and innovative peace building activities in the region through building women and youth solidarity for peace. Even the country programs that were delayed or postponed due to political unrest—Egypt, Syria, and Yemen—still contributed towards these goals.

The major gap of the project is the informal nature of regional and country activity monitoring and evaluation (M&E), as well as general project reporting. The documentation tends not to fully indicate the positive effects of the activities' impacts or the significance of what actually was accomplished in each country.

The ASRO Project Team. A great deal of the project's success is attributable to the ASRO project team's planning, management, and oversight. The team carefully selected seven implementing partners, which were well established, had credibility in their countries, and a record of previous successful project management experience. ASRO's "hands off" management style and flexibility was conducive to gaining the implementers trust and cooperation.

One of the greatest strengths of the project was the freedom each implementing agency had to select an issue of importance to women and youth of the country, to research the issue, and to select activities based on the research's findings. The ASRO office provided technical advice, guidance, encouragement, and support to the country organizations. The Peace Building project exercise in itself was a capacity building activity—particularly for those organizations with less development experience.

Because of the ASRO project team's management style, the country implementers felt great project ownership, are enthusiastic and energized about the activities' outcomes, and are committed to continuing their activities' and building on their successes whether or not the project continues under UN Women's auspices.

Regional activities also contributed to the success of the first phase of the project. ASRO hosted two annual roundtable meetings in Beirut and Damascus. Representatives from each of the participating countries attended to discuss their respective activities. The regional roundtables should continue and be enhanced by scheduling workshops and trainings during the meetings.

The Country Organizations. Each country produced a workable program contributing to the outcomes. Project partners agree, “The activities implemented under the project have enhanced their capacities to influence policies, agendas, and practices with respect to gender equality and also in contributing to the development of country action plans.” Six country organizations successfully implemented their proposed activities, empowering marginalized women and youth across the region. Even though the Egypt team was unable to implement its planned activities due to the revolution, it still produced useful research materials that will be useful in planning activities during the extension.

The Country Activities. The success of the project was also due to each country’s freedom to self-select its issue and activities. The participants have been empowered in many different ways. The activities contributed to the project goals of reaching excluded women and youth and supporting creative solutions to conflict-prevention, and supporting women’s economic engagement and political participation. This project demonstrates that the country organizations are capable of producing knowledge products, successfully implementing complex projects, as well as conducting effective trainings.

Redefining the Project, 2012-2013

The proposed country and regional activities for the UN Women Peace Building Regional Project extension are based on (1) discussions with the ASRO project team; (2) teleconferences and meetings with the country implementers; (3) a desk review of the available project documentation; (4) the funding available for continuing project activities; (5) the feasibility of conducting the activities in the forthcoming 18-24 months based on the project team and the implementers assessments; (6) the expected positive outputs due to the organizations successful implementation of activities during the first phase of the project, in spite of regional unrest; and (7) the opportunity to seize the momentum to reinforce and expand project activities among excluded women and youth in the seven countries.

Collect Peace Building knowledge products to disseminate. The Peace Building Regional Project outputs include a variety of knowledge projects. The ASRO project team needs to collect samples of each countries research and training materials. These materials need to be prepared for dissemination through the project website, publication of booklets/CDs etc., and the possibly creating toolkits for regional use.

Transform ASRO project website into a dynamic virtual knowledge portal. Select project materials should be made available in Arabic on the project website. This material will provide widely available cross-regional training materials for download at low cost to implementers, activists, civil society, nongovernmental organizations, and community based organizations.

Roundtable Conference. The annual roundtable for participants and the project team should be continued during the project extension. Every country implementer mentioned the value of the annual roundtables to discuss research and share project activities. This event provided an important opportunity for women and men from other Arab countries to network, share experiences, gain valuable knowledge, and learn how others overcame challenges. Workshops should be incorporated during the annual meeting with skills trainings in monitoring and evaluation, effective report writing, and other capacity building skills as determined by ASRO and the country implementers.

Proposed Country Activities. The activities proposed for the seven participating countries are based on the activities that the implementers would like to continue doing or add to their programs, and for Egypt, Syria and Yemen, those activities that are possible during the current political unrest. The activities will reinforce the community empowerment that was initiated during the first phases of the project. The proposed activities are presented in Table 2.

Lessons Learned and Good Practices

- ✓ The project's success lies in its adoption of a community approach that addresses aspects of women empowerment in a comprehensive manner and transcends superficial thematic separation, i.e., economic empowerment of women and elimination of violence are necessary and supportive to women's political participation.
- ✓ Political participation training must be systematic, strategic, and on-going to effect change and not merely sporadic and based on the election cycle.
- ✓ Select partner organizations with a wide and diverse base of support.
- ✓ Each country context varies considerably. Because each country organization identified its own issues of concern and selected its activities, the resulting national programs developed great ownership, commitment, and positive outcomes.
- ✓ The roundtable is an excellent mechanism to exchange ideas and experiences.
- ✓ JOHUD's inclusion of tribal leaders in their activities and seeking their support to avoid direct confrontation facilitated entry into excluded areas.
- ✓ Transferring knowledge at local and public meetings and Friday mosque lecture proved very effective in a number of countries.
- ✓ Developing behaviour change messages within Islamic concepts was effective in Syria and Yemen.
- ✓ Gender differentiated messages can be key to success. Health messages for women and religious ones for men were effective in changing people's beliefs about early marriage in targeted Yemeni communities.
- ✓ Incentives such as mobile health clinics in Yemen helped to open minds to the early marriage message.
- ✓ In Lebanon, economic work with rural women contributed to political participation. Women gained peer support and a constituency, earned social recognition, and developed relationships outside their families. With increased self-confidence, some became candidates in municipal elections.
- ✓ Empowered women entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia applied and gained membership to the local Chamber of Commerce.

- ✓ Women leaders in each Syrian governorate were identified and trained in leadership skills to prepare them to participate in government. These women created supportive networks to communicate with each other and share experiences.
- ✓ The UAE business training activities responded to Bedouin women's desire to start home businesses and in the process revitalized local crafts while economically empowering young women graduates.
- ✓ Rural women producers and cooperatives benefitted from the creation of sustainable market outlets in Lebanon.
- ✓ Health issues were used as an entry point for volunteerism in Saudi Arabia because "anything related to women is considered feminist" and is not socially acceptable.

Review of the Women's Political Leadership and Economic Empowerment for Peace Building Regional Project

I. Assignment Objective

The main objective of this assignment was to review the Peace Building Regional Project to assess the activities completed and results achieved in order to build on the successes of the project and/or to propose new activities that respond to emerging regional needs resulting from the on-going political transformation. The proposed activities for the 2012-2013 extension of the project focus on two areas:

1. Country activities in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen that meet the goals of the project and are potentially sustainable during a changing political environment.
2. Regional activities that provide critical tools, resources and experts to build women and youth capacity in citizenship, conflict resolution and dialogue, and, to provide networking opportunities that allow better articulation of needs, desires, and demands using international human rights instruments as tools.

The assignment's deliverable is a proposal with a minimum duration of two years that elaborates the new direction of the project. The proposed activities in this report will utilize the remaining available project funds and any additional mobilized resources to implement the proposed activities for the project's 2012-2013 extension.

II. Methodology

The project review is based on the available project documentation, i.e., studies, training manuals, and regional and country progress reports listed in the bibliography; discussions with UN Women ASRO's project and program staff; as well as teleconferences and meetings with the implementing partners from the seven participating countries during a four-day mission to Amman, Jordan, August 21-25, 2011.

The purpose of the UN Women Peace Building Regional Project review is to examine the program from a design point of view and to evaluate whether the implemented activities were relevant to achieving the project's objectives. The strengths of the project design, and any existing gaps, are identified and considered in continuing current activities and/or proposing new activities and outputs to enhance and build on relevant activities for the project's extension. The evolving regional political situation is also an important consideration in this effort.

Rather than a full evaluation of the project—which is planned when the project ends in 2013—this project review offers suggestions on continuing or complementing effective country activities and enhancing regional activities in support of the country programs.

III. Project Background & Context

UN Women ASRO has been implementing a two-year initiative entitled Women's Political Leadership and Economic Empowerment for Peace Building in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

The United Nations Secretary General's report "Women's Participation in Peace Building articulates the rationale for this project. It states that "Women are crucial partners in shoring up three pillars of lasting peace: economic recovery, social cohesion and political legitimacy. Strengthening national capacity and ensuring national ownership are crucial elements of effective peace building." To this end, **the overall development goal of this project is to strengthen political leadership and promote women's economic empowerment for peace building by enhancing women's capacity for leadership and access to economic opportunities.** "Efforts to facilitate an increased role for women in decision-making processes must be based on recognition that peace building strategies cannot be fully 'owned' if half the nation is not actively involved in their design and implementation."¹

The intended outcomes of this project are to

1. Develop the leadership skills of women's groups at all levels of society to effectively participate in decision making and peace building;
2. Advocate for the formulation and implementation of economic policy and legislation that promotes equal opportunity in the private and public sectors; and,
3. Propagate knowledge towards democratic and innovative solutions and emerging issues, as well as finding innovative solutions towards conflict resolution through peace building processes within communities.

The impetus for the UN Women Regional Peace Building project was an initiative by the British Embassy in Jordan after successful implementation of a previous regional project and the general impulse of the United Nations and the international community to focus on women's participation in conflict resolution. Project planning began in September 2008 and implementation of activities in 2009. Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Yemen were the first countries selected to participate. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), Syria, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) joined the project soon after. The project entry points were increasing women's and youth's political participation and strengthening economic development.

Under the direction of UN Women ASRO, the selected nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and quasi-government organizations in seven Arab countries developed their own national plans of action and activities. The organizations implemented the project in two phases. Phase I (January-June 2009) consisted of a six-month inception period during which specific interventions addressed the program's main elements, which are sexual and gender-based violence, political leadership, and economic security. This phase included an independent rapid assessment by each country's implementing agency to identify factors that contribute to women's social exclusion, such as

¹ General Assembly Security Council. Women's participation in peace building: report of the Secretary General., 7 September 2010, pp. 3-5.

unemployment, underemployment, and weaknesses in women's political participation and advocacy for issues that concern women.

Phase II (July 2009-December 2011), which is on-going, consists of implementing the planned country activities and trainings aimed at enhancing the capacities of women and youth to engage in peace building and conflict prevention activities. Other activities focus on building knowledge about SCR 1325² and SCR 1820³ in the seven Arab countries, developing a rule of law training manual targeting youth, developing a resource webpage for the project, as well as preparing a regional report to take stock of the whole project and the lessons learned.

Although a full project evaluation was scheduled for November 2011, and the project was to be completed by the end of December 2011, the following factors emerged leading the ASRO staff to determine that the project needed to be reassessed before it ended:

1. The February 2010 revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt rapidly spread to other Arab countries resulting in political contestation movements affecting project implementation in three countries: Egypt, Syria, and Yemen. The upheaval led to suspension of project activities in Egypt, delay of activities in Syria due to implementation difficulties, and in Yemen, implementers altered certain planned activities to accommodate the volatile situation.
2. Due to different management/staffing arrangements within the ASRO, the project team saved a significant portion of its resources to reallocate in support of the project objectives.

The project's main goal is to enhance women's engagement and leadership in conflict resolution and innovative peace building activities in the region by building women and youth solidarity for peace; supporting creative solutions to conflict prevention; and supporting women's economic engagement and political participation at the local level.

Overall, progress in advancing women's rights has been stifled by the lack of democratic institutions in the Arab countries. Government restrictions on civil society organizations (CSOs) have limited women's space for advocacy and action. Additionally, gender-based obstacles to women's participation in public life revolve around the deeply rooted perception that politics remain a male domain. These are only some of the hurdles women must overcome to attain leadership positions.

² UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was adopted unanimously in October 2000. It is a landmark legal and political framework acknowledging the importance of the participation of women and the inclusion of gender perspectives in peace negotiations, humanitarian planning, peacekeeping operations, post-conflict peace building and governance.

³ UN Security Council Resolution 1820 was adopted unanimously in June 2008. It recognizes that sexual violence in conflict is a threat to international peace and security. The SCR recognizes sexual violence as a tactic of war and the UN's responsibility to improve prevention and protection against the atrocity. The resolution also highlights the link between sexual violence and women's participation and empowerment.

Nevertheless, the unrest and youthful activism in the region is raising hopes and the real potential for political change and reform in a number of the Arab countries. The dynamic situation also presents an opportunity for women to advocate for changes to overcome the obstacles preventing their full participation in public life.

At the same time, the instability poses a danger of retrenchment during which women and their hard-earned gains could be subordinated during the transfer of power. Women and youth who have been at the forefront of the revolutions are at risk of being excluded from the reconstruction and reform decisions and any resulting economic opportunities

With peace-building project activities underway in 2011, revolutionary changes ignited in Tunisia and quickly swept throughout the Middle East and North Africa. The ASRO project management team viewed the regional events as an opportunity to continue capacity-building activities while reorienting them as necessary to respond to the dynamism and hope coursing through the Arab populations due to the popular uprisings and revolutionary changes.

In light of current events, the team believed that by reviewing the current approach and evaluating what is working, the remaining activities could be adjusted, and resources reallocated to respond most effectively to any changing needs of the targeted women and youth. These activities include *providing the needed resources for women and youth to communicate better, express their needs effectively, network with each other more easily and unify their voices*. By acquiring these skills, women and youth will be empowered to participate effectively in expected conflict resolution structures, dialogue committees, and policy negotiations to obtain their rights and achieve their political, economic, and social goals.

Under this project's strategy, UN Women also is focused on increasing the capacity of civil society organizations' leadership skills and their understanding of the rule of law, citizenship, and the human rights based approach—particularly women's groups and emerging young male and female activists. By increasing these skills, future civic leaders and conflict mediators will be equipped to participate skilfully in any on-going or future reform processes.

IV. Results of the Review

The UN Women Peace Building Regional Project has achieved the stated goals of the project. The success of the project is attributable to (1) the ASRO project team's skilled management and program oversight; (2) the country organizations' community-based implementation process; (3) the country partners' multi-dimensional peace building activities; and (4) the overarching regional activities. The outcomes of the national programs have direct and immediate relevance to achieving the project's goals of enhancing the engagement and leadership of women in conflict resolution and innovative peace building activities in the region through building women and youth solidarity for peace. Even the Syria and Yemen's country programs, which were delayed or postponed due to political unrest, still managed to achieve notable inroads towards these goals. In addition, Egypt's research on excluded women has laid the groundwork for future activities. The diverse regional activities also contributed to project success.

The ASRO project team focused its efforts toward achieving the following:

- ❖ **Institutional Development:** The team provided sustained support to develop strong national counterparts. They also developed mechanism for gender mainstreaming by providing technical backstopping and advice for gender-focused activities and capacity building in seven different countries. The project helped to improve the attitudes and capacities for inclusion of gender advocates in national organisations and provided support to events and initiatives in convening women’s forums.
- ❖ **Policy Development and Advocacy:** The team provided the country partners support to undertake evidence-based research to underpin advocacy to eliminate various forms of violence against girls and women and the exclusion of women in decision making. In the long-term, this advocacy is expected eventually to lead to the revision of existing laws and to the review of model laws to honour international commitments on gender equality and women’s empowerment.⁴

Overall, the project’s results are impressive due to the diversity and creativity of the activities implemented in six countries (and those completed in Egypt before the revolution); the amount of work the implementers accomplished in two years to assist excluded women and youth in engaging in peace building activities; the dedication and enthusiasm of the project implementers; and the determination of the country organizations to continue their activities—whether or not the UN Women Peace Building Regional Project continues.

The project’s major gap is the informal nature of regional and country activity monitoring and evaluation (M&E), as well as the unevenness of the country reporting quality. The country project documentation tends not to fully describe the activities undertaken or indicate the positive effects of the activities’ impacts or the significance of what implementers actually accomplished on the ground, which project implementers clarified during teleconferences and meetings. These issues, as well as ways to improve M&E and reporting in the next phase of the project, are discussed below in the section on monitoring and evaluation and regional activities.

1. The ASRO Project Team Management

A great deal of the project’s success is attributable to the ASRO project team’s planning, management, and continual oversight. They carefully selected implementing partners, which were well established, had credibility in their countries, and a record of previous successful project experiences. Despite their differences, the counterparts shared the vision of influencing changes in national policies, laws, decisions, and practices to advance the regional goals of achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment.⁵

Before the project team concluded partnerships with all countries, they had to neutralize the suspicions of several country organizations, which had not worked collaboratively before with an international donor. In some cases, this took months of diplomatic negotiations. Eventually, the ASRO established a working relationship with seven Arab country organizations. The

⁴ Women’s Political Leadership and Economic Empowerment for Peace-building Second Progress Report to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Foreign and Commonwealth Office, January 2010-December 2010, p. 6.

⁵ Ibid, p. 6.

project team's "hands off" management style and flexibility was conducive to gaining the implementers trust and cooperation. Moreover, it may have instilled confidence in the country teams own abilities to implement their project activities since they were not being micromanaged or patronized from Amman.

Throughout 2010, the ASRO project team coordinated with country partners to develop national work plans and allocate budgets for programme activities. They continued holding meetings with partners in each of the seven countries and discussed the partners' objectives and subjects related to the planned studies to analyse women's political participation in their respective countries. They also provided feedback on the partners' objectives and topics for the capacity development workshops, and the priorities and subjects to be discussed during the annual roundtable meetings.⁶

The country implementers reported that the ASRO office provided technical advice, guidance, encouragement, and support to the organizations, but generally let the implementers find their own way. The peace building exercise in itself was a capacity building activity—particularly for those organizations with less development experience—because the process was empowering to the country implementers. One implementer said: "The Amman office was very supportive. The discussions were helpful and coordination was excellent."

In that one of the project's strategies was to increase the capacity of civil society organizations—particularly women's groups and emerging young male and female activists—and considering the varying experience levels of the CSOs, and based on the outcomes, this strategy proved very successful in accomplishing its objective.

One of the greatest strengths of the project was the freedom each implementing agency had to select an issue of importance to women and youth of the country, to research the issue rapidly, and to select activities to address the issue—whether it was political participation, economic development, capacity building, violence against women or some combination of issues. The implementing partners then selected the areas of the country in which they planned to work with marginalized women and youth.

Because of the ASRO project team's management style, the country implementers felt great project ownership, are enthusiastic and energized about the outcomes, and are committed to continuing their activities' successes whether or not the regional project continues under UN Women's auspices.

The regional activities also contributed to the success of the first two phases of the project. Two annual roundtable meetings were held in Beirut and Damascus. Representatives from each of the seven countries attended to discuss their respective activities. Every focal point praised these meetings as an excellent opportunity to network with other implementers, share experiences, ideas, successes, and problems, as well as to explain their priorities, approaches, strategies, and lessons learned to each other. The women from Jordan and Lebanon were surprised to learn that UAE women had any problems at all and few had met Saudi women

⁶ Women's Political Leadership and Economic Empowerment for Peace-building. First Progress Report to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Foreign and Commonwealth Office. November 2008-December 2009. Annex A-B, p.3.

before or knew what problems concerned them. One implementer commented, “It was very interesting to see what was happening in other countries and how they managed to achieve things on the ground even though the context was difficult. It was impressive to hear the Saudi women saying they were working for women’s rights.” These regional meetings are also building a coalition of experienced country leaders who can turn to this network for advice and support in the future. The annual meetings should continue and be enhanced by scheduling pertinent workshops and trainings during the meetings based on the needs of the participants.

2. The Country Organizations Implementation

The process of implementation also contributed to the success of this project. The selected country organizations assumed responsibility for each phase of their respective programs. Each organization selected an issue of importance to the country, province or targeted community that responded to the goals of the project, conducted rapid research, and based their activities on the research results. The ASRO project team held the implementers accountable to deadlines and benchmarks but otherwise the country organizations had freedom to complete their work plans. The country teams appreciated the process and the ASRO project team’s light-handed management style and oversight.

The country teams’ assumption of project responsibility was in itself a successful capacity building exercise. Each country produced a workable program contributing to the projected outcomes. Project partners agree, “The activities implemented under the project have enhanced their capacities to influence policies, agendas, and practices with respect to gender equality and also in contributing to the development of national action plans.”⁷ Six country organizations successfully implemented their proposed activities, empowering marginalized women and youth across the region. Even though the Egypt team was unable to implement its planned activities due to the revolution, it still produced research materials that will be useful in planning activities during the project extension.

The country activities were creative, unique, and responsive to the issues facing women and youth in the respective countries. The activities contributed to the project goals of reaching excluded women and youth and supporting creative solutions to conflict-prevention, and supporting women’s economic engagement and political participation. The Peace Building Regional Project demonstrated that the participating country organizations are highly capable of successfully implementing complex activities and producing excellent knowledge products, as well as conducting effective trainings to empower women and youth.

3. The Country Activities

The success of the project was also due to each country’s freedom to self-select its issue and implement pertinent activities. The country organizations produced diverse research and training materials, which will be useful for other countries of the region and beyond. The women, youth, and men who participated in the activities have been empowered in many different ways. The following section describes each implementing partner and highlights the

⁷ Women’s Political Leadership and Economic Empowerment for Peace-building Second Progress Report to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Foreign and Commonwealth Office, January 2010-December 2010, p. 5.

activities and successes of each country's activities.⁸ Table 1 summarizes the country activities in relation to achievement of the project objectives.

Egypt. The National Council of Women (NCW), established by presidential decree and headed by former First Lady Susan Mubarak, established an extensive social, economic, and political network throughout Egypt. Although the quasi-governmental NCW's Cairo office was destroyed during the February 2011 revolution, plans exist for its restructuring.

The NCW conducted a literature review about the economic, political, and social situation of excluded Egyptian women. It was also collaborating with UN Women, the United Nations Children's Fund, and the United Nations Population Fund to compile accurate and current data about adolescents and youth. UN Woman was working in conjunction with the Egyptian National Statistics Department to collect gender-disaggregated data.

The NCW had selected Minya Governorate to implement activities in economic empowerment, violence against women, and leadership skills for women. Aside from the literature reviews, the NCW was unable to implement planned activities due to the revolution and therefore returned the project grant to UN Women.

Nonetheless, the literature reviews provides a broad overview about the current situation of excluded Egyptian women in the economic, social, and political spheres and very general ideas for change through policies and programs. For example, for combatting violence against women, such as female circumcision (female genital mutilation [FGM]), the following suggestions are made, but no detailed plan for activities or programming is offered.

1. Break silence
2. Link female circumcision with women issues such as education
3. Increase awareness regarding negative medical and psychological impact
4. Approach society leaders who have social influence to assist in very closed communities.

The economic, political, and social literature review reports would be more useful if the recommendations referenced the individual studies reviewed, instead of listing the sources as a general bibliography, especially if the ASRO project team decides to include the review reports on the project website.

For the project extension, the Egypt implementer proposed conducting a human rights campaign in the select governorate. This could be a logical progression from the research, particularly since a rule of law manual was reportedly being prepared in Egypt, and during the current unrest and military rule, such training would be pertinent. Whether UN Women continues to work with the NCW or selects another civil society group for the extension, the goals and activities for this phase need to be detailed and related to the findings of the research.

⁸ This project review and assessment is based on a review of regional and country documentation noted in the bibliography and brief teleconferences with implementers. Not all research studies and few training materials were available for review. No onsite visits with beneficiaries were made.

Jordan. The Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD) has 50 community centres located throughout the country. JOHUD/The Queen Zein al Sharaf Institute for Development (ZENID) carried out qualitative research in the north, south and central regions of the country: Umm Al Jamal (Mafraq), Al Quweira (Aqaba) and Naqira (Amman).

Insightful focus group discussions found similar cultural, social, tribal, economic, religious, traditional, and political obstacles to public political participation for all three regions. The research found that public participation of women is weak and restricted to social visits and occasions. Males interviewed view female participation as detrimental to women's expected duties in the home. Women and female youths said the culture of shame precludes them from leaving the house to participate and mix with men. "Women are dominated by fear of the family's reaction if they bring up the idea of participating in the elections or the freedom of voting."

Violence against women, including early marriage, is also a significant problem in these communities and is perpetrated by brothers as well as fathers. The tribal system obligates male and female members to elect the candidate of the same tribe, qualified or not. Economic obstacles limit participation in public and political affairs; poverty forces individuals' priorities towards survival.

Based on the research findings, JOHUD implemented peace building activities in the three Bedouin communities. They included training in human rights, including UN SCR 1325 and SCR 1820, political participation, communication and elections, legal awareness and networking skills, and training community volunteers. JOHUD involved tribal leaders in the activities to avoid direct confrontation and to gain community cooperation.

As part of political development, JOHUD held two interactive theatre performances to raise awareness of the election process and citizen participation. Youth and students participated in a painting activity to express their own reality of women and youth's participation in political and public life. These activities were well received. One youth commented, "We never had the opportunity to express our feelings before; we've never been asked to share our opinions."

JOHUD established committees composed of males and females to moderate religious discourse on Friday and to teach Islamic precepts on the importance of women and youth participation in decision-making and in political and public life. Local communities held meetings with municipal leaders to exchange ideas. Project participants held mock parliaments in front of decision makers and mock election cycles to debate issues. They also held a one-day conference to document civil society organizations' efforts to promote women's participation in public and political life and submitted recommendations to the Ministry of Political Development.

These programs appear to be responsive to the research findings, well-targeted, and filling critical needs in political participation and economic empowerment for marginalized men, women, and youth. The feedback from the beneficiaries is very positive. The ASRO project team should review JOHUDs training programs for possible dissemination to other parts of the country through training of trainers. The materials could also be made available region-wide

through the project website.

During the project extension, JOHUD proposes to continue empowering youth by supporting the growth of debating clubs and encouraging women and youth to participate in municipal affairs through various activities. Building participation at the local level seems particularly important in the targeted excluded areas.

Lebanon. The Collective for Research and Training on Development-Action (CRTDA) is a nongovernmental organization. CRTDA's research focused on identifying factors to motivate rural women to participate in political life at the municipal level. CRTDA conducted interviews in North and South Lebanon and the Beka'a Valley with women municipal candidates to answer the question: "What are the challenges that affect rural women's participation in local municipal elections." The research found that women were motivated to participate in political work due to support from male member(s) of the family; a personal desire to change her situation and conditions; affiliation to active political parties; and a personal interest in public affairs.⁹

CRTDA reported that it conducted a fact-finding study of women candidates in the previous municipal elections as well as a gender analysis of women in the 2010 municipal elections including a critical analysis of a proposed women's quota system.

The implementer also did rapid appraisal on women and economic security by surveying 150-200 women from different social strata to examine the concept and practice of women's care work; the ways in which care work is determined by prevailing relations of gender within the household and the community; and the contribution of care work towards the economy in Lebanon and towards women's economic empowerment.

As a result of the research, training focused on economic and social empowerment, leadership and political participation, household gender relations, and qualitative research tools. Three trainings targeted staff of the Ministry of Social Affairs while all other training targeted local women in urban and rural communities.

Economic empowerment was the main part of the project activities, particularly creating and supporting rural women's agricultural cooperatives. Some 33 cooperatives are working to expand their food production, including biscuits, dates, lentils, and jam and received socioeconomic training according to CRTDA's reports. Trainings focused on governance and legal structure, product development, capacity building, and leadership. CRTDA also held training in marketing for women producers and cooperatives of all ages. A sustainable market outlet for rural women producers and cooperatives was established. The economic development contributed to political participation in political life, leading some women to run in municipal elections.

CRTDA also produced *Gender Equality Social Empowerment & Economic Empowerment: A Training Tool Kit*. The documentation, however, does not indicate whether the tool kit was used

⁹ Study on Women's Political Participation info sheet for Lebanon.

in training. The ASRO project team should review the tool kit to determine its efficacy and possible use for trainings in other countries. Although CRTDA's project reports are well written, they would be enhanced by details and a presentation of the monitoring and evaluation mechanism.

For the project extension period, CRTDA would like to prepare policy briefs. The ASRO project team will need to work with CRTDA to clarify the intended subjects for future studies and how they will advance the peace building project goals.

Saudi Arabia. The Ladies Committee of Gassim (Al-Qassim) is an NGO. The committee conducted rapid research on the hijab (veil) as a means to empower women's participation and economic empowerment. Interviews with 600 women established the need for income generation projects for marginalized women who wanted to start small businesses to work from home. Women in this central region of Saudi Arabia are interested in entrepreneurship because the government gives women only part-time public sector contracts, e.g., as teachers or nurses. Therefore, women need other income alternatives. The Ladies Committee trained participating women in business skills, lending, communication, training in leadership and good governance. Because women lack access to banks or credit and have no ownership to secure a loan, the committee also provides quick and seasonal loans outside the scope of this project, thus complementing its activities.

The committee also researched whether the hijab was an obstacle for working women to participate in the work force or in local business organizations. These women entrepreneurs wanted to gain membership to the Chamber of Commerce in Gassim as a means of empowerment and to support their business ventures. Research determined that the hijab was supportive of women's lives and aspirations. Emboldened by their training and the research results, Saudi businesswomen applied and were accepted as members to the Chamber of Commerce. The women also participated in dialogue sessions with men from the Chamber. "Women are no longer afraid to go to the Chamber themselves. They have value. They are recognized," the implementer said.

Young women were also encouraged to volunteer in support of various health issues, such as cancer, because there are few outlets or activities for young women in Gassim. Health issues were used as an entry point for volunteerism because "anything related to women is considered feminist" and is not socially acceptable. The implementer reported that the Gassim training manuals are being used in Makkah and Medina. The ASRO project team should obtain the training manuals to assess their applicability to other countries and for possible e-publication on the project website.

During the project extension, the project implementer in Saudi Arabia would like to expand business training and to facilitate Gassim women's membership to the local Chamber of Commerce. Since the research indicated that there is a dearth of employment opportunities in Gassim, expanding economic opportunities through entrepreneurship seems logical. And, empowering women's participation through chamber of commerce membership in Saudi Arabia is audacious and deserving of a media story.

Syria General Women Union was established in 1967 and is a semi-governmental organization. The central office is located in Damascus with 14 other offices. The Union held

parliament workshop trainings to raise capacity. A series of workshops were also conducted on women's rights for 92 women from the three governorates of Damascus, Aleppo, and Lattakia. The Union also conducted a research study on the crimes of honour and their cultural and non-religious basis. This study was launched in Damascus on international women's day. Because of the study's initial dissemination, some laws were amended and the penalty has been increased to at least seven years, according to the Union's reports. Lobbying and advocacy is on-going to increase the penalty for these crimes. Five TV sketches also were created to raise awareness and reduce the practice.

A planned national strategy against VAW is being developed but was slowed by the current violence. Another activity was team building among women. In each governorate, the Union identified women leaders to participate in government and trained them in leadership skills. These women created networks to communicate with each other, which is on-going. Activities included two symposium and workshops on SCR 1325 and SCR 1820.

The Syrian report on crimes of honour is a particularly important research work. It should be widely disseminated in electronic and print forms, including professionally edited and submitted for publication to both English and Arabic peer-reviewed journals. This study could form the basis for advocacy against the practice region wide and be the basis of a dynamic VAW media campaign. Shaykhs and tribal leaders could receive copies of edited versions for Friday discourse at mosques and community discussion. Edited version should be included on the project website.

During the project extension, the Union would like to continue its VAW campaign efforts. Evidently, VAW is a significant problem in Syria. Their efforts should be supported.

United Arab Emirates. The Family Development Foundation undertook a study of 261 women aged 21-40 in the marginalized western region of Abu Dhabi (Al Gharbia). Based on the research, the implementers geared its activities to empowering women socially and economically by providing economic skills and finding new work opportunities. Bedouin women prefer to work from their homes. The survey found that 70% wanted to start a business; 42.5% have no idea about private sector work and are not focused on any specific sector; 24% wanted to becoming engaged in craft work; and 56% expressed the need for technical and administrative training to improve their current enterprises.

The beneficiaries received capacity building and business training. They wanted to improve themselves and reportedly, the results are remarkable. One of the pillars of the Foundation is project sustainability. The foundation has a monitoring body that does monthly and quarterly verification. Although the UAE training materials were not available for this review, the ASRO project team should review them to determine whether they would be of use to other countries of the region by making them available on the project website.

The UAE project documentation is particularly sparse; therefore, a full understanding of project activities requires documentation that is more detailed.

During the extension, the UAE implementer proposed conducting human rights advocacy and VAW awareness activities. Domestic violence in the UAE is evidently widespread. The ASRO project team should review the activities the partner proposes to determine if they adhere to the

community-responsive strategy of the project.

Yemen. The Yemeni Women's Union, a semi-governmental organization, was established in 1968 and has 22 centres and 100s of branches. The Yemeni Women's Union engaged a consultant to lead a rapid assessment on the topics of the gender division of labour, education, early marriage, decision-making, health access, and violence pertaining to marginalized male and female youths aged 15-30 living in rural areas of Laheg, Maa'fir (Taiz region), and Al Mahweet. The study concluded that child marriage in Yemen is a type of sexual and gender-based violence, which also restricts the access of boys and girls to further schooling. Based on the research, the Union chose to focus on early marriage—i.e., weddings celebrated between youths under 15 years old—to prevent maternal mortality and infant mortality rates, which are among the highest in the world. In Yemen, 48.4% of women under 18 are married. To raise awareness of the issue and myths about birth control, social and religious educators visited the rural areas of Nihm and Al Hisn outside of Sana'a. The project team coordinated activities with the shaykh, school principle, and local council representatives.

Implementers overcame suspicion in one community by talking to the village local council. Although the leaders were suspicious, they agreed to partner with the local clinic, believing they would receive some benefit from the initiative. A mobile health clinic was an incentive for males and females to attend gatherings and schools to hear the briefings. Doctors saw more than 2,600 people during the early marriage awareness sessions. Twenty community educators were trained from Al Mahweet, Al Taweela, and Shibam Kawkaban districts. Implementers prepared messages for TV broadcast and a TV miniseries to deal with the issue and raise awareness about early marriage, family planning, education, women's and children's rights.

Because of the current turmoil and difficulty of travel in Yemen, future project activities will use the media. Implementers already have created radio messages about early marriage. The Union's goal is to focus training on communities, particularly educators and trainers of trainers (TOT) to spread the message. The project already has had some success in preventing early marriages. The message that early marriages were actually against Islamic teachings convinced one man not to marry his daughters early.

The Yemen project implementers would like to continue their VAW activity by TOT to educate against early marriages. Due to the current unrest, they plan to implement media campaigns using TV and radio.

4. Regional Activities

Roundtable Meetings. Since the beginning of the project, UN Woman ASRO has held two annual meetings with project partners. During the roundtable meetings in Beirut and Damascus, the project team used the time to discuss objectives and subjects related to the planned studies that analyse women's political participation in their respective countries; objectives and topics of the capacity development workshops; and priorities and subjects to be discussed during the roundtable meetings. Such interactions with programme partners strengthened the relationship between UN Women and its counterparts and fostered a more enabling working environment. This learning event is very popular with country partners and should be continued during the extension and enhanced with workshops.

Peace Building Regional Project Website. A corresponding project website is planned and materials are being planned for uploading. This website will be a particularly powerful tool for activists and civil society to use in the current unstable regional environment. The website is included as a regional activity during the project's extension.

Rule of Law Manual. The ASRO project team published a rule of law manual designed to train civil society activists in facilitating rule of law discussions. The manual includes a total of five modules related to the promotion of respect for the rule of law. The objectives of the manuals are to familiarise participants with the court structure and functions, and to educate accessing the judicial system to settle disputes. Where and how the manual has been disseminated is unclear. An electronic version should be made available on the project website.

Table 1. Peace Building Project Regional & Country Activities, 2009-2011

Objective Strengthen political leadership and promote women's economic empowerment for peace building by increasing: (1) Women's leadership capacity, (2) Access to economic opportunities	Objective 1 Develop leadership skills of women groups at all levels of society for effective participation in decision making and peace building processes	Objective 2 Advocate for the formulation and implementation of economic policy and legislation that promotes equal opportunity in the private and public sectors	Objective 3 Propagate knowledge towards democratic and innovative solutions and emerging issues as well as finding innovative solutions towards conflict resolution through peace building processes within communities
Implementer	Regional & Country Activities		
Regional ASRO	*Capacity building in gender mainstreaming for country implementers during annual roundtable *On-going project support for country implementers in 7 countries		*Preparing to update website with social inclusion & citizenship materials *Prepared rule of law manual on women's human rights to train youth activists * Workshops for government bodies & civil society in all 7 countries on UN SCR 1325/1820, governance, rule of law
Egypt National Council of Women (NCW)			*Research reports on economic, social and political situation of excluded Egyptian women *Survey of young people in Egypt

Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD)	*Human rights training for women & youth *Youth volunteers in targeted areas *Political participation training women & youth *Mock parliament for youth		*Assigned rural community leader; programs to meet community needs *Women & youth visit to parliament * Trained 200 Bedouin women, SCRs 1325/1820
Lebanon CRTDA	*Training in leadership and political participation for rural women cooperatives *Prepared gender & socioeconomic empowerment manual	*Training in social and economic empowerment, market access for 125 rural women	*Study on municipal candidates *Research study on rural women's economic requirements
Saudi Arabia Ladies Committee of Gassim	*Leadership, business skills training for excluded women	*Small business training for young women	*Hijab research study *Women joined Chamber of Commerce
Syrian General Women Union	*Team building, political participation, leadership skills for 92 young male & female community leaders		*Research on honour crimes in Syria *Developing national VAW strategy *TV flashes raising awareness on honour crimes *Training on SCRs 1325/1820
UAE, Family Development Foundation	*Leadership and communication training for women 21-40	*Technical training for excluded women to establish businesses in the western region	*Research to assess economic needs of Bedouin women 21-40
Yemen Women Union	*Training men and women in the health dangers of early marriage		*Research study on early marriage from religious and health perspective *VAW awareness session in 24 villages; 1,112 women & 791 men participated

V. Redefining the Project 2012 to 2013

The following proposed country and regional activities for the UN Women Peace Building project extension are based on (1) discussions with the ASRO project team; (2) teleconferences and meetings with the country implementers; (3) a desk review of the available project documentation; (4) the funding available for continuing project activities; (5) the feasibility of conducting the activities in the forthcoming 18-24 months based on the project team and the implementers assessments; (6) the expected positive outputs based on the organizations successful implementation of activities during the first phases of the project, in spite of regional unrest; and (7) the opportunity to seize the momentum to reinforce and expand project activities among excluded women and youth in the seven countries.

The experience of UN Women in the Arab region has shown that the attainment of political and economic rights is a viable entry point for such a programme. Economic security is critical to women's social as well as political empowerment. Women's financial gains will not only support their immediate and individual economic needs, but will go beyond that to strengthen their social status and political bargaining powers. Therefore, UN Women has strategically chosen the enhancement of the economic and political rights of both women and youth as a pivotal means to address some of the major causes of dissatisfaction and radicalisation in the region, particularly among youth.

The feedback from beneficiaries participating in the Peace Building Regional Project indicates that there is a real need and enthusiasm among women and youth for training in political participation and economic empowerment. What is also evident is that political participation and human rights trainings must be systematic, strategic, and on-going to effect change, and not merely sporadic events based on the election cycle or to celebrate international women's day. Many of the concepts that implementers are teaching challenge long-held cultural beliefs. Therefore, learning activities for the targeted populations must be sustained, reinforced, expanded, and practiced repeatedly for extended periods to effect lasting change.

The following regional activities have the potential to engage stakeholders in the seven project countries, as well other ASRO countries. A major attraction of these proposed regional activities is that they will overcome obstacles of time and space. Women and youth will be able to access a plethora of educational information day or night wherever they can access the Internet.

However, because significant areas within the regions have slow or costly Internet access, in addition to electronic access to material, ASRO should make select training materials available as published documents, e.g., rule of law manual, and/or as CDs/DVDs for dissemination, e.g., leadership, communication or business training. During the current regional instability, political transitions, and in some countries, open conflict, while travel in the country may be restricted, localized activities may still be possible with access to virtual and/or published information.

A. Proposed Regional Activities

1. Collect Peace Building Regional Project knowledge products

The Peace Building Regional Project outputs include research and analysis on early marriage, crimes of honor, and training manuals on rule of law, economic empowerment, political participation, leadership, and a gender tool kit, etc. To prepare the material for dissemination through the project website and publication of booklets/CDs, the ASRO project team needs to collect each countries research and training materials. This material, once obtained could be processed and utilized as follows:

1. The research studies regarding honour crimes in Syria and early marriage in Yemen—both important issues in many countries in the region—warrant their publication either in peer-reviewed Arabic and English journals or as edited papers on the website. The authors' presentations could also be filmed and added to the website or

- disseminated through radio or TV. Multiple media outlets should be considered for disseminating these important knowledge materials regionally.
2. The training manuals and tool kits produced by the countries and ASRO should be selected, professionally edited, and made available in Arabic on the project website.
 3. Selected knowledge products could be published as booklets or CDs to distribute to NGOs and CBOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) for training purposes, particularly to areas without ease of Internet access (a significant issue).
 4. Working groups from the project countries could be created to review and synthesize the training material into regional tool kits. For example, implementers from Syria and Yemen could constitute a VAW working group, Jordan and Lebanon political participation, and Saudi Arabia and UAE economic empowerment. The annual meetings could be the venue to discuss, prepare, and finalize regional training materials.

2. Transform ASRO Project Website into a Dynamic Virtual Knowledge Portal

Once the project materials are selected and prepared, they should be made available in Arabic on the website. This material will provide widely available cross-regional training materials for download at low cost to implementers, activists, and civil society; thereby make learning materials accessible to the intended audience. Providing the materials in English would also be useful to others, including donors, but accessible Arabic language materials are the first priority. The knowledge portal for the Peace Building Regional Project may include some or all of the following:

- An Arabic version of the project website with select peace building materials. Ideally, the website will be bilingual, Arabic-English.
- Downloadable training manuals, e.g., rule of law, political participation, economic empowerment and other critical skills development
- Select country activities and reports which would be useful regionally
- Selected training of trainers' manuals, e.g., political participation, rule of law.
- Violence against women campaign materials
- Crimes of honor and early marriage research and training materials
- Video training sessions on economic issues and political leadership
- YouTube dedicated ASRO channel of videos if possible
- A virtual art gallery of Jordanian youth's artistic work
- Photos of beneficiaries and activities, e.g., cooperatives, mock parliaments, etc.
- Radio and TV media campaigns, public service announcements

3. Roundtable Conference with Country Implementers and ASRO Project Team

The annual roundtables should be continued during the project extension. Every country implementer mentioned the value of the annual roundtables. This event provided an important opportunity for women and men from other Arab countries to network, share experiences and research, gain valuable knowledge, and learn how others overcame challenges. It was also a rare occasion to learn about women from other countries,

particularly the issues affecting women from the Gulf countries, for whom misperceptions are common and knowledge is lacking.

Workshops should be held during the annual meetings. Suggested workshop subjects include project monitoring and evaluation, effective report writing, and other capacity building skills as determined by ASRO and the country implementers. Committees could be created from among the country implementers to focus on individual topics or initiatives, e.g., legal reform, rural development, elections, VAW, etc., to produce regional toolkits on different approaches to women's empowerment at the communities level, with case studies from different countries. Working on producing a joint deliverable, such as a toolkit, will contribute to capacity building, regional networking, and strengthen regional links.

Country implementers could participate in preparing the annual conference agenda, perhaps by assisting ASRO in drafting the roundtable program. By including the country implementers in the conference planning, the project will continue to build regional capacity by incorporating programming and workshops responsive to the countries' respective needs.

B. Proposed Country Activities

Women's participation in the political arena is relatively new, and the cultural and social obstacles for women in the Arab region are numerous and daunting. Women remain woefully unaware of their human rights or how to exercise them. Therefore, continuing the project's comprehensive approach, which addresses social and cultural issues, should be continued in country activities planned for the extension.

The activities proposed for the seven participating countries are based on the activities that the implementers would like to continue doing or add to respond to the research findings, and for Egypt, Syria, and Yemen, those activities that are possible to implement during the current political unrest. It is important to note that the implementers spontaneously proposed these activities during the teleconferences. Each country organization should therefore submit a written proposal to ASRO detailing its proposed activities during the extension. The ASRO project team will need to review each proposal's detail and discuss any modifications with the country implementers.

Because of its familiarity with the project partners and the respective countries' issues, the ASRO project team endorses the general focus of these proposed country activities as feasible during the project extension. Continuing a community-based strategy of implementing and expanding successful activities to engage excluded women and youth has proven highly effective and is in accord with the Peace Building Regional Project goals of increasing women's leadership capacity and access to economic opportunities.

Table 2 presents the proposed country activities for the UN Women Peace Building Regional Project extension in a logical framework strategy and in Table 3 as an implementation strategy. Both tables will need to be updated and finalized once the countries and regional project activities are detailed, finalized, and approved for the extension by ASRO.

Table 2. Logical Framework for Women’s Political Leadership and Economic Empowerment for Peace Building Regional Project Strategy for Program Extension, 2012-13¹⁰

Development Objective/Goal	Impact	Measurable Indicators/Targets	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
Strengthen political leadership and promote women’s economic empowerment for peace building by increasing women’s leadership capacity and access to economic opportunities	Including women as active citizens will create a more harmonized society at the community level	Women’s ranking on international measure	National Reports	On-going social and political unrest and economic disruptions in some countries has slowed implementation, e.g., in Egypt, Syria, and Yemen, which may affect other countries.
Objective 1	Outcome	Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
Develop women’s leadership skills at all societal levels to effectively participate in decision making and peace building processes	*Increase the percentage of women local decision makers *Rural and excluded women become active against VAW	*Women community leaders increase *Increase NGOs, CBOs & civil society opposing & monitoring VAW at local level	*National statistics *Number of reported new cases	*Accurate reporting & VAW data
Regional Activities	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
*Collect project knowledge products, prepare for website & publication as booklets, CDs, info sheets. *Create Internet knowledge portal for peace building knowledge and training material *Hold project roundtable with country implementers & hold training workshops during meetings	*Increase regional access to knowledge & training material for women & youth *Strengthen regional capacity building & network of women leaders and trainers; enhance technical skills at workshops	*Requests for training materials *Website counter; number of document downloads *Increase implementers technical skills as TOT	*User feedback from online comments & surveys *Disaggregated provincial and national data *Increase in national and community activists using available materials	*Project material is accessible and disseminated effectively *Available resources to prepare & publish project materials *Security situation conducive for participants to travel to roundtable conference

¹⁰ Many of the risks and assumptions of the project’s extension are similar to those for the first phase of the project 2009-2011.

Jordan Activities¹¹	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<p>*Expand citizen community associations interaction with municipal officials</p> <p>*Increase debate clubs for youth to train in communication skills</p>	<p>*Politically involved community activists peacefully resolve local governance issues</p> <p>*Skilled empowered youth participate in peace building</p>	<p>*Increased citizen satisfaction with municipal services</p> <p>*Number of emerging youth leaders and community activists</p>	<p>*Public surveys on attitude toward local government</p> <p>*Number of youth and women participating in local government</p>	<p>*Skilled trainers continue local capacity building efforts</p>
Objective 2	Outcome	Indicator	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<p>Advocate for the formulation and implementation of economic policy and legislation that promotes equal opportunity in the private and public sectors.</p>	<p>New gender sensitive policies and legislations formulated for women's economic participation in the private and public sectors.</p>	<p>Increase in the percentage of women economically active in both the private and public sectors within excluded communities.</p>	<p>National statistics reports and studies.</p>	
Lebanon Activities¹²	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<p>*Prepare policy briefs on political and economic issues</p> <p>*Expand agricultural co-op program for rural women</p>	<p>*Greater understanding of obstacles to women's leadership and economic empowerment</p> <p>*Increase in economically empowered rural women</p>	<p>*Actionable plans based on research</p> <p>*Increase in women-owned sustainable businesses</p>	<p>*M&E activities reporting</p> <p>*Project monitoring reports; national data</p>	<p>*Policy briefs approved by ASRO project team</p>
Saudi Arabia Activities	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<p>*Expand business training for Ladies Committee members</p> <p>*Increase women members of Chamber of Commerce</p>	<p>*Increased women's businesses and economic empowerment</p> <p>*Excluded women involved in local business community</p>	<p>*Increase economic activity of unemployed women</p> <p>*Increase in women's chamber membership and community involvement</p>	<p>*M&E activities reporting</p> <p>*Number of chamber members</p>	<p>*Lack of development centres; transportation difficulties; implementation delays due to extended national holidays</p>

¹¹ JOHUD is apparently already implementing these activities and would like to expand them. Country implementers should submit a detailed proposal to correspond to ASRO's request for proposal (RFP) criteria before the proposed activities are approved.

¹² CRTDA needs to clarify with ASRO the subjects of its proposed policy briefs it proposes.

Objective 3	Outcome	Indicator	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
Propagate knowledge towards democratic and innovative solutions and emerging issues as well as finding innovative solutions towards conflict resolution through peace building processes within communities	*Excluded women have improved dialogue, political participation, economic opportunity and peace building initiative. *Enrich the opportunities for women and youth to participate more widely in community activities and advocate for peace building	Higher percentage of women and youth actively involved in community initiatives Increase in the number of women and youth participating in community activities and advocating for peace	National statistics reports Establish and incorporation of peace building in women and youth societies.	
Egypt Activities¹³	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
*Human rights campaign	*Increase awareness of human rights during transition	*Increase local activism in support of human rights *Changes in laws to protect human rights; code enforcement	*Human rights monitoring & surveys *Media coverage	*Political and legal reform; security situation improves
Syria Activities	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
*Disseminate honour crimes training and education to 12 governorates *VAW campaign	*Increase awareness of cultural and non-religious basis of crimes & activism against it *Community activism against all violence	*Reduced number of crimes; increase penalties for crimes *Increased protection of women & children	*New penalties and enforcement *Media reports *National statistics	*Political violence subsides to implement activities
UAE Activities¹⁴	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
*Human rights advocacy *VAW campaign	*Empowered women and youth in western UAE advocating for rights *Increased activism by rural women against violence	*Targeted women and youth assuming community leadership roles *Reduced incidents of VAW; increased penalties	*Country reports *National data	*Lack of enforcement; backlash

¹³ The Egypt project partner was unable to implement activities due to the revolution. The partner should submit a proposal detailing activities to ASRO.

¹⁴ The UAE project implementer indicated that VAW in UAE is a major problem. The partner should submit details of proposed activities for the extension.

Yemen Activities	Outputs	Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
<p>*TOT to educate marginalized women and rural communities on dangers of early marriages</p> <p>*Radio campaign of health and religious messages against early marriage</p>	<p>*Increase in communities educated about the dangers of early marriage</p> <p>*Women and youth in rural areas educated against dangers</p>	<p>*Decrease in early marriages in targeted communities</p> <p>*National data on early marriages and childbirth</p>	<p>*Provincial and national data</p> <p>*Reports and follow ups studies</p>	<p>*Political violence prevents training activities.</p>

Table 3. Logical Framework Implementation Strategy for Peace Building Regional Project Extension, 2012-13

Activities	Inputs	Estimated Cost US\$	Responsible for mobilizing inputs
Regional *Collect project knowledge products, prepare for website & publication as booklets, CDs, info sheets.	Arabic/English Editors Communication specialist Publisher-as consultant Meeting Costs Advisors Costs (if needed)	50,000	Project Manager Project Associate
*Create Internet knowledge portal for peace building knowledge and training material *	Web designer Communication/ Multimedia specialist-as consultant	25,000	Project Manager Project Associate
*Hold 2 project roundtable with country implementers & hold training workshops during meetings	Workshop facilitators	36,000	Project Manager Project Associate
*Prepare training materials for monitoring, evaluation and reporting	Project team or Consultant	10,000	Project Manager Project Associate
*Prepare request for proposal for country partners to submit detailed activity plans for review	Project Manager Project Associate	0	Project Manager Project Associate
	Project Management Team (2 years)	150,000	
	Communication costs	10,000	
	Webmaster	10,000	
	Regional Travel	15,000	
	Translation	10,000	
	Consultants	25,000	
	Evaluation costs	50,000	
Country Partners		341,000	
Egypt *Human rights campaign	To be determined	15,000	Egypt Program Coordinator
Jordan *Expand citizen community associations interaction with municipal officials *Increase debate clubs for youth to train in communication skills	Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD)	15,000	Jordan Program Coordinator
Lebanon *Prepare policy briefs on political and economic issues *Expand agricultural co-op program for rural women	CRTDA	15,000	Lebanon Program Coordinators
Saudi Arabia *Expand business training for Ladies Committee members *Increase women members of Chamber of Commerce	Ladies Committee of Gassim	15,000	Saudi Arabia Program Coordinators
Syria *Disseminate honour crimes	Syrian General Women Union	25,000	Syria Program Coordinators

training and education to 12 governorates *VAW campaign			
UAE *Human rights advocacy *VAW campaign	UAE, Family Development Foundation	15,000	UAE Program Coordinator
Yemen *TOT to educate marginalized women and rural communities on dangers of early marriages *Radio campaign of health and religious messages against early marriage	Yemen Women Union	25,000	Yemen Program Coordinator
Estimated Country Activities Cost		125,000	
Total Estimated Cost		466,000	

VI. Management Arrangements

The UN Women Peace Building Regional Project should continue to be managed by the current ASRO team. They are familiar with the country organizations, have shepherded the projects successfully through the first round of activities, and have established an excellent rapport with the implementers, who turn to the project team for advice, guidance, and feedback.

The ASRO project team has also done a very good job of holding project implementers to agreed deadlines and providing continuing support and project backstopping. This has ensured the timely implementation of activities and report submissions necessary for good project management.

In addition, a skilled communication professional and webmaster would be excellent additions to the team to assist in website redesign, packaging of training materials for publishing hand-outs, documents, and CDs, as well as for video productions, media relations, marketing, and to disseminate project training materials and research products to NGOs, CBOs, and activist, and to increase awareness of UN Women’s Peace Building Regional Project so other interested organizations could benefit from project materials and lessons learned.

VII. Monitoring and Evaluation

Two different monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes will be on-going during the project extension:

1. ASRO’s monitoring and evaluation of the regional activities and the country implementers and activities, and,
2. The country organizations monitoring and evaluation of their respective activities.

The project reporting needs to be improved. The project documentation does not give a clear indication of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) structure or mechanisms used for each

country's project implementation or its role in monitoring and evaluating project activities. Consequently, it is difficult to review the project's M&E effectiveness.

To improve monitoring, evaluation and reporting skills, one of the regional activities could be to produce training modules in monitoring, evaluation, and report writing to assist country organizations to incorporate M&E in their project designs. This training material could also be used to advantage as workshop material during the annual roundtable. The modules could also be included on the project website or published in Arabic for distribution in each country. UN Women could provide implementers with suggested formats for M&E and reporting requirements. Table 4 presents a performance-monitoring framework with ideas for M&E, which country organizations will need to refine for their own context.

Table 4. Monitoring and Evaluation Peace Building Project Activities 2012-2013

Expected Results	Indicators	Sources/ Means of Verification	Baseline	Collection Methods	Responsible
Regional *Increase regional access to knowledge & training material for women & youth *Strengthen regional capacity building & network of women leaders and trainers; enhance technical skills at workshops	*Requests for training materials *Website counter; number of document downloads *Increase implementers technical skills as TOT	*User feedback from online user comments & surveys *Disaggregated provincial and national data *Increase in national & community activists using website materials	Start of project 2009 and extension 1/1/2012	Quantitative and qualitative M&E pre- and post-training	Webmaster ASRO project team
Egypt *Increase awareness of human rights during transition	*Increase local activism in support of human rights *Changes in laws to protect human rights; code enforcement	*Human rights monitoring & surveys *Media coverage	Start of project 2009 and extension 1/1/2012	Quantitative and qualitative M&E pre- and post-training	To be determined
Jordan *Politically involved community activists peacefully resolve local governance issues *Skilled empowered youth participate in peace building	*Increased citizen satisfaction with municipal services *Number of emerging youth leaders and community activists	*Public surveys on attitude toward local government *Number of youth and women participating in local government	Start of project 2009 and extension 1/1/2012	Quantitative and qualitative M&E pre- and post-training	JOHUD project team
Lebanon			Start of	Quantitative	CRTDA

*Greater understanding of obstacles to women's leadership and economic empowerment *Increase in economically empowered rural women	*Actionable plans based on research *Increase in women-owned sustainable businesses	*M&E activities reporting *Project monitoring reports; national data	project 2009 and extension 1/1/2012	and qualitative M&E pre- and post-training	project team
Saudi Arabia *Increased women's businesses and economic empowerment *Excluded women involved in local business community	*Increase economic activity of unemployed women *Increase in women's membership and community involvement	*M&E activity reporting *Number of chamber members	Start of project 2009 and extension 1/1/2012	Quantitative and qualitative M&E pre- and post-training	Ladies Committee of Gassim
Syria *Increase awareness of cultural and non-religious basis of crimes & activism against it *Community activism against all violence	*Reduced number of crimes; increase penalties for crimes *Increased protection of women & children	*New penalties & enforcement *Media reports *National statistics	Start of project 2009 and extension 1/1/2012	Quantitative and qualitative M&E pre- and post-training	Syrian General Women Union
UAE *Empowered women and youth in western UAE advocating for rights *Increased activism by rural women against violence	*Targeted women & youth assuming community leadership roles *Reduced incidents of VAW; increased penalties	*Country reports *National data	Start of project 2009 and extension 1/1/2012	Quantitative and qualitative M&E pre- and post-training	Family Development Foundation
Yemen *Increase in communities educated about the dangers of early marriage *Women & youth in rural areas educated against dangers	*Decrease in early marriages *NGOs and government agencies monitoring the practice	*Provincial and national data *Reports and follow ups studies	Start of project 2009 and extension 1/1/2012	Quantitative and qualitative M&E pre- and post-training	Yemen Women Union

VIII. Analysis of Risks and Assumptions

The greatest risk to the project for the near future is the political unrest in the region, which may delay or derail project activities or implementation, as occurred in the first phase of the project with Egypt, Syria, and Yemen. Nevertheless, the instability and transitions are no reason to delay or otherwise postpone project activities. Despite the delays, the project partners have increased their capacity and effective political participation, and economic empowerment

trainings have taken place in spite of the instability. The trainings are preparing women and youth to participate more fully in conflict resolution and the transition to more democratic and equitable societies.

Even though the implementing partners have demonstrated serious political will and commitment to the programme, a major gap nonetheless exists between “expressed official intention towards building political participation and the actual translation into national policies and plans.”¹⁵ Therefore, the capacity building activities are urgent and timely and delays will only result in the continued marginalization of women and youth during the revolutionary changes and transitions now occurring in many countries in the region.

IX. Lessons Learned and Good Practices

- ✓ The project’s success lies in its adoption of a community approach that addresses aspects of women empowerment in a comprehensive manner and transcends superficial thematic separation, i.e., economic empowerment of women and elimination of violence are necessary and supportive to women’s political participation.
- ✓ Political participation training must be systematic, strategic, and on-going to effect change and not merely sporadic and based on the election cycle.
- ✓ Select partner organizations with a wide and diverse base of support.
- ✓ Each country context varies considerably. Because each country organization identified its own issues of concern and selected its activities, the resulting national programs developed great ownership, commitment, and positive outcomes.
- ✓ The roundtable is an excellent mechanism to exchange ideas and experiences.
- ✓ JOHUD’s inclusion of tribal leaders in their activities and seeking their support to avoid direct confrontation facilitated entry into excluded areas.
- ✓ Transferring knowledge at local and public meetings and Friday mosque lecture proved very effective in a number of countries.
- ✓ Developing behaviour change messages within Islamic concepts was effective in Syria and Yemen.
- ✓ Gender differentiated messages can be key to success. Health messages for women and religious ones for men were effective in changing people’s beliefs about early marriage in targeted Yemeni communities.
- ✓ Incentives such as mobile health clinics in Yemen helped to open minds to the early marriage message.
- ✓ In Lebanon, economic work with rural women contributed to political participation. Women gained peer support and a constituency, earned social recognition, and developed relationships outside their families. With increased self-confidence, some became candidates in municipal elections.
- ✓ Empowered women entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia applied and gained membership to the local Chamber of Commerce.

¹⁵ Women’s Political Leadership and Economic Empowerment for Peace-building. First Progress Report to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Foreign and Commonwealth Office. November 2008-December 2009. Annex A-B, p.11

- ✓ Women leaders in each Syrian governorate were identified and trained in leadership skills to prepare them to participate in government. These women created supportive networks to communicate with each other and share experiences.
- ✓ The UAE business training activities responded to Bedouin women's desire to start home businesses and in the process revitalized local crafts while economically empowering young women graduates.
- ✓ Rural women producers and cooperatives benefitted from the creation of sustainable market outlets in Lebanon.
- ✓ Health issues were used as an entry point for volunteerism in Saudi Arabia because "anything related to women is considered feminist" and is not socially acceptable.

Annex 1
Interviews with ASRO Staff and Country Implementers

ASRO Project Staff	
Maha Nuaimy	Deputy Regional Program Director
Rania Tarazi	National Program Officer
Shirin Shukri	Peace Building Project Manager
Anoud Al-Majali	Peace Building Project Associate
Country Focal Points & Implementers	
Lina Abou Habib	President CRTDA, Lebanon
Fakhri Qatarnah	UN Women Project Implementer, UAE
Wasan Hijazi	Project Coordinator at Ladies Committee of Gassim, Saudi Arabia
Magida Qteit	President of Syrian General Women Union
Aref Al-Sheikh	UN Women Syria, Country Program Coordinator
Rana Korayem	Program Association UN Women Egypt Country Office
Ola Al-Momani	Project Coordinator, Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD)
Nisreen Syouf	Project Coordinator, Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD)
Mai Abdulmalik	Yemen Women Union

Annex 2

Project Review Questions

ASRO Project Team

Explain the history of the project?
Who initiated it and why?
How did you select the respective counterparts?
Tell me about each organization.
How did you see the inception papers?
What did each country identify as a problem?
What activities were chosen and why?
Would you support the same projects again? Why or why not?
Did you agree with the activities selected?
How do you rank each country activity?
What are the country-specific strategies?
How did you support the activities?
What about monitoring and evaluation?

Country Organization Implementers

Provide a brief background about your organization.
How did you choose the issue?
What did you learn from the research?
How did you select activities?
Describe the beneficiaries
What were your goals?
Did you achieve them?
How was the implementation of the activities?
Were youth involved?
What went well? What did not?
How did you monitor and evaluate the work?
Will the project be sustainable?
Did you like the project? Why?
What did you learn from the project?
How did the Amman office support you?
If you could continue activities, what would you do and why?
What regional activities would be helpful?
What is the major contribution (impact) of the project?
Why were you successful in this project?

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